



# OUTWARD BOUND INTERNATIONAL

*Journal*

2020 Edition



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UNCERTAIN  
LANDSCAPES

NEED

AGILE  
LEADERSHIP





## FROM THE EDITOR



In October 1941 when Outward Bound was founded, World War II was in its second year; Churchill had just assured Stalin that convoys of merchantmen would sail for the Soviet ports of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk every ten days, and the 1918 flu pandemic, which killed an estimated 50 million people before petering out in 1920, was still a vivid memory for those who had experienced its ravages firsthand. But for the students of Outward Bound's inaugural course at Aberdovey, Wales, that October, the pandemic was all but ancient history—none were old enough to remember it.

Today, none of us is too young to ever forget Covid-19, the most disruptive global pandemic since 1918. However, much like its Welsh forebear learned to navigate the turmoil of a world war while preparing young merchant sailors to survive the challenges of the North Atlantic, our global network of Outward Bound schools is learning how to weather the storm of coronavirus. We are doing this while continuing to prepare students to meet today's challenges by cultivating in them strong connections to others, to self, and to the natural world. Outward Bound's core outcomes—resilience, self-confidence, compassion, social competence, and environmental responsibility—are more important than ever.

During the last eight months, many of our schools have turned to government support to cope with the impact of Covid-19; others have carried on with a greatly reduced schedule of courses carefully crafted to minimize the risks of viral transmission. Some have remained closed while their governments determine how best to proceed. And others still have chosen to work directly with schools in their communities to bring Outward Bound into the classroom. Lastly, a few of our schools have been able to return to near full capacity, largely because of their governments' success in responding to the crisis and reining in the virus.

While Covid-19 and its tsunami of effects are the biggest challenges to confront our network since the end of World War II, we are indeed fortunate that our co-founder Kurt Hahn gave us a robust philosophical framework for coping with adversity. Sometimes simply referred to as the "Outward Bound philosophy" the framework includes several tenets or principles. One is the idea that "your disability is your opportunity," a challenge to us all that we can learn to overcome our vulnerabilities by reframing them as openings for positive change, and another is the notion of ensuring an "indefatigable spirit," the characteristic of tireless persistence, which is essential to our ability to survive tough times without giving in to defeatism and then giving up.

Finally, Outward Bound's motto, "To Serve, to Strive and Not to Yield," adapted from the Tennyson poem "Ulysses", remains a reliable and motivating guide for how to proceed during difficult times. As James Neill, assistant professor in psychology at the University of Canberra wrote in his related 1996 paper; "... 'to serve' means to give to others through self-sacrifice, 'to strive' is to pursue one's goals with great determination, and 'not to yield' is to carry on in spite of difficulties, that is, to persist and to eventually triumph."

In the months to come, Outward Bound International will continue to meet the deep challenges ahead while serving our member schools, pursuing our vision of "a stronger worldwide network of more effective and resilient Outward Bound schools," and carrying on with indefatigable spirit, resilience, and a commitment to emerge stronger. We hope you will enjoy this issue's stories from our wonderfully diverse network of schools as an illustration of how they go about preparing their students to meet today's and tomorrow's challenges.

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**BACON CHAN:**  
*When Kurt Hahn Meets Laozi*

Bacon Chan is the Executive Director of OB Hubei. He started his career in human resources and later found his passion for the outdoors through an OB course. In 2011, he joined OB Hong Kong and worked with a wide range of clients, from small children to corporate executives. Bacon has an M.A. in Transcultural European Outdoor Studies, a field which informs his practice. In 2019, he took on the challenge of starting OB Hubei. He aspires to enrich the OB philosophies with Chinese wisdom. He enjoys sea kayaking, running, and playing with his kids.

**CHAI MOI LEN:**  
*Professionalizing the Management of Human Resources*

Chai Moi Len was appointed the first female Executive Director of OB Sabah on January 1, 2019. She has impressive experience in education and over three decades of human resources management, along with extensive experience outdoors. She became the first Queen's Guide in Sabah in 1967 and was one of the participants in OB Sabah's first 28-day Challenge Course in 1986. She has climbed Mt Kinabalu, Malaysia's highest peak, more than 20 times and trained with the Gurkhas for two weeks to prepare for the 1994 Mt Kinabalu Climbathon. She also regularly joined OB Sabah's staff in their Crocker Range expeditions.



**CLARE DALLAT:**  
*Learning from Tragedy: The Legacies of Laura and Alice*

Clare Dallat is the director of Risk Resolve, an Australia-based service that has provided both educational and risk management services for schools, organisations, and governments internationally since 2007. She is also an experienced outdoor educator with 25 years of practice. Clare has a PhD in Engineering Psychology (Accident Prediction) and an MSc in Risk, Crisis, and Disaster Management, and is deeply involved in experiential education organisations and related academic work. She is the first recipient of the Reb Gregg Wilderness Risk Management Award outside of North America. She also co-chairs the annual Adventure Risk Research Symposium.



**JASON ONG:**  
*Simply Sustainability*

Jason started his journey with Outward Bound by completing the Children's Adventure Course at Outward Bound Malaysia in 1988. He returned soon after to volunteer continuously as a course assistant and rose rapidly through the ranks to qualify as an instructor right after completing the Standard 25 Days Course in 1995 with a merit award, making him one of the youngest recognised instructors at OB Malaysia. In 2004, Jason became the first of two appointed Corporate Instructors for OBM and, in 2009, was invited to become a distinguished life member of the Outward Bound Trust of Malaysia. He has been co-chairman for the Safety Committee since 2014 and a member of the Training and Programme Development Committee since 2017. Jason is also a business and project analyst and the group director of operations in a firm he co-founded based in Malaysia. He is an enthusiastic hiker and climber.



**CHRISTINE MANGOLD**  
*Opening of a New Facility in Austria*

Christine Mangold, executive director of Outward Bound Germany and Austria, is a business economist, business coach, and systemic consultant. She previously worked for ZF Friedrichshafen AG, a car parts manufacturer; and spent many years self-employed in business consulting and as the business manager of a facility for the disabled. She enjoys being close to nature and is passionate about helping people make a positive impact on the environment.

**IRMELIN KÜTHE:**  
*The OB Academy: Past, Present, and Future*

Irmelin Kütthe is the academic director of OB Germany's Outward Bound Academy. She has a diploma in Sport Science and an MSc in Therapeutic Recreation. She was an Outward Bound instructor in Germany and the US, and has been a hiking guide in Germany, Austria, Italy, and Greenland. She developed and led Germany's first comprehensive training program in experiential education, and established volunteer training programs for people with disabilities at the ski school at Crested Butte ski area in Colorado. She makes her home in Bavaria.



**MADELEINE ETTINGER:**  
*Outward Bound Bees—More Than Just Honey*

Madeleine Ettinger joined Outward Bound Germany as an instructor and program manager in 2019. After a season working in an outdoor education camp in Canada and getting more experience abroad in youth project work, she was ready to settle down and finally found her place at Outward Bound in Schwangau. The landscape in the Allgäu is what she loves: mountains, lakes, and rocks. The perfect place to share her passion with the groups and individuals she works with.



**TIFFANY FERNYHOUGH:**  
*2020 Asia Regional Staff Symposium & Setting Goals and Expressing Gratitude*

Tiffany Fernyhough began her outdoor education career with OB Hong Kong, pursued her passion for adventure and education working with a wide variety of clientele in a Canadian outdoor education centre and as a ski instructor before returning to Asia. Her love for challenging people to realize their potential through the outdoors has led her to her current position as senior instructor at OB Vietnam.



**PETER WARD:**  
*2020 Asia Regional Staff Symposium*

Peter Ward is an operations manager with Outward Bound Vietnam. He has worked in the outdoor education industry for over nine years. He has developed his sea kayaking and rock climbing through expeditions around the world and has previously worked for OB Hong Kong where he helped deliver staff training, and as Program Manager for an outdoor education centre in Canada. He is very excited about being part of the OBV team and encouraging the development of others through challenging experiences.

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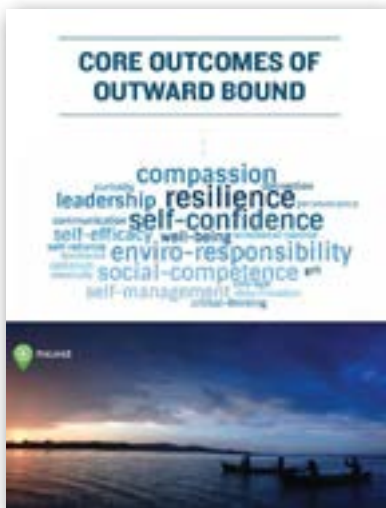
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# THE OBI 2020 GLOBAL IMPACT REPORT

## The OBI 2020 Global Impact Report is completed!

The report provides an overview of the impact of Outward Bound programs on a global level and introduces five core outcomes of OB courses which were consistently demonstrated through the evidence provided by the network: resilience, self-confidence, compassion, social competence, and environmental responsibility. All of these core outcomes are organized within the larger theme of “Connections” — to self, to others, and to the natural world.



Use this QR code to access the report

# OUTWARD BOUND GERMANY AND AUSTRIA CELEBRATES OPENING OF A NEW FACILITY IN BAAD, AUSTRIA

By Christine Mangold

The original Outward Bound Centre in Baad, Austria, has a long history going all the way back to 1957. Based in what was once a sports hotel, Outward Bound in Baad—and other centres in neighbouring Germany—has, over the years, delivered programmes to almost 350,000 participants.

On Saturday, July 6, 2019, a new facility with accommodation for up to 50 additional participants was opened in Baad. Outward Bound representatives from the UK and Romania, Outward Bound alumni, as well as politicians from Schwangau, Germany, and the Austrian valley of Kleinwalsertal (Mayors Stefan Rinke and Andi Haid, respectively), EU representatives, and people from Kleinwalsertal were present.

Future support in the form of government funding has been confirmed and we are pleased to report that our region's political leaders have come to understand and value the important educational work of Outward Bound.

The new facility, "House Bianca", exists thanks to the support of our long-time patron Bianca Vetter. Bianca's heart beats to help young people. She has supported Outward Bound for many years and it is as a direct result of her assistance that Outward Bound has been able to develop in Germany and Austria.

All guests of the opening ceremony agreed that the work of Outward Bound is more important than ever before. Experiential learning is the right approach to prepare young people for adulthood. Building a new house and strengthening the impact and reach of Outward Bound is the beginning of a joined initiative of Outward Bound Germany and Austria to reach out to potential new schools in order

to bring the message and values of Outward Bound to more young people, students and apprentices alike.

An intensified effort to build relationships with the local community and its political leaders where Outward Bound operates has led to new possibilities in the way the programs are run. Christine Mangold, Outward Bound Germany and Austria's executive director, and her staff team are delighted with the developments and with the additional community support. According to Daniel Riedel, centre manager at Baad, the two facilities can now accommodate groups of up to 140 people, and, in cooperation with Manuel Wenzel, centre manager in nearby Schwangau, Germany, even bigger groups can be welcomed.

Up until now, legal wild camping has not been allowed in the mountains surrounding Baad. Building relationships with landowners and municipalities was important and has resulted in the identification of bivies (places where groups can improvise camps and spend the hours of darkness—an important part of Outward Bound programs) that only Outward Bound is allowed to use. The same is true for the development of new climbing and abseiling sites that are off the beaten path and offer the participants a more authentic experience than using established climbing sites. Staying in touch with local politicians (and those operating at a European level) is important for Outward Bound as ongoing government support is crucial to Outward Bound's plans to engage with even more young people.

Outward Bound Germany and Austria is indebted to Bianca Vetter and the officials from Kleinwalsertal for their support and encouragement. We look forward to hosting many more programmes out of House Bianca in the years to come! [▶](#)





# PROFESSIONALIZING THE MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

By Chai Moi Len

During my university years, my focus was not in human resources (HR). Nevertheless, over the years my field exposures in both strategic HR and administration in different countries have yielded practical and insightful concerns which I would now like to share.

Today human resources management has become an integral part of companies and organizations in many developing countries, as corporate management has realized the importance of human capital and the related issues that have significant roles in establishing harmony between staff and management. Outward Bound Schools are no different from any other private organizations and need to be guided by their respective country's labour practices.

## WHAT IS HR MANAGEMENT?

The challenges of labour issues are undeniable and faced by numerous organizations. Even now, the concept of HR management is not fully understood by many people. To many managements, HR is simply the administration of payroll. However, HR departments generally handle recruitment, compensation and benefits, labour relations, performance evaluation, training, development, and succession planning. They must ensure from the inception of their organization that all the staff's data are recorded and updated periodically. Remuneration and other benefits have to be established for all levels of staff, from the management and executive levels right down to the rank and file, based on the current competitive job markets or similar scopes.

HR departments are therefore cost-intensive, taking 30 to 40 percent of a company's total expenses, including the department's overhead and the direct labor cost of all the organization's employees. As one might imagine, numerous issues contribute to the success of HR operations in an organization.

## HR DEPARTMENTS ARE THEREFORE COST-INTENSIVE, TAKING 30 TO 40 PERCENT OF A COMPANY'S TOTAL EXPENSES

Regrettably, due to misconceptions, HR management often takes a backseat in organizations and is often overshadowed by the marketing department. To leadership, this is rightly so, as that department generates income for the organization. Nevertheless, equal or more weighting must be applied to the HR department and to the other departments.

For instance, if a company (or OB School) does not pay much attention to its HR department, that might give rise to challenging issues such as labour shortages or disputes, both of which can incur unnecessary expenses, hassles, headaches, and a decline in the school's image. More often than not, ignoring HR could be the main reason for a staff's low morale and dissatisfaction in their workplace and for high turnover. Management must try to avoid or prevent such a situation from occurring at all costs.

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH EMPLOYEES

It goes without saying that all managers, regardless of whether they are in HR or not, must have a good understanding of their country's employment act, without which they might not be eligible to qualify for the position. Managers should have the ability to impart appropriate knowledge of employment principles and practices and skills to their staff.

Those in leadership roles need to know the rights and obligations of employers and employees, which include handling discipline in their department and the unlikely termination of staff. The correct practices applied at the time of severance will ensure both employer and employee separate with minimum loss of resources and continued good relationships. When termination is executed professionally, it fosters confidence in the organization's management system and avoids costly consequences, otherwise it could end in court and project a negative image of the organization to the community, making them not a "preferred employer".



In an organization, human capital is often the only asset that grows its value with time. The staff pool is the backbone of the organization and the most cost-intensive investment of the organization. Managers must realize that teams need to be well managed and taken care of, including their development and growth within the organization, feel fulfilled in their workplace and deliver high-quality service standards to customers.

Management must also be seen to be fair to all staff, especially in terms of their remuneration and benefits. Does the organization have the budget for the staff's welfare and activities? The bottom line of HR is to minimize labour issues, maintain the workforce's stability, and have a conducive working environment infused with a culture of staff engagement.

## REVIEWS AND GUIDELINES

Biennially, Outward Bound International conducts programme reviews to audit and confirm that the Outward Bound Schools are performing and abiding by consistency and quality expectations as they apply within the Outward Bound network.

Likewise, HR management systems should be established to maintain workplace continuity regardless of changes in top management. Thus, the department and its procedures have to be reviewed and audited yearly to ensure full compliance with employment acts and simultaneously, where necessary, to rectify and update the HR system. Changes are inevitable due to external factors and situations that could influence HR management; for example, the staff termination process implemented five years ago may not apply in the current context of Covid-19. It is therefore vital that the HR department also keep the wider management abreast of the latest or current statutes applicable to running the school.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and operating manuals are crucial in helping Outward Bound schools' staff to conduct their activities in line with Outward Bound's vision, mission, and safety guidelines. Similarly, every team member must be given an employee handbook, which outlines the terms and conditions of employment, including employee benefits and possible disciplinary action. Properly written HR policies, procedures, and SOPs provide clear direction for decision-making by management and also establish a responsible delegation of authority. With all these documented guidelines collectively in place, any organization will have established a foundation for clear management.

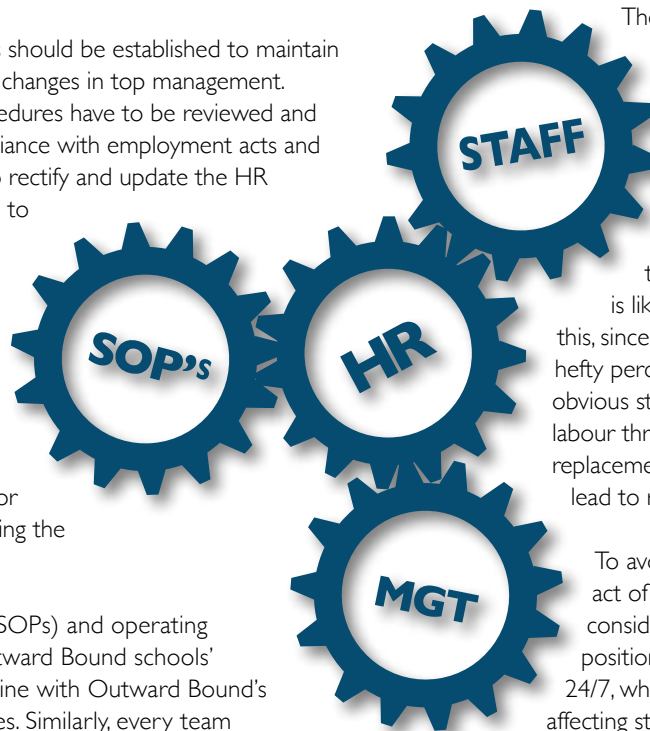
## STAFF RETENTION

The current employment situation resulting from Covid-19 poses many challenges for recruiting quality staff. The selection of potential

staff during recruitment must not be taken lightly. Not only are a candidate's skills and qualifications essential, but their attitude is paramount. Selecting the wrong candidate will create more challenges for an organization and the time and cost involved with these situations is sometimes high. Sadly, this problem is sometimes overlooked by leadership, who sometimes believe that recruitment is easy; but to get quality staff is a real challenge.

To ensure smooth management and operation, organizations should have staff development, retention, and succession plans in place. The success of a well-established organization depends on the efficiency of its professional development programme to offer its staff the necessary training and help them to perform their work to the highest standards. Obviously, this is another major expense for the organization. In Outward Bound's case, the training has to be based on the needs of the school and the staff's knowledge and skills. However, the many hours spent training staff are an investment that organizations such as ours cannot afford to lose.

## OB AND COVID-19



The current pandemic allows Outward Bound schools the opportunity to reassess their entire operation. Management's priority should be to find creative ways to provide continued activities and maintain the standard of quality service OB Schools have always provided while introducing cost-controlling measures to overcome shortfall. Human resources is likely the first department to be involved in this, since, as has already been noted, HR incurs a hefty percentage of total expenses. The unspoken, obvious steps to take will be to reduce the cost of labour through salary deduction, unpaid leave, and no replacement for natural attrition. Ultimately, this could lead to retrenchment or a more drastic step, closure.

To avoid such drastic measures and the ultimate act of retrenchment, leadership may have to consider outsourcing specific departments or positions. If the school is not running courses 24/7, which department can be outsourced without affecting standards and quality? Could it be the back of the house—kitchen, dormitory cleaners, and ground maintenance—or the more part-time instructors who conduct the courses as and when required? An advantage of outsourcing is that the contractor is fully responsible for their own staff's maintenance, such as salary, statutory contributions, benefits, etc., while the school only pays the agreed sum to the contractor. However, one must be practical and humane in handling current staff.

At the end of the day, in these times stakeholders, management, and staff will have to do whatever it takes to keep their schools afloat and profitable.

I would prefer not to end with a doom and gloom note. In my humble opinion, human capital remains the soul of the organisation. ►

# WHEN KURT HAHN MEETS LAOZI: WHAT DOES OUTWARD BOUND MEAN TO CHINA?

By Bacon Chan

[The following conversation is imaginary]



Laozi: Finally you are here.  
Kurt: Oh, have you been expecting me?  
Laozi: Well, yeah... kind of.  
Sometimes things are inevitable.  
Kurt: I've heard that the kids of your country are in trouble, and that's why I am here.  
Laozi: Maybe you are right. You have some great ideas?  
Kurt: I will take them to the outdoors and take on some challenges!  
Laozi: Um... the kids have already been through much hardship in school. You know, sometimes less is more.  
Kurt: Oh, what do you mean?  
Laozi: Wisdom is everywhere in the nature. You will learn about the law of nature only if you slow down and pay attention...



## THE TRANSCULTURAL WORLD THAT WE ARE IN

COVID-19 makes us realise how connected we are. The convenience of international travel of people and information has enabled cultures to fuse. We are entering the era of transculturality in which cultures mingle in a way where sometimes it is hard to tell which is which. It is like tributaries of various sizes mixing and converging into a larger body of water. If you take a sip of the water downstream, you will taste a bit of everything from each contributing tributary.

## OUTWARD BOUND: A TRANSCULTURAL PROJECT

Since its foundation in the 1940s, Outward Bound has evolved organically into a transcultural project. With its western historical and philosophical roots, Outward Bound has been taken into cultures created by vastly different geographical, cultural, and political landscapes. For an Outward Bound course to be meaningful, it must understand local people and local places, and adapt to those local cultures while preserving the Outward Bound ethos.

## OUTDOOR EDUCATION IN CHINA

This adaptation is the challenge that we have been taking very seriously as we introduce Outward Bound to China. Outdoor education is not new to the Chinese, but here it is more often seen as boot camps to boost morale and obedience, not so much as activities to inspire personal reflection and expression. Many of these camps happen in constructed areas deprived of the magic of nature. Meanwhile, young people are suffocating from the stresses of the university entrance exam. They spend all their time on books and seldom have the luxury to head outdoors and learn about themselves. To many of them, nature is either a distraction or a mystery.

## THE CHINESE PERSPECTIVE ON NATURE

There is in fact a lot of wisdom about life and nature in Daoism, one of the most prominent schools of philosophical thoughts in Chinese culture.

*"The Dao that can be described in language is not the constant Dao."  
(Tao-te ching, section 1)*

Daoism was founded by Laozi more than 2,000 years ago. To study Daoism, first you need to understand what Dao is. Dao, literally meaning "the way", is the natural order of the universe. From a modern scientific perspective, that is the law of nature. Dao is behind both natural phenomena, such as thunderstorms and volcanic eruptions, and human behaviours, such as helping others or wielding violence.



A stream flowing into the hilly town Muyu in Shennongjia where our operating area will be



The mountains in Shennongjia



Dao cannot be understood just as a concept. It has to be known through actual living experience of one's everyday being. In the early days of Daoism, the character for Dao was written with an eye in the centre looking at all the different things around it. Being observant to both the outer and inner world is the key to understand Dao.



The Chinese writing of Dao today (left) and more than 2,000 years ago (right)

*“The myriad things, bearing yin and embracing yang, form a unified harmony through the fusing of these vital forces.” (Tao-te ching, section 42)*

Dao connects to a familiar symbol, yin and yang. According to Laozi, everything consists of the opposite energies of yin and yang in balance. Yin and yang both contradict and complement each other. For example, life and death are the opposite ends of life cycle, yet without death there is no life. This applies to everything. If you go too fast, you will need to slow down. If there is too much leadership in the team, you need some followership.



The Symbol of Yin and Yang

To Laozi, someone who understands and practises Dao learns from nature. Just as it does in English, the word “nature” means the natural way of being (e.g., human nature), and the beautiful natural world out there with trees and animals. Laozi believed that by being observant to the smallest things in nature, you can understand Dao.

*“Man takes his models from Earth; Earth takes its models from Heaven; Heaven takes its models from the Dao; and the Dao takes its models from the Nature.” (Tao-te ching, section 25)*

Among all things, water best symbolises Dao. Water is everywhere and nurtures all life forms. It is flexible and can adapt to the shape of whatever contains it. Yet water can also be incredibly strong and powerful, and a large volume of water can break a dam effortlessly.

*“The highest good is like water. The goodness of water lies in benefiting the myriad things without contention, while locating itself in places that common people scorn.” (Tao-te ching, section 8)*



Looking out from a campsite in Shennongjia

Laozi also advises that we should do less to achieve more. To be effective, one should follow the law of nature and act accordingly. Effort is wasted if we work against the Dao. If you are leading a team, know your team and lead accordingly. Otherwise it is just endless fight.

*“The Dao in its constancy engages in no conscious action, yet nothing remains undone.” (Tao-te ching, section 37)*

#### WHAT DOES OUTWARD BOUND MEAN TO CHINA, AND YOU?

Clearly there is a lot of wisdom about the nature and personal leadership contained in Daoism. And it is exactly what Outward Bound is about—learning about self through the outdoors. More than 2,000 years apart, Laozi and Kurt Hahn are both inspirational educators. Laozi believes in human potential as much as does Kurt Hahn. In Laozi's view, everyone has the potential to practise Dao and hence lead a full and meaningful life.

More importantly, Laozi and Hahn share an appreciation of nature. Laozi believes that nature is where one learns about the law of the universe while Kurt Hahn sees nature as the perfect classroom for character building. They have different opinions, however, on how to develop individuals. Kurt Hahn believes that challenges bring out the best in us while Laozi advocates that one should slow down and be mindful to learn the law of nature. In my opinion, their views supplement each other, just like yin and yang. Engaging ourselves with nature in different ways help us develop a deeper understanding of ourselves and nature.

So, what does this mean for our courses? The outdoor classroom will be a journey of discovery for which we have a sense of where we are heading but do not know the exact destination. At a foundational level, these two different philosophies shape the character of the organization. They also inform programming as we will be intentional in creating a variety of fast and of slow elements in our courses. We will still talk about Kurt Hahn and World War II and how those challenging times are relevant to us. And we will also talk about the Chinese Warring Period of Laozi's time and how the chaos of their eras nurtured many great ideas. We will teach bushcraft from a modern (western) perspective, but we will also introduce Chinese folklore and how ancient farmers used the gifts from nature to live their lives.

We visualise creating Outward Bound courses in China that makes use of the unique natural resources enriched by Chinese culture and illuminated by Outward Bound philosophies and values. And in the end, hopefully, each school across the world will be running unique OB courses that share the same roots. [O>](#)



# WINGS FOR THOSE WHO CAN FLY

*Unique and defying, the Borboleta Azul program celebrates 10 years promoting experiential learning in nature for youth and adults with intellectual disabilities in Brazil*

By Bruno Romano











# “THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I WILL SLEEP AWAY FROM HOME.”

The voice of a young participant of the Borboleta Azul (Blue Butterfly) expedition echoes on a late spring afternoon through the mountains and valleys of the Serra da Mantiqueira, a stronghold of wildlife in southeastern Brazil. Their sentiment symbolizes a unique Outward Bound challenge in the country: taking youths and adults with intellectual disabilities on a self-sufficient expedition into a natural environment.



Leaving the safety of our protected harbors to seek new learning and transformational experiences is the key feature of an Outward Bound program. But here, getting “out of the cocoon” takes on a deeper dimension. People with intellectual disabilities have cognitive impairment and not mental illness, a mistaken assumption that is still quite common. Adequate support throughout life is essential.

In Brazil, 2.6 million people have intellectual disabilities—500,000 of them live in the state of Sao Paulo, where Outward Bound Brazil has its headquarters. Recent research on the subject shows that the most accurate way to deal with this challenge is to “educate for life in society”. Disability in itself does not define these people entirely as who they are. A comprehensive and holistic approach is the key.

At the end of 2019, Borboleta Azul celebrated ten years of existence—a real, and powerful journey adding socio-emotional development, access to nature, and a preparation for the inclusion into the labor market of socioeconomically vulnerable people. In this segment of society in Brazil, only one in every ten people has access to outdoor activities.

In this challenging context, the expedition started well before the first steps on the trail. Through a crowdfunding campaign, funds were raised to take three complete groups to the field (three times the initial target), all thanks to donations from the Outward Bound community, the support of the Refinaria Nacional de Sal, and the partnership and co-creation of the program with the Jô Clemente Institute, the IJC.



As a long-term partner of the Borboleta Azul project, the Instituto Jô Clemente (IJC) is the leading non-governmental organization in Brazil in the comprehensive care and inclusion of people with intellectual and multiple disabilities in all stages of life. It is a courageous, efficient, and responsible endeavour that also promotes important bridges



with the job market—since 2013 a total of 2,300 teenagers and adults were inserted in the job market with the help of the IJC's projects.

“Overcoming challenges in this case has to do with the lack of autonomy: there is always someone doing almost everything for them”, reports Marcos “Kito” Gomes, an Outward Bound Brazil instructor and staff, during the last four-day trekking expedition. “This overprotection is evident,” reinforces Paulo Ribeiro, an IJC instructor who accompanies the field trips with OB Brazil. “Over the days, we are recognizing more cooperation and less individualism. The care for others is strengthened,” he adds.

This learning resonates in more quotes from the participants, who share their feelings after each newly overcome challenge, giving more meaning and strength to the project. “I learned to respect others more.” “I made friends and learned to work my mind better.” “Life has to be this way: helping one another.” These are some phrases that arose naturally during the process. “My biggest challenge was to climb that mountain; I had never done a hike like this,” reports a participant after the long walk to the Pico da Princesa, an 11 kilometre (6.8 mile) hike on the edge of Serra da Mantiqueira.

More than overcoming physical and mental challenges, participants transfer the expedition's lessons to their daily routines, gaining autonomy and confidence to overcome their own personal challenges. In other words, at Borboleta Azul, youth and adults with intellectual disabilities start to believe more in themselves. And by doing so, more and more other people come to believe in them too.

This is the “other side of the coin”, which was made even clearer by the culmination of a decade of the program. Collaborating with the initiative generates the potential to impact everyone involved—participants, educators, and supporters—expanding general knowledge and creating a closer relationship to the reality that people with intellectual disabilities have more potential in themselves and that they can contribute in a constructive manner to society as well.

“What I learned most from this program was about gratitude. It makes me more aware of the value of life,” says Carlo Fumagalli, an OB Brazil instructor.

“It is a purity and an immense joy. With adequate support, they overcome barriers, and this is truly transformative,” adds Humberto Medaglia, a senior instructor at OB Brazil.

After four days of immersion in nature, and now already back at the OB Brazil base in Campos do Jordao, the participant who said he had never slept away from home is emblematic. “I thought I wouldn't be able to finish the expedition, but I did it!” Yes, there's more in them than they ever imagined—and more than society would ever imagine. After all, all of us, in one way or another, intentionally or not, have contributed to creating cocoons and keeping these people inside of them. It's time for us to open and to take part in the transformation; it's time for wings for those who can fly. ▶



# ADVENTURE THERAPY TRAINING PROGRAM:



## Practical Knowledge from the World of Adventure Therapy

By Christine Mangold

In the spring of 2021 the OB Academy will start its comprehensive training program in adventure therapy and prevention. Among the tools we will be teaching will be the "lifeline", something most adventure therapists are familiar with. This exercise has been tried and tested many times and comes with different variants and questions. Modified, it can also be used in OB courses featuring various target groups and educational goals.

Working with the lifeline can be a powerful and emotionally profound intervention. We recommend good preparation and embedding the lifeline exercise at just the right moment in a therapeutic process. This tool won't be used at the very beginning of a therapeutic process. It is most useful after a good and trusting relationship has been built

between the therapist and the client. In this article I would like to provide a little insight into the practical work behind the lifeline and to give a few tips and hints for its application.

The lifeline is usually laid with the help of natural materials and helps the client to see decisive events in their life in a meaningful sequence. It can happen that people no longer relate events from their own life to a comprehensible context and may completely lose important moments from their memories. Burned-out people, for example, sometimes have little access to a competent self-image. The brain has literally forgotten that it was recently at its peak.

The goal behind the lifeline is to renew or strengthen self-image and allow clients to see their story more clearly. Depending on the set-up and the questions being asked, an effective lifeline exercise can help clients appreciate all they have accomplished and gained in life; or it can provide clients with a better understanding of their own thoughts, feelings, and behavior by looking at their life-changing moments and possibly traumatic experiences.

### A few tips

The first step is to focus the question for the lifeline:

- When in my life did I feel successful? When did I feel powerful?
- What decisions have I made for my own good?
- What are the moments when important supporters have become effective in my life?

Depending on the stability of the client and the point in the therapeutic process during which this exercise is applied, questions about break-ins, injuries, or traumatic experiences can also be asked.







The next step is to find a suitable place: a stream, a dry river bed, a clearing in the forest, a tree's root line in the earth, etc. Depending on the client's current psychological state, he or she can look for a suitable place in nature on their own or the therapist can accompany and support him or her in their search for a suitable place. The therapist may also decide on the choice of seat or suggest one or two places for the client to choose between.

The same options apply to the natural materials such as stones, pine cones, leaves, twigs, etc., which are used as symbols for events within the lifeline. One can look for natural materials in advance and provide them for the exercise, or allow the client to choose those that work best for them.

### **The therapeutic conversation**

The lifeline can also help to make painful and sometimes traumatic events and processes in one's life discussable. The therapeutic conversation, which can be enhanced by the positive influences of a natural setting, requires experience and a professional approach. The therapeutic conversation has the goal and the task of supporting an emotional or psychological healing process.

### **Work on the same question several times**

It can be useful and helpful to work with the lifeline several times in the course of a therapeutic process, because memories may return and form an increasingly complete picture. This is often a healing moment for clients because they can reintegrate their own parts and strengthen their self-perception and self-image.

### **Time and time**

As with all interventions, as a therapist, I plan a time window of up to several hours, appropriate to the exercise and the question. The


set time frame creates security and orientation for my clients. This therapy can definitely be planned from the beginning in such a way that the lifeline is laid, worked on, and discussed several times. The time intervals depend on the general therapeutic setting, the (life) topic of the client, and the course of the healing process.

### **Summary and conclusion**

This powerful and effective therapeutic tool used in adventure therapy to give clients a better understanding of their life can also be used in experiential education programs, such as OB courses. That said, anyone applying it should always keep in mind what the goals of their program are, and its boundaries and limits. Don't go with one's participants where one is not supposed to go! General OB courses have no therapeutic focus. However, a lifeline focusing on accomplishments and successes in life, for example, can help participants to have more appreciation of their own life and can support their self-awareness.

In aiming to provide a unique set of adventure therapy tools for those interested in expanding their repertoire, OB Academy is preceded by a long history of innovative programming by Outward Bound schools around the world intended to enable the transfer of learning from a natural setting to the personal or professional settings of course participants.

A comprehensive training program in experiential education will start in Schwangau, Germany, in January 2021 and in the adventure therapy and prevention program in March 2021. Both programs will provide practical experience with this useful tool.

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# OB AMERICAS STAFF SYMPOSIUM

Valle de Bravo, Mexico, February 2020



By Hector Tello Mabarak

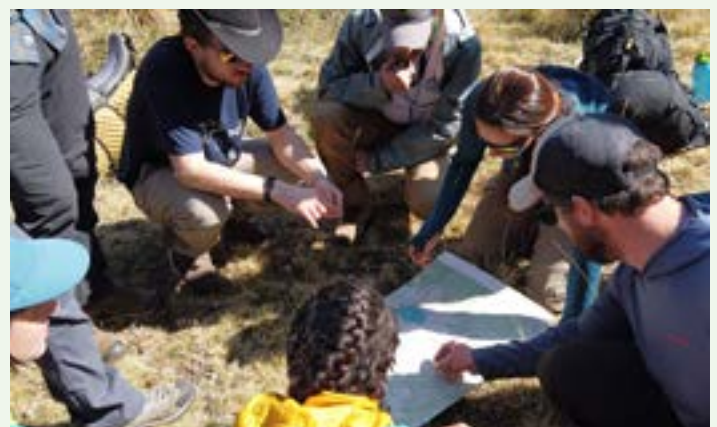
Our Outward Bound network is growing stronger by the day. As an international organization we're discovering the opportunities and synergies that lie within our reach, as well as the richness of ideas and inspiration gleaned from various meetings around the world. Some of the outcomes of this collaboration include the OBI brand manual, the "People, Places, Process" framework explaining our learning model, and a global strategic plan.

Programming in the Americas has come a long way since the first OB course held there in 1961. Since then, programs have grown in their diversity, reach, and relevancy as new schools have opened across the continent. Following the trend of the Asian region schools, it has become increasingly relevant in the Americas to share ideas between schools regionally. This movement towards international interaction inspired the idea for this first regional symposium. The mission of this symposium was to share expertise, opinions, and insights, with the goal of bringing the Outward Bound schools of the Americas closer to create a more robust and more relevant experience for our current and future students.

The four-day OB Americas Staff Symposium was focused on those closest to the programming of an Outward Bound experience: operations and program directors, staff managers, senior staff, and members from OB International. Outward Bound schools from Canada, Bermuda, Brazil, Costa Rica, and México were represented. The symposium was framed around activities, processes, and spaces

that promoted dialogue around Outward Bound's Distinctive Features framework: Our People, Our Process, and Our Places. The main goal was to facilitate a rich exchange of know-how, experiences, and best practices for our programs and shared processes.

The approach for each day of the symposium was significant for the construction of the community. From the day of the expedition to the heights of the Nevado de Toluca, participants began to build the foundations upon which the dialogue developed. Though we already knew it, this space reinforced the great significance of our community and an acknowledgement of the people that connect this network, crossing borders. We are grateful for the people who traveled such a long way to gather and share with us a corner of this beautiful country. ▶





## OUTDOOR RESEARCH FACE MASK

Seattle, USA, based Outdoor Research (OR) has introduced a reusable face mask equipped with a filter insert that is suitable for indoor and outdoor use. According to OR, the moisture-wicking face mask dries quickly and filters greater than 95 percent of virus, bacteria, and particles. The polyester mask is treated with HEIQ V-BLOCK® NPJ03, a Swiss textile treatment that apparently reduces the chance of bacteria or viral contamination compared to reusing a disposable paper mask. The mask is designed to be washed 30 times before protection diminishes. Adjustable ear loops and a nose wire allow for a snug fit.

OR offers a discount for eligible outdoor industry professionals and sells its masks and filters separately in packs of 25. Masks sold in packs of 25 are not treated with HEIQ V-BLOCK® NPJ03.

The OR face mask is not intended for medical use.

**\$20.00 US**

[www.outdoorresearch.com](http://www.outdoorresearch.com)



## SILVA TRAIL SPEED 4XT HEADLAMP | HEAD TORCH

The Bromma, Sweden, based company Silva invented the first liquid-damped compass in 1933. Most long-time outdoors people will be familiar with its orienteering compasses, but fewer will know that Silva introduced its first headlamp in 1935. Eighty-five years later, Silva enlightened Trail Speed 4XT will blast out 1200 lumens for five hours at its highest setting and give 20 hours of running time at the lowest 80-lumen setting. For comparison, a candle flickers at about 14 lumens, a 26-watt fluorescent light bulb delivers 1,800 lumens, and a sunny day shines at 100,000 lumens.

The 4XT will project its high beam out to 160 meters, and its four-mode, two LED system unites a floodlight and spotlight to optimize the light pattern according to how you tilt the 4XT's aluminum body. A detachable USB-rechargeable lithium-ion battery uses five LEDs to display its remaining charge. When the battery reaches 10 percent of capacity it switches to "reserve mode," leaving you about 30 minutes of light. This bright idea from Silva will lighten your wallet to the tune of about 17 cents per lumen or about 78 cents for each gram of weight.

Weight 257 g. Colors: Black, One Size

**\$200 US**

[www.silva.se](http://www.silva.se)



# THE OUTWARD BOUND ACADEMY:

## Past, Present, and Future



By Irmelin Küthe

**1991**—almost 30 years ago—saw the start of the Outward Bound Academy in Germany, even though it wasn't called an "academy" for the first 15 years. Right after the wall between Eastern and Western Germany came down in 1989, Outward Bound Germany wanted to support educators and social workers from Eastern Germany with a comprehensive training program in experiential education. The timing wasn't right; too many uncertainties and too much resistance existed amongst the people from the former GDR for the country to be ready for our training program, which was deemed "exotic" at that time.

Therefore, in 1993 Outward Bound Germany decided to open up its training program to all people who were interested in becoming experiential educators, and the success story started. Now the timing was right! In the '90s, outdoor activities became more and more popular in Germany and with it experiential education, which was pretty unknown up until that time.

Outward Bound was the first organization in Germany starting a comprehensive, two-year training program in experiential education. We were pioneers. There was hardly any German literature for experiential education available. Our knowledge was based on our extensive Outward Bound experiences, as well as on training programs for communication psychology by Prof. Schulz von Thun (University Hamburg) which several Outward Bound staff completed. Staff also attended the AEE (Association of Experiential Education) conferences in the US to gain more knowledge and to expand their network. North American experts in the field, like Canadian Simon Priest, came to Germany to teach OB staff. With 208 participants and 1,261 participant days, 1997 was the most successful year for the Outward Bound adult education training programs in experiential education.

The comprehensive training program of seven courses included a three-day introductory course, followed by a two-week Outward Bound course. Two further week-long basic courses covered topics such as safety, leadership, communication, group dynamics, and ecology.

After those four courses, participants had to make several choices. They could select from various outdoor activities such as canoeing, climbing, or backpacking. Another choice for the advanced courses was which target groups participants wanted to work with, such as pupils, youth at risk, people working in the corporate world, and people with disabilities.

After these courses, participants had to plan, implement, and evaluate their own experiential education program. The evaluation concluded with a written report presented during the final course.

This concept still proves effective today. With only minor changes and some new topics, the Outward Bound Academy training program described above will start again in November 2020. One new emphasis is now being placed on the topic of climate change and appropriate experiential education programs which acknowledge that issue and help preserve our natural environment.

Back to the Academy's history: In 1998, five years after the first German training program started. EU funding became available to start ZABRO, the first comprehensive experiential education training program in Romania in cooperation with Outward Bound Romania. The first German OB staff traveled to Romania by train in December of that year—quite an adventurous journey.



In 2000 the first ZABRO training program in Transylvania (Romania) was completed—but the precious friendship never ended! As a result of that friendship, in 2017 the social project Orizont, founded by Irmelin Kütke to support young women and men from orphanages and poor families, went under the umbrella of OB Romania thanks to Adam Horvath-Kovacs's support and engagement.

In 2005, all training programs at OB Germany were consolidated into the now officially named Outward Bound Academy, which, with extended programs and also some international courses, continued its work until 2012. At that time OB Germany went through very challenging times, which led to the dissolution of the Academy—a break that ended up lasting eight years.

Irmelin Kütke, who developed the German experiential education training program (ZAB) and ZABRO programs together with a team of OB staff and external professionals, returned to OB Germany in 2020 to continue the work of the OB Academy. She and a highly motivated team of OB staff members have developed curricula for three different comprehensive training programs and conducted marketing—not easy in the times of Covid-19. However, the cancellation of many programs due to the pandemic has allowed us to take more time for conceptual work than we would have had during a normal year.

The training program for experiential education now consists of 29 days of training and additional time for an internship as well as an individual project to gain experience in planning, implementing, and evaluating experiential education programs. This program is based on 30 years of experience in instructor training programs. Most people who have signed up for this year's course have a business background rather than an educational one, which is an interesting surprise.

Outdoor Guiding is another one of the new programs, which includes 22 days of training along with the time for the internship and project. It is geared towards people who want to be outdoor guides, for example in the tourist business or for leisure activities.



Another brand new training program is for adventure therapy and prevention, which includes six courses totaling 21 days and also requires the participants to develop, implement, and evaluate a project of their own. Adventure therapy and prevention is still a new field in Germany, and one with great potential.

Outward Bound Germany is very excited to once again be a pioneer in the field by offering an adventure therapy and prevention training program which is based on the ideas of the adventure therapy developed by Kurt Hahn. Taking Hahn's historic ideas into further account, current therapeutic approaches like the systemic approach will be covered in that new training program as well—so the tradition of the founder of Outward Bound will be connected with an innovative holistic approach in therapy. For this particular training program people have to have an educational or therapeutic background and be at least 25 years old.

Beside those three comprehensive programs, the Outward Bound Academy also offers other programs. In the future we plan not only to establish those three training programs on the market, but also to offer a wide range of programs for adult education—conducted first in German and later in English as well. We are looking forward to this new educational adventure. [▶](#)





# Outward Bound Bees So Much More than Honey!

By Madeleine Ettinger





# ees—



“If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe, then man would have only four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man.”

This quote, attributed to Albert Einstein, shows us how important bees are for our planet and our survival. It is even more frightening that the prospects for bees these days are not good. Monoculture weakens their immune systems, leaving them susceptible for disease; pesticides and industrial honey cultivation under the influence of drugs make them disoriented. The bee population is decreasing constantly worldwide, sometimes for inexplicable reasons.

Outward Bound Germany in Schwangau aims to work against this development, and so we brought a beehive to our education center in spring 2019. Since then the staff have taken care of about 6,000 to 40,000 bees, depending on the season.

After a year of feeding and learning, we finally harvested honey this summer. During this year of observing and coming to understand the connections between nature and bees, we also saw a huge potential in letting our bees be part of the Outward Bound courses.

Working with a beehive in an educational setting is something special for kids, youth, and adults. They get to know the meaning of responsibility, biodiversity, healthy nutrition, and economics. The participants learn through intensive participation, develop their own personality, and improve their teamwork, all important for the development of a sustainable lifestyle, which Outward Bound also stands for. Working with bees encourages responsibility and perseverance, and also planning, foresight, concentration, and taking care of other beings. And last but not least it offers sustainable experiences!

Learning with and through honey bees is versatile and colourful. Most importantly, it is always interactive and fosters self-discovery. The different products, like honey, wax, pollen, and propolis, offer a lot of possibilities for experiential work in the outdoors—for example, drawing a candle with beeswax, or tasting honey directly from the honeycomb.

The self-harvested honey can be used afterwards in the outdoor kitchen, demonstrating several ways to use honey for cooking and opening up discussions about food in general. Where does the food come from? How much work and resources stand behind a product? Are there different ways of keeping bees?

But not just the products of the bees can be inspiring for outdoor education! The whole organization and communication of a beehive can be used as a metaphor for humans in various situations. Communication, effectiveness, efficiency, goal orientation, common good, teamwork, flexibility, loyalty, and identification are terms which are lived in a beehive and could get transferred in human work-life and social interactions.

After the two years of observing, learning, and working with our Outward Bound bees, for us it's clear: it is so much more than just honey! [▶](#)

## **RISING:** BECOMING THE FIRST CANADIAN WOMAN TO SUMMIT EVEREST

By Sharon Wood

From Douglas & McIntyre, Madeira Park, B.C., Canada. 2019. \$24.95 US. Paperbound. 240 pages.

Like the sirens of Greek mythology whose enchanting songs lured sailors to shipwreck on their tiny Aegean island, Mount Everest has attracted the imagination of young adventurers ever since British climbers Mallory and Irvine disappeared near its summit during their ill-fated 1924 attempt to reach Earth's highest peak. Nearly 100 years later, fueled by an exponentially increasing death toll, Everest has experienced a rebirth of media fascination amid several high-profile tragedies and rising public interest in extreme sports.

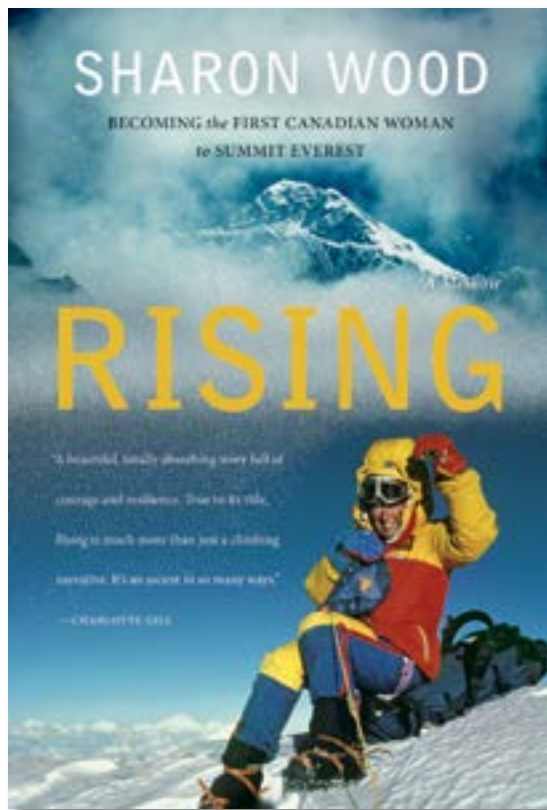
In Sharon Wood's captivating memoir, *Rising: Becoming the First Canadian Woman to Summit Everest*, one can sense Everest's siren song tugging at the author, enjoining her to abandon the complex narrative arc of her life story and simply write another adventure book. But Wood does not relent. She writes, "...Everest wanted this book to be about it. But the mountain merely serves a stage and a timeline for the real story." The real story, it turns out, is so much more interesting and engaging for the reader than simply tracing the steps of yet another perilous journey to the roof of the world.

*Rising* darts across time and space, contrasting the author's personal challenges during and after Everest with snippets of her difficult early adolescent years and the array of influences that ignited and then sustained her decades-long relationship with climbing and adventure. Throughout, Wood shares her conflicted relationship with Everest, the mountain that in 1986 saw her become the first Canadian woman to reach its summit; and then, for the next three decades, the mountain that would all too frequently drape its often uninvited shadow of fame over every contour of her life.

Her story begins to fully unfold in Chapter 3: "I first felt the alpine take my hand when I was eleven years old..." she writes, "hiking in the Coast Range of British Columbia with my dad," a man she describes as "a pilot, amateur philosopher, avid hiker and skier." Two years later, with her father away flying firebombers and her mother struggling to help a daughter mired in willful adolescence, Wood internalizes the salient advice of her probation officer and decides to take charge of her life and make something of it. At seventeen, she nearly crashes out of a 24-day Outward Bound course, believing she wasn't getting the "climbing and adventure" that she had expected; but, during the rock climbing session, she encounters an Outward Bound instructor who, she writes, "gave me a glimpse of my potential and a likeable self. I wanted more of that."

Fortified with newfound confidence and inspired by her instructor, Wood starts on a path that leads her on a layered and unexpected journey whose epic stages spans four decades and gives her readers an account that is at turns breathtaking and heartfelt, adrenaline-infused and contemplative.

From the blustery interior of adolescence to the searing high altitude storms of the mountain, and from the indispensableness of the Everest team to the hindrances of accidental celebrity—and then back down to earth as a mother, wife, mountain guide, and reluctant public speaker, *Rising* is truly a humble memoir for the ages. It delivers an accessible and revealing reminder to all of us that if we rise above the siren's call of our inner doubts and embrace the promise of our full potential, there really is more in us, as Outward Bound's co-founder, Kurt Hahn once remarked, "than we know. If we can be made to see it, we will be unwilling to settle for less."



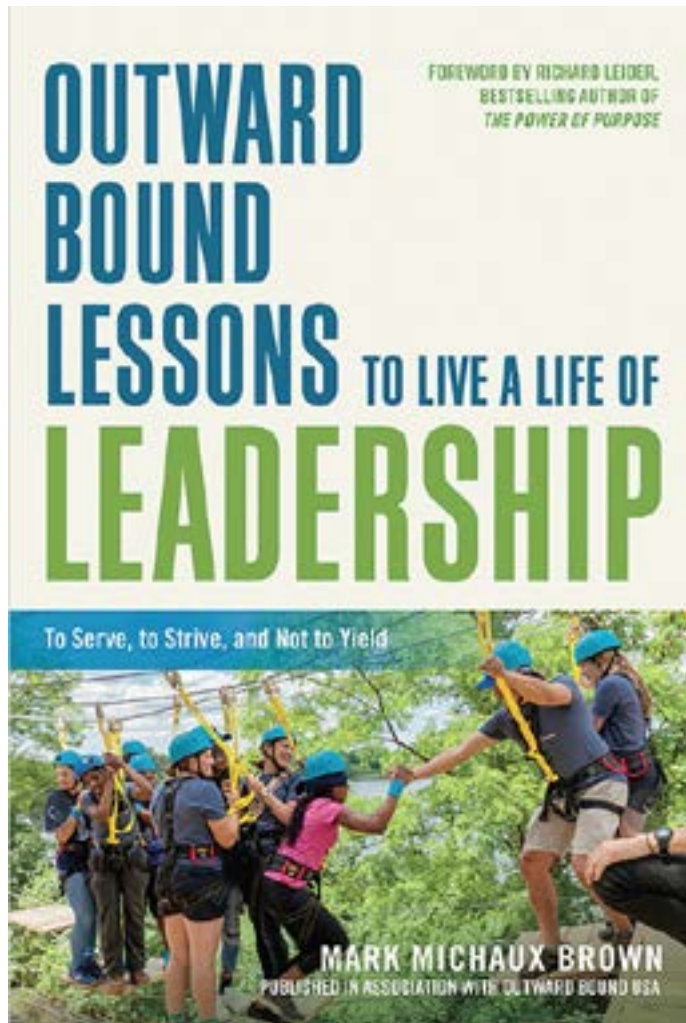


# OUTWARD BOUND LESSONS TO LIVE A LIFE OF LEADERSHIP: TO SERVE, TO STRIVE, AND NOT TO YIELD

By Mark Michaux Brown

From Berrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, CA, USA. 2019. \$18.95 US. Paperbound. 144 pages.

Mark Brown's first book is a refreshing and enthusiastic exploration of leadership through the prism of Outward Bound's philosophy and the experiences of its former participants, leaders, and supporters. A co-publication with Outward Bound USA, *Outward Bound Lessons to Live a Life of Leadership* elevates the stories of people deeply inspired by Outward Bound's core values and resonant life lessons, who at first internalize them and then integrate them into their own lives as leaders.



Brown writes from experience: burnt out as a young magazine editor, he took a 23-day Outward Bound course. The course was life-changing and he soon found a job driving vans for Voyageur Outward Bound in northern Minnesota. One thing led to another and at the end of a ten-year career as an instructor and course director he relocated to North Carolina Outward Bound where he focused on corporate leadership development. While in North Carolina, he trained as a professional coach, started a related business with his wife, picked up a graduate degree in business, and later joined the leadership of a New Hampshire-based automobile retailer. Despite the other influences on his life, Brown credits his Outward Bound experiences with teaching him how to lead.

In *Outward Bound Lessons*, leadership is deeply coupled to Outward Bound's core values. The book's three namesake "keys," as Brown calls them, are based on Outward Bound's animating motto: To Serve, to Strive, and Not to Yield, and they run through his book like a spine, connecting the reader to the inspired stories of leaders, such as Laura Kohler, former OB student, instructor; OBUSA board chair; and current Kohler Company executive; Home Depot co-founder and Atlanta Falcons owner; Arthur Blank, who also served as an OBUSA board chair; former Colorado Outward Bound executive director; Mark Udall, who served as an OB instructor and United States senator; and Liz Cunningham, author, speaker, and conservationist whose great-uncle was Kurt Hahn.

The book's sections (tellingly entitled: To Serve; To Strive; Not to Yield) and ten chapters frame key lessons, namely that leaders are learners, create a safe environment to take risks, develop other leaders at all levels, understand the journey is the destination, always watch for teachable moments, are always ready to serve a greater good, and facilitate a graduated level of responsibility for all those in their care.

Liz Cunningham offers apt advice to all readers in Chapter 9, Not Yielding to Uncertainty, when she says, "Leadership is ultimately about doing what is right and inspiring other people to do what is right as well." *Outward Bound Lessons to Live a Life of Leadership* is a book full of inspiration for leaders who wish to do right—and to serve, to strive, and not to yield!



By Tiffany Fernyhough

# SETTING GOALS

## EXPRESSING GRATITUDE

*This article is based off the workshop I presented at the Outward Bound Vietnam Asia Regional Staff Symposium and is designed to provide the 'why' and 'how' to link goal setting and gratitude expression to the transfer of courses.*

According to Harvard Medical School, gratitude is defined as a “thankful appreciation for what an individual receives, whether tangible or intangible.” As outdoor educators, this may lead us to think of the countless appreciation and feedback sessions we have run on our courses. The notion of setting goals either short or long term is also familiar to us, but what about tying the two types of session together? How does expressing gratitude link in to our goals? What is the correlation between expressing gratitude and setting goals, and how does this practice translate to life on Outward Bound courses and beyond?

### **What is gratitude and why is it rising in popularity?**

The idea of being grateful has long been a topic of interest among world religions and philosophers, but it was only in the late 1990s and early 2000s that a systematic study of gratitude within psychology began. These looked at gratitude in terms not only of understanding feelings of distress but also understanding positive emotions as they serve as adaptive mechanisms for social life. For modern society, the increasing popularity of expressing gratitude can be linked to the North American tradition of Thanksgiving, a time to celebrate the harvest, which has promoted a culture of being intentionally grateful once a year. Gratitude has also long been romanticized within poetry

and literature. All of these factors have led to a society that is more open to the expression of thankfulness and appreciation.

### **What are the benefits of a more grateful outlook?**

A dive into the literature surrounding gratitude research reveals Robert Emmons and David DeSteno to be pioneers in arguing for the correlation between gratitude and pro-social behaviour. Emmons has uncovered physical benefits of a more grateful outlook and DeSteno among others has studied the specific effects of gratitude as opposed to general feelings of happiness. Both have found that a more grateful outlook leads to:

- Lower blood pressure
- A stronger immune system
- Heightened feelings of optimism, happiness, and stress resilience
- More generous, compassionate people who are more forgiving
- People who are less likely to experience feelings of loneliness and isolation

### **How does gratitude tie in with goal setting?**

Along with compassion and pride, gratitude is seen to be a pro-social behaviour that encourages actions such as helping others, and generates a positive feedback loop that develops and maintains social relationships. This in turn upholds a greater sense of community. These three emotions work together to encourage individuals to exercise self-control with gratitude arguably being the driving force.



In his 2016 article with Leah Dickens, "The Grateful Are Patient: Heightened Daily Gratitude Is Associated with Attenuated Temporal Discounting", in *Emotion Journal*, DeSteno concluded that gratitude increases people's ability to wait and helps them to persevere in long-term goals and behaviours. This is because those who are consciously grateful are less likely to devalue future reward in favour of short-term hedonic pleasures.

Emmons and Anjali Mishra discounted the idea that gratitude can lead to complacency through their 2010 study "Why Gratitude Enhances Well-Being" in *Designing Positive Psychology* and determined instead that "gratitude enhances effortful goal striving." At the beginning of their gratitude journaling study, Emmons and Mishra asked participants to provide a short list of goals they would like to achieve over the two-month period of the study. They found that compared to the group who were asked to record their hassles over the course of the study and the control group who simply wrote about their lives, the gratitude group reported achieving more progress towards their goals over the study period.

By tying in gratitude journaling with goal setting on courses, participants are encouraged to recognize the steps they have taken to achieve their goals and the team that has helped them get there.

### How can we generate this habit on a course?

As facilitators during Outward Bound courses, instructors can create a space to explore the goals and gratitude of their group and for individuals to be acknowledged for their unique contribution to the team. Within this space of sharing, participants are connected to the moment, their surroundings, their individuality, and their community—connections that uplift and uphold the group dynamics, and society, in a positive way.

This session can be run in many forms, for instance as a daily grid, journal, or jar. Begin by establishing appropriate parameters; typically three goals and three gratitude entries allow for enough time for introspective reflection and sharing. Most importantly, it is key to emphasize that these entries should be free of judgment from oneself and others. The point is to help participants recognize what all they can be grateful for without feeling guilty or judging others for not writing big or conventional answers such as "my family, my friends, my partner." As DeSteno argues, "if you think about the same thing every day you are going to eventually habituate to it," so instead the focus should be on smaller appreciations such as a nice favour someone did.

By allowing each participant to share one goal and one gratitude entry, facilitators can build a sense of community. Knowing what others are grateful for helps us recognize other things for which we too feel grateful, which in turn helps us understand other people and therefore build solidarity and acceptance within a group. In sharing goals, we can hold each other and ourselves accountable and generate a support system to help achieve our goals. By acknowledging daily goals and gratitude, we can set clear intentions behind our actions (and those of our students) while

creating a space for accountability and understanding among group members.

### How do we link this to the final review?

On course, sharing daily goals and gratitude can provide consistency in a foreign environment, bringing the evening discussion together and providing a foundation for the final review. Within the latter, participants can be challenged to set a goal for the next hour, the next week, and the next month to facilitate the transition between their Outward Bound experience and 'normal life'. Participants can also be encouraged to base their gratitude on the things they were grateful for during the course, which can help them to appreciate the experience and begin further internal reflection post-course.


### How and why should we encourage this practice to continue after the course ends?

To help the habit of reflecting on gratitude last in the long term, it is important to allow space to acknowledge negative emotions while encouraging a positive outlook. We must accept that there will be some days where the idea of being positive makes our blood boil, and acknowledge this emotion by making goals about those around us instead of ourselves. This removes the internal pressure to be positive and helps us focus on how to help others. This, in turn, generates positive feedback, which may help with the feelings of negativity.

After the course has ended, continuing this habit every day can give participants five minutes to themselves, to appreciate their blessings and acknowledge how far they have come with their goals. And if this practice is picked back up one month, six months, or even one year down the line, it can remind participants of where the practice came from and may encourage further post-course reflection.

### Conclusion

Expressing gratitude and setting goals regularly during a course promotes a conscious focus on appreciation that upholds a greater sense of community, individuality, presence, and connection. Expressing gratitude also encourages perseverance in our goals by promoting patience and discouraging the devaluation of future goals. The practice serves not only as a way to provide consistency but as a vehicle for continued development and transfer after the course has ended. A conscious effort to identify personal and group gratitude during Outward Bound courses can encourage participants to understand their experience better and make for a more meaningful course experience.

Tried this on an Outward Bound course and want to chat about it further? Please email [tiffany.fernyhough@obv.vn](mailto:tiffany.fernyhough@obv.vn) 

*"Gratitude bestows reverence, allowing us to encounter everyday epiphanies, those transcendent moments of awe that change forever how we experience life and the world."*  
– John Milton



# LEARNING FROM TRAGEDY:

## The Legacies of Laura and Alice

By Clare Dallat

The blue flatbed pickup truck, shiny blue from memory, moved so very, very, slowly; the driver skilfully negotiated the tree stumps on the narrow hiking trail and the low overhanging branches of the eastern hemlock trees. Soaking wet and walking behind that blue truck, my 22-year-old hand stabilizing the orange stretcher that lay in the back of the truck, I removed my overshirt and carefully placed it over Laura's face and chest.

We had tried in vain for the past two hours to resuscitate her. We just couldn't get her back. The only thing we could do now was to bring her home. We had stretchered her to where the blue truck could gain access on the narrow, rocky hiking trail and take her the final kilometre. As we walked beside Laura, not a word was spoken: the silence both holy and deafening. My colleagues and I were only starting to process the enormity of what had just happened and what would soon unfold.

Although that was 20 years ago, the lingering, somewhat sour scent of that eastern hemlock forest returns to my senses each time I reflect on that early June day. Laura, a 30-year-old teacher visiting our outdoor and environmental education centre in the beautiful Catskill Mountains of New York State, tragically lost her life in a drowning accident. As an outdoor educator, the worst imaginable outcome of my profession had become real for me. My life had changed forever.

### Choosing to Stay In

In the hours and days that followed Laura's death, I experienced strong competing sensations of wanting to run as far as I could from a career in outdoor education, to one of utter conviction that this tragedy would galvanize me to try and make our profession safer. Fear and sheer will competed in equal measure. To this day, I have not been able to fully explain why the latter option prevailed, but I simply could not bring myself to exit the profession that had brought me wonderful elation, as well as absolute tragedy.

One major influence on my decision was the belief, experienced personally, in the wonderful benefits that can be achieved through outdoor experiences. As a young child growing up on the troubled shores of Northern Ireland, where violence between Catholics and Protestants was a way of life, I became a living, breathing

example of the potential of outdoor education experiences. As Northern Irish teenagers, we were able to access opportunities to participate in multiday outdoor education programmes, designed to introduce us to other young people from the opposite religion. These trips included a whole host of outdoor activities, canoeing down Ireland's longest river, the Shannon, being my most memorable. Without a doubt, I am the person I am today because of these trips. I developed tolerance and understanding through shared experiences in the outdoors with people my own age of the opposite religion, gained through hours of paddling in canoes, cooking dinners together on riverbanks, or setting up tents in the driving rain. Most importantly, I learned we were not all that different, and that we could, in fact, become friends.

Those experiences formed me, and they became my strength following Laura's death. From then on, risk management in the outdoors would become my professional focus.

### Becoming a Risk Manager

Although I knew what I wanted to do, I don't think I knew what I was in for. Not only were there a mere handful of dedicated outdoor risk managers working in outdoor education organizations around the world, all happened to be male and were blessed with many more years on earth. I was a mid-20s Irishwoman and although I had spent the previous six years leading and coordinating outdoor programmes all over the United States and Canada, I had no formal qualifications in risk management. I had no idea if such a job was even possible for someone in my shoes. I started reading. I read and read. I studied all the published work I could find in the outdoor education field. I read every single book of previous proceedings of the Wilderness Risk Management Conference, as well as from other outdoor education associations and organizations all over the world.

It was through my reading that I came across Deb Ajango and her story. In 1997, Deb had just become the director of the Outdoor Education Program at the University of Alaska, Anchorage, and within mere weeks of commencing the role, her programme experienced a mountaineering accident on Ptarmigan Peak resulting in the tragic deaths of two students. I was inspired by how Deb had so openly shared her learnings from the tragedy that had



occurred on her programme. Deb was to become, and remains, a hugely valued and respected mentor to me. To find another woman who had made such a massive contribution to learning from accidents in the outdoors who was also completely non-judgemental and giving with her time and ideas, was immensely important for my professional and personal development. I would come to rely on Deb to support me enormously following more tragedy that would unfold later in my career.

Although often nervous, I was never afraid to ask questions of other professionals, or to be open to new suggestions. In a way, perhaps my awareness of my relative inexperience in this specialized area facilitated my making connections and gaining access to peer support and resources. I simply asked lots of questions—and I soon developed long-lasting relationships and networks with other practitioners across the globe. I would pick up the phone, send an email, or walk up to someone at a conference and really pick their brains in relation to issues or aspects of risk management that I wanted to learn more about. To this day, engaging in conversation has far surpassed any course or degree I've started or finished in terms of return on investment.

## Looking Up and Out

After absorbing everything written about risk management within the specific outdoor education field, I started to look outside the profession as well. I felt that it was vital to learn from as many places, people, industries, and organizations as possible. Soon I found myself reading books and papers on crew resource management within the aviation sector. I became fascinated by the safety talks prior to take-off and the ways the crew interacted with each other. Every time I flew (something that feels so strange right now in COVID times!), I intently watched how they did their pre-take-off cross-checks. I wanted to know what habits they developed and how they achieved consistency of practice. Major air disasters, such as the Korean Air Flight 007 in 1983 and the Kegworth disaster in 1989, were significant in increasing my understanding of factors influencing accident causation.

As well as aviation, I also read about accidents in other safety-critical sectors: nuclear power, healthcare, transportation, and space. A book given to me by another significant mentor and friend, Preston Cline, titled *Failure Is Not an Option*, was hugely influential to my learning about the impacts of cultural factors within organizations and industries. Such insight helped me understand that a web of factors, such as financial or production pressures, can often lead to shortcuts. Additionally, political or social pressures, or competition with other organizations, have also been determined to influence the potential for accidents. Such factors contribute to the decisions and actions of people within the organization in relation to safety or accidents. A major lightbulb for me, in my reading, was that these factors were often far removed in both time and space from the person at the "sharp end": the nurse, the control room operator, the pilot, or the outdoor leader. It was obvious to me that these learnings and disasters, which resulted in the loss of many lives across multiple domains, had so much to teach us in outdoor education.

## First Risk Management Role

Two-and-a-half years after Laura lost her life, I found myself sitting very nervously on a Qantas plane on my way to Melbourne, Australia. I had applied for and been successful in gaining the risk manager role for The Outdoor Education Group, one of the largest outdoor education organizations in the world. At age 24, I was now responsible for developing and overseeing risk management systems and processes for an organization which then worked with approximately 18,000 participants and 200 staff per year on multiday outdoor education programmes. Today, the same organization works with 50,000 young people.

Touching down on the other end of the world, I was acutely aware of my ignorance of those things that could, in fact, kill me. Snakes, spiders, and sharks were never far from my risk antenna. Professionally, I was terrified and felt completely out of my depth. Although an avid reader and learner, I still had no formal qualifications in risk, a point that was not lost on several people who openly questioned my credentials (and age) upon my arrival in Australia. My undergraduate degree in environmental archaeology did not exactly increase confidence—theirs or mine. One such questioner, a board member with risk management experience in other outdoor organizations, looked nothing but horrified when we met for the first time.

In many ways, it was fully understandable that such concern was evident at that time. My two male predecessors both had a law enforcement background: one in police special operations and the other in the defence force. Both men were quite imposing physically and emotionally, and both were highly qualified in technical outdoor activities. We couldn't have been more different.

I remember speaking to the person who hired me about my concerns; I was wobbly and my self-confidence was low. To this day, I'll never forget what Sue said in reply to my concerns:

Clare, we have hired you because we want a totally different approach. We want our staff to think, to question, and to work things out together. We want them to be supported by policies but it's not just about policies. We don't want you to just give them the answer. We want them to know there is very little that is black and white in outdoor risk management; you have been hired to make that happen. If we needed someone who has 30 years of climbing big mountains or paddling rivers, we would have hired them. We don't—we already have those people and they are excellent at what they do. You are here to do something very different.

Sue, and the other leaders of the organization, wanted me to lead an approach to risk management that both established clear risk management boundaries where such boundaries needed to be set, as well as to enable a culture to be fostered that would value open and honest sharing in relation to risk management. To achieve such an aim, all staff would need to trust that it was safe to speak up and share incidents and opinions. Everyone within the organization would need to contribute.

## Needing the Credentials

My brief was subsequently very clear: I set about working with my colleagues to implement change strategies and processes in relation to the risk management programme at the Outdoor Education Group. However, I also realized that I needed to attain some formal qualifications in the area I was now specializing in. I wanted to be able to really influence risk management practice, both internally and externally. I went on to complete an MS in Risk, Crisis, and Disaster Management at the University of Leicester, United Kingdom.

My master's degree experience would lead to significant developments in my outlook and my practice. My mind was once again expanded through the benefits of exploring beyond my field. The subject of risk communication, the focus of my thesis, has since become an important and more considered aspect of the sector's risk management practices. My desire to enable the key aspects of this topic to become understood within a practical perspective has helped it evolve into part of many organizations' risk management considerations.

Without doubt, attaining my master's degree and publishing the findings of my research became the most important action I took to be able to start to influence the risk management dialogue in Australia. After publishing, I started to receive invites to present at conferences and workshops throughout Australia and overseas. I was asked to sit on government and industry committees in relation to safety guidelines development, as well as consult to independent school associations and perform expert witness duties. All these experiences, however valuable and relevant to my work, could never have prepared me for the heart-breaking reality of another tragedy, one that would again change many lives, forever.

## Tragedy

At 12:45 a.m. on August 31, 2005, almost three years after my arrival in Australia, I received the phone call that every outdoor professional dreads—the call that informs you that the absolute worst has occurred, and that it happened on your watch. One of our students, a sixteen-year old young woman named Alice, had tragically lost her life when a tree fell on her tent whilst camping as part of her school outdoor education programme.

Five years earlier, I had been a field staff member when Laura lost her life. Now, here I was standing in very different shoes as the person ultimately responsible for risk management. Alice's death was absolutely devastating. Her parents and sisters had lost a beautiful daughter and elder sister. Her family, friends, and whole school community had lost a young woman with everything to live for. Our organization experienced a loss and grief that we had never previously known. Our staff team were numb.

In the days and weeks following Alice's death, my job, as risk manager, was to gather huge amounts of documentation and collect accounts

of the circumstances surrounding the accident from multiple people. My colleagues and I gave interviews to the police as well as the investigators sent by the workplace health and safety regulator and the various other investigation bodies.

I read the newspaper blog sites, which were quick to judge and blame. Criticism was levelled squarely and directly at our feet. How could it be any different? A young woman had just lost her life and her family forever impacted by her loss. I knew and felt that ultimately, as the risk manager, I had failed. I blamed myself and ruminated repeatedly on every detail associated with that programme. I froze when hearing the wind blowing outside. I couldn't bring myself to go camping for several years.

## Recovery

I refused to get counselling, even when it was offered to me. I just couldn't. I felt such shame at what had happened, and I had no idea how to resolve it. I just knew I could not talk to a stranger about it.

That was until the network of professionals that I had so strongly relied on for my professional growth rallied around me. They emailed, they called, and they supported. It took a couch, a foreign country, and my mentor Deb Ajango sitting me down and telling me to start talking, to get it out. Deb was a member of the dreaded "club," those risk managers that had experienced tragedy, and between her and Preston Cline, another member of that "club," I was encouraged to talk, cry, and then talk some more. When I was done talking, I would start again.

With such strong feelings of shame and loss, I wasn't sure, yet again, if I could keep doing this work. I was terrified that it would happen again and I didn't know if I really believed in outdoor education anymore. I wasn't sure I could cope if that call ever came again. Even writing those words now, I feel shallow. How could I think about whether I could cope, when I wasn't a parent or a sibling who had just lost their child and sister?

Although I looked for every other job under the sun, at one stage considering doing risk management in war zones or even making coffee for a living, my heart and soul gently navigated me back to the outdoors. I knew, though, that yet again a change was occurring within me, within my practice. Alice's death was a tragic accident, but I also knew that we needed to learn everything we could from it, and I knew these lessons needed to be shared. Elements of outdoor education that had previously not received much discussion in our management of programmes, such as programme design, weather warning processes, crisis management, and campsite selection needed to be talked about openly in a wider context with colleagues.

I had to put myself out front again, to stand my ground and be prepared for some to judge me, if that is what they desired. I had the full support of my organization and my colleagues to tell the story, the good and the bad. The failures and the learnings. Alice's death would galvanize me, yet again, into further education.





## The PhD

The idea of a PhD was foreign to me growing up, so much so that it was never even considered. In fact, a failed national exam at the age of 11 would have likely signed my fate to a formal education that would have ceased at age 16. Had it not been for very determined parents and some wonderful teachers, I would never have had enough grades to leave Northern Ireland for undergraduate studies in Wales and Canada.

In the months and years following Alice's death, I became very interested in, and wanted to understand better, how as a profession we can identify and assess risks that may be present throughout the entire design, development, and delivery of outdoor education experiences. I wanted to see if we could make risk assessment less of a compliance tick-box exercise, and more of a meaningful process that identifies and prevents harm to our participants and staff.

Yet again, I felt it was important to look beyond our own profession and explore what other domains could teach us about the variety of factors influencing accidents and, in turn, challenge us to consider attempting to prevent injury-causing incidents. I wanted to seek out and work with world-leading researchers in the field of human factors, a discipline that is concerned with understanding human behaviour and the many things that influence it. I was tired of seeing reports of incidents, newspaper stories, or coroners' reports that repeatedly assigned blame to an individual teacher or instructor following incidents. I now knew, firsthand, twice over, that there was much more complexity to the story. I felt that if we could have better, more meaningful ways to identify and assess the sources of risk across the entire programme (those associated, for example, with policies and procedures development, school preparation of students, or location and activity selection), that we could look at ways to better prevent those sources. Such factors were commonly identified in accident causation reports as being influential; therefore, they must also be relevant in accident prevention. It felt to me, however, that as a profession we lacked the tools and the methods with which to identify, assess, and openly discuss them.

Of course, not everyone agrees with such an approach. There are still some who adopt the view that if you train an instructor or teacher well enough, the rest is up to them. If something goes wrong, the blame is with them and they should face the consequences. My view could not be more opposite. I feel strongly that by getting rid of the blame approach, people throughout organizations will be more open, investigations will garner more vital information about contributory factors, and consequently, we will learn more about the issues across the outdoor education/recreation system that influence behaviour. When we understand these better, we can address them throughout the system.

I also wanted to understand and find ways to better look after our own when bad incidents occur. The term "second victims" was first used in healthcare to describe professionals whose job it was to protect patients in their care but whose patients were unfortunately in some way harmed. In my view, our profession is full of "second victims" and we need to do a much better and more consistent job of genuinely being there for them before, during, and after incidents. My curiosity and genuine desire to help find better ways of both identifying and managing risks associated with the hugely important work we do gets me out of bed every day.

I want and need to look back on my career and feel that I have,

as best as I possibly can, honoured the legacies of Laura and Alice and the others who have lost their lives on the programmes our profession plans and conducts. To me, honouring their legacies necessitates that we both look after and look beyond individuals in the field as sources of blame and instead focus on the whole process of planning, development, and delivery of the programme.


## A Way Forward

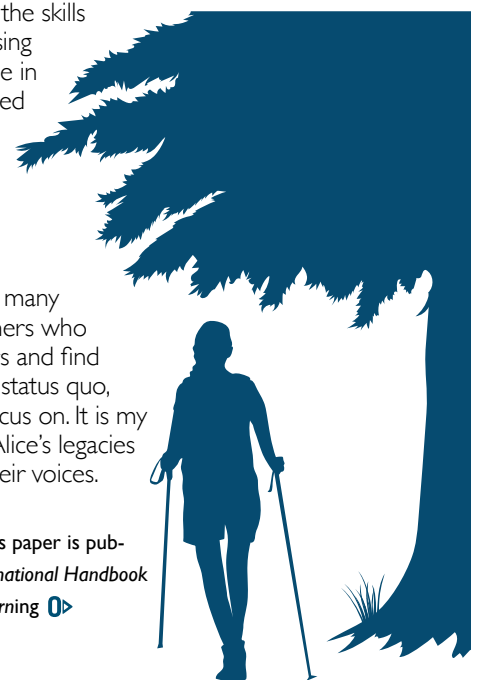
It took me 16 years to return to the place where Laura lost her life that June day in 2000. Standing there in quiet contemplation, I reflected on how much had changed in those intervening years. Although 16 years had passed, the eastern hemlocks continued to offer their protective cover overhead and the trail remained as rocky and narrow as I remembered; yet everything else had changed. Looking down on the water, I realized I was a very different person to the one who found herself there that day many years ago. Laura's death had catapulted me in a direction I could never have predicted.

The tragic loss of both Laura and Alice had to mean something, and for me it meant that I wanted to help contribute to continuously improving risk management within our profession. I wanted to find ways to better understand and improve our management of the variety of factors that contribute to both safety and accidents, and to ensure we also care for everyone involved. I was honoured, and remain so, to receive the support of wonderful mentors and friends, positioned all over the world, who back then challenged me to become the best I could be in a career that lacked a clear map or set of coordinates. I am immensely grateful to those people and to the many authors of books and proceedings that led me into the specialized domain of outdoor risk management.

These days, I also consider it my duty to give back and to share what I've learned. What will continue to drive and inspire me is that I firmly remain a committed advocate of the positive outcomes our profession can deliver to the lives and experiences of our students. Our world is constantly changing; social, political, and environmental challenges dominate our attention for kind, creative, collaborative, and innovative approaches. Never more so than today do our young people require the skills to navigate the increasing uncertainty and change in their lives. Well-managed and planned outdoor education/recreation experiences can help them develop those skills.

Our profession needs many more young practitioners who seek out their mentors and find ways to challenge the status quo, whatever area they focus on. It is my hope that Laura and Alice's legacies also help them find their voices.

The original version of this paper is published in the *Palgrave International Handbook of Women and Outdoor Learning* 



# ANOTHER YEAR OF GROWTH FOR OUTWARD BOUND OMAN

*Mark Evans reports on another busy year of progress for OBO, with royal visits, the delivery of the first courses for Omani young people experiencing mental well-being issues, and the opening of a second national training centre and headquarters.*

With seed funding from the legal firm Dentons, from Shell, and from Omani businessman Sheikh Suhail Bahwan, and by way of small beginnings operating out of a tiny donated office in Madinat Qaboos with equipment stored in a 40-ft container in the Ghala industrial area, things have evolved rapidly for Outward Bound in Oman in the last ten years.

As the first Outward Bound operation in any Arabic speaking nation, OBO's success has acted as a catalyst for similar operations to start up in both the UAE and more recently in Bahrain, where His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Al Khalifa, son of the Crown Prince, has been appointed as the Patron of the embryonic Outward Bound Bahrain—which is, like the UAE, being mentored by Outward Bound Oman.

OBO now employs 34 full time staff, and since starting in May 2009 has helped shape the lives of nearly 16,000 people through challenging outdoor courses in the desert or the mountains.

One fortunate group found themselves with a special guest dropping in three days into their course in the spectacular Wadi Arbeieen. Eighteen unemployed job seekers on a course supported by HSBC Oman had the opportunity to spend an hour with HRH The Duke of Cambridge, who helicoptered in from Muscat and then drove on rough tracks to the roadhead from where, after a typical Omani welcome in an outdoor majlis (meeting place), he walked to meet the team as they prepared for the penultimate challenge of their four-day course, which was to construct a self-supporting bridge. The Duke







sat with groups of participants and discussed issues of employment and employability, before getting involved in the (thankfully) successful construction, much to the delight of all, including His Royal Highness.

Sultan Haitham bin Tarik Al Said formally opened OBO's first national training centre in the Sharqiya Sands in March 2018, and with much hard work and the generosity of His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Said bin Saif Al Kalbani, Minister of Social Development, a second training centre has recently opened in the capital city of Muscat on a site located close to Sultan Qaboos University.

Located just 15 minutes from the international airport, the centre serves as an administrative headquarters and central equipment stores, as well as an urban training facility, boasting two fully equipped indoor training rooms, a 60-person lecture theatre, and an indoor climbing wall.

Like the desert centre, the new facility was designed by Muscat-based design consultancy 23 Degrees North. Nadia Maqbool, architect and founding partner, describes some of the thinking behind the eye-catching design: "The Outward-Bound HQ is embedded within the

vibrant urban community of Al Khoud 6 in Muscat. The building has already sparked the imagination and curiosity of its neighbours who see it as a magnet for community activity.

"Inspired by the courtyard typology and the memories of learning and playing under the sky and trees, the building revolves around a central shaded courtyard where the OBO community can get together in an accessible comfortable outdoor environment designed for both informal and formal activities. Arranged around the courtyard are the administrative, training, and ancillary spaces. They all enjoy direct views of the community and easy access to the courtyard. The OBO HQ reinforces the belief that the inner 'courtyard' cannot function without the structure and resources around it, conversely these very structures and resources cannot thrive without being in the inner heart of the courtyard".

One of the first courses delivered at the new centre was for young Omanis experiencing challenges with anxiety and depression. Supported by a grant from the Anglo-Omani Society in London, OBO Learning and Adventure Manager Sokayna El Haddad was able to spend a week in 2019 working with The Wilderness Foundation, a



UK charity whose stated mission is to harness the power of the wilderness to transform vulnerable lives and empower people to conserve nature. The foundation does some outstanding work with young people in the UK experiencing mental well-being issues and Sokayna was able to shadow a group on a course on Loch Lomond. What she learned from the trip enabled OBO to design and roll out the first course for young Omanis experiencing similar challenges.

The course was generously supported by BAE Systems in Oman, an organization that has won several UK awards for its innovative approach to mental well-being at the workplace, and has now been adapted further to run indoors and be more accessible to more young people in and around Muscat.

If the past year has been busy, the coming one seems likely to be no less so. Thanks to the generosity of the Ministry of Oil and Gas Social Development Committee, funding has been secured to construct a third training centre. Located at nearly 8,000 ft. on Jebel Akhdhar, on land provided by the Ministry of Education, this centre will have the capacity to operate year-round and will enable Outward Bound Oman to work with even greater numbers of young people, ensuring that young Omanis have the skills, attitude, and ethics to help make the Oman Vision 2040 development strategy a reality. [O►](#)





# THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUTWARD BOUND CANADA AT 50

By Robert Wallis (OB Canada), Miles Minichiello, and Nevin Harper (School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria), with thanks to Art Rogers for interviews, notes, and archives.



## LEGEND

- ① RECEPTION BUILDING
- ② VISITOR ACCOMODATION
- ③ ADMINISTRATION BLK
- ④ STAFF COMPLEX
- ⑤ PATROL CABIN
- ⑥ SICKBAY
- ⑦ KITCHEN-DINING COMF
- ⑧ CANOE REPAIR SHOP
- ⑨ POOL
- ⑩ GARAGE



Outward Bound

Canada turned 50 years old in 2019. Part of the celebrations and recollections involved me delving into the past and discovering our roots in Canada, from even before that first expedition in Keremeos which set out on June 30, 1969. This account outlines the beginnings of Outward Bound in Canada, starting with the Canadian Outward Bound Mountain School (COBMS) in Keremeos, to the start of the Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School (COBWS), and on to Outward Bound becoming a national entity.

It's funny how the longer you stay with an organisation (or with anything), the more time seems to contract. When I joined Outward Bound Canada in 2011, we had recently come through a tumultuous time, having had to close our last owned centre at Chetwynd, Ontario, to avoid financial catastrophe. As we battened down the hatches and leaned into the waves to build the organisation up again, two years previous seemed like ancient history. And now here I am contemplating the founding of Outward Bound Canada, 50-plus years ago, which now seems not too far off or very long ago!

One reason for this could be that, in some ways, fifty years ago was not that different: the same pedagogy; the same 'tenacity and fortitude'; the same inspired, hard-working selfless attitudes behind building up something that we believed in. One thing that is different, though, is the network of individuals we have built up, who we are realising have never really left Outward Bound—those instructors and participants that OBC means so much to. For example, Wendy Talbot, an intern in our first year in eastern Canada (Homeplace: see later in article, The Eastern School: COBWS)) around 1976 became program director ten years later, and Bob Maxwell, who started as an instructor in 1994, travelled 10,000 miles to reconnect, share, and reminisce at our recent Ontario staff reunion event.

The following details have been collected from interviews with Art Rogers, articles written about John Hasell, and an enormous amount of work by Miles Minichiello and Dr. Nevin Harper of the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria. I have tried to summarise without losing either accuracy or interest. I hope I have not misrepresented anyone during this process. I certainly cannot do full justice to the hard work and faith of the folks who started Outward Bound in Canada, and those of us who currently fan the flames are incredibly grateful to those who lit that spark so many years ago.

## International Roots

Back on July 20, 1960, Kurt Hahn addressed the Annual Meeting of the OB Trust. (It's a great speech—look it up!) In it, he says, "Mr. Chairman, I consider that Outward Bound is at the crossroads today. Will you be satisfied for your five schools to continue improving their practices as they are doing? Will you be satisfied to increase at a slow and safe rate the number of new schools, or will you hear the cry for help from bewildered and frustrated youths all over the world and accept a missionary assignment?" Shortly after this, OB began to spread rapidly, with schools already being formed in Germany and Kenya, and later in Colorado and at Hurricane Island, Maine, in the US. And so it was in Canada, too.

## Formation

By the mid-1960s there were four groups wishing to set up OB in Canada—in the Provinces of Quebec, two in Alberta (in the town of Hinton and one connected to the Boy Scouts in Calgary), and in British Columbia (BC). However, it was the BC group that managed to attract two former instructors of the OB Mountain School at Eskdale in the UK, Art Rogers and Mike Perry, who had the tenacity to get things moving. On September 9, 1966, the Outward Bound Trust of British Columbia (OBTBC) was registered. Art Rogers took over full leadership that November and persuaded the other western Canada groups to get behind the BC school.

In the Chairman's report within the 1967 feasibility study for the school

(composed by Art Rogers and Mike Perry), Art Rogers writes:

"When I relate to you our endeavours in getting OBC off the ground I am reminded of something that Bill Tillman related one time. He had given a lecture about his various adventures and expeditions of the time and after he had spoken he was asked a question by a young man, 'What do you have to do to go on an expedition?', Tillman exclaimed in his own laconic way; 'Just buy a good pair of boots and go!'"

Edward W. Dawson, then executive director of OB Trust, remarked when meeting the OBTBC committee on December 2, 1967, how young, enthusiastic, and determined the group was to observe OB principles."

From Art:

"What I would like to emphasize is that we were young and yet had the temerity to make a major decision to run three full courses for young men in 1969 starting from scratch and knowing the risks involved. We had done numerous trips into the Cathedral Lakes area to determine the possibility of operating there and found it a pristine environment for our operations. We knew full well the risks involved in ploughing ahead. However this being OB we decided to meet head-on the various challenges facing us, which seem enormous now. The more Mike and I saw of the mountains and the Cathedral Lakes area, the more confident we became."

Outward Bound schools were established to help young men to discover and develop their own abilities by confronting the demands of a seemingly unfriendly environment. From service comes a sense of concern for others. From hardship and danger comes self-reliance. From adventure and excitement comes a new interest in life and as the challenges increase in severity, a keen sense of inward strength is born. Such self-discovery is a powerful antidote for the indulgence, the indifference and the indolence so common to our soft and highly materialistic way of living.

## The Site

An old ranch site had been approved at Keremeos, BC, running along the Similkameen River and for a mile along Hwy 3, with a convenient bus stop at its gate. The land had a very attractive crag which they called 'Old Tom Crag' (complete with rattlesnakes). Adjacent, the Flume (an aqueduct) supplied the school and valley with beautiful clear water from across the river. Part of the property had been used to grow marijuana, and when preparing the site, the staff burned the crops not knowing what they were, much to the chagrin of the locals who had planted the weed!

## Construction

The Board was an active bunch. In a 2018 interview Art Rogers mentioned that a requirement to be on the Board was that one must be able to do "real work" such as cutting trees, chopping firewood, and help with general school maintenance. In Vancouver, Mike Perry designed and oversaw the cutting and stitching of canvas for tents for 40 students and 12 staff, plus a larger dining tent, while at base camp of the Keremeos school. Permission was given to mill the lumber from the local lodgepole pine forest for the poles. To save money on the ropes course, Board members from Vancouver went down to the harbour and sourced rope from various different docks. Bonds between local ranchers and OB board and staff members were formed over pints in the local pub in that first year.



## Programming

At the same time, parties of instructors were sent out to familiarize themselves with the trail systems around nearby Cathedral Lakes and into the mountains. They located good rock climbing crags and established challenging but relatively safe routes suitable for inexperienced climbers. A couple of Board members had worked at the mill at Fernie, BC, and were able to borrow boxes of hard hats for the rock-climbing students.

## Personnel

Instructors and school directors from Ullswater, the Devon school, and Aberdovey in Wales were head-hunted to fill the OBTBC School Director position from the UK. However, it seems it was a good time to be in the OB Trust, as there was stiff competition from many OB schools wishing to hire them internationally, especially from the more established US schools. Hiring proved so difficult that the first pilot programs planned for 1968 were delayed a year.

OBTBC was determined to run three pilot courses in the summer of 1969 so as not to lose the momentum gained over the last four years, and especially after the tremendous interest generated by an article in the March issue of *Readers Digest*, after which the OBTBC office received 200 letters of interest in two weeks (while OB Inc. in the US was receiving 500 letters a day!). By early 1969, both an Executive Secretary, John Joseph Christian, and School Director were found, the latter being Major John Antony Hasell, coming at the recommendation of Brigadier John A. Marchant, who had first accepted, but then declined the position in November. John Hasell soon became executive director in 1971 to focus on fundraising and recruitment, and Geoff Evans—a former Phys. Ed. teacher, who served as an instructor at the OB Mountain School in the English Lake District and later at the Minnesota OB School (now Voyageur OB School)—became school director.

## Finances

Initial funding was garnered from three investors—Mr. Clyne, Mr. Richardson, and Judge Norris—who between them donated \$13,000 to proceed with the development; and later, with help from MacMillan Bloedel Limited and BC Telephone Company, the land at Keremeos was negotiated on a three-year lease at \$300 per month with an option to purchase for \$30,000.

The budget of the school had tripled in the first three years of operation, and by 1971 the name was changed to the Canadian Outward Bound Mountain School (COBMS). The hope was that having a national name would attract donations from national companies.

## The first course

It all came together just in time for the first students in June 1969.

From Art's account:

"Needless to say, it didn't all go according to plan. Right off the bat within the first two days of starting the first course a forest fire broke



out near Penticton. What could we do? Our motto of 'To serve, to strive and not to yield' was to be severely tested. In retrospect we could not have wished for a more real emergency to test the mettle of the students (aged 16–21). For a few days they worked on the fire lines under our first Chief Instructor Colin Bolton, an OB instructor from England via Australia [currently working for Zen Quest Adventures in Hong Kong], under the experienced eye of the Penticton Fire Chief."

Three courses ran that summer, each servicing a different age group of young males. The June 30 to July 27 course was for 17–23 year olds, the August 4 to 31 course for 15–17 year olds, and the September 8 to October 5 course for those aged 21–28. Ninety-six students participated on these courses.

Colin Bolton was assisted by instructors John Wright, Jack Miles, and Terry Rollerson. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) sponsored a participant who would record interviews and conversations with staff and students, unbeknownst to the other participants. (This journalist's son is now a prominent member of OBC's current Board of Directors!) This would be then turned into a CBC Radio program that was broadcast across BC. The *Canadian Magazine* asked three students to keep journals, which were then turned into an article for their November 1969 issue. At the end of the summer, all three courses were deemed very successful.

Prince Philip agreed to be the patron of Outward Bound Trust of British Columbia (which as noted was later renamed to Canadian Outward Bound Mountain School) in April of 1969. After much organization, he also met with the executives and two students at the Hotel Vancouver on October 30, 1969, following the summer pilot courses. Present at the meeting were Art Rogers, Chairman; John Joseph Christian, Executive Secretary; John Hasell, School Director; Glen Evans, a student on the July course, and Jon King, a student on the August course. The meeting was very lively and included the Prince cautioning Rogers about the use of horses as part of the school, saying that his wife was quite keen on horses but that he greatly disliked them. The audience was scheduled for twenty minutes, but after an hour the Prince's staff came in to take him to another commitment. In reflecting on his meetings with

the Duke of Edinburgh, Rogers found that Prince Philip was always very interested and informed on OB. These meetings produced lively discussion that always went over their intended time limit.

For several years COBMS, also known as the western school, continued to grow, expanding programs to work with public school districts. Fundraising was a key focus, along with continuing to improve the site. COBMS was running girls' courses, winter courses, and graduate courses consisting of a week of whitewater paddling and culminating with a surf kayaking trip on Long Beach on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Many of these former students paddled kayaks or canoes that they had made, as Geoff Evans had incorporated canoe and kayak building into the COBMS courses. Simon Fraser University also ran a study on how an OB course affected high school boys' attendance, grades, and leadership. With the addition of winter courses COBMS had reached their goal of being a permanent, full-time school with programs running all through the year.

A central focus of COBMS was that an OB course would introduce boys to people from different backgrounds, religions, or social classes. The bursary fund was important so that this could happen. The BC Minister of Education at the time, L.R. Peterson, wrote that Outward Bound was an education institution of significance in BC, and praised the great work they were doing.

Some standard features of these early courses were a morning run and swim, a moment of silence before meals, and a 'quiet walk' when students arrived at the school. Hasell described a quiet walk he led for a group of Capilano College students at their weekend retreat. He began with a lecture and slideshow of the principles and history of OB. Upon finishing he invited students outside for a walk, which soon turned into a run and, after approaching a river, Hasell jumped in and swam across with several students following. These students were then tasked with getting the rest of the students across the river. Once everyone was across, the group continued their run to a cliff face which they proceeded to rappel down. And so the course was introduced!

By 1973, COBMS had finished all of their planned improvements to the school site, with summer student accommodations allowing for 60 students at a time and 30 students during winter courses, a dining hall and auditorium, and a three-bay service garage (complete with hoists!), a shower block, a water and sewer system, an on-site office, and even a rose garden. The school owned a duplex in Keremeos for senior school officials, where Geoff Evans and Adrian Todd lived with their families.

After the 1973 season, Geoff Evans decided to leave OB to take a teaching position at the Keremeos High School. A COBMS newsletter wrote that this new job would allow Geoff more time for his "other interests like falling off horses, Sitzmark skiing, and breeding an ever growing pack of disobedient dogs." Adrian Todd was appointed as the new school director, a position he held until 1987.

Bob Cuthbert and Howie Richardson, two of the COBMS instructors at this time, were members of a Canadian expedition to Patagonia, while Judy Cook, another instructor, was a member of the Canadian Alpine Club's expedition to Peru.

Also in 1973 John Hasell began his own Channel 10 cable TV program where he interviewed someone on OB every week, and Notre Dame University was so impressed with the COBMS program that they offered their students a full course credit for anyone completing a program.

In 1976 the Alpine Club of Canada's journal published a story of a failed attempt of the first traverse of McKean Ridge, and the COBMS staff wrote to the publication and club to inform them that over 300 COBMS students had completed the traverse over the last seven years. This was also the year that Martin Hendy, Director of Recreation at Simon Fraser University, was elected Chairman. Hendy described himself as "the first Outward Bound success story," as he had started as a participant, became an assistant instructor, progressed to instructor, course director, interim program director, then council member, and now Chairman. This year also saw a COBMS film aired on the CBC program *Cross Country Checkup*. COBMS was in a strong financial position, and had over 700 students a year.



### **The Eastern School: COBWS (Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School)**

In 1974 Bob Pieh, a professor of education at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, who also started the Minnesota OB School, and Kirk Whipper, a University of Toronto faculty member, had contacted the Outward Bound Trust of British Columbia about running mobile OB courses in Ontario. However, the OBTBC Council thought that a more traditional OB school such as Keremeos was more desirable. In April of that year, the Steering Committee for Outward Bound of Ontario (OBO) met, including Kirk Whipper (Chairman), Mike Exall, John Ardill, Bob Woodburn, Alice Casselman (Executive Secretary), and John Hasell. OBTBC deemed it imperative that a national body be in place if there were to be two schools in Canada.



Bob Pieh and Margueritta Kluensch, also a professor of education at Queen's University, were given permission to begin plans for an Ontario school and would receive financial support from OBC, through COBMS, with the first courses of COBWS located at Black Sturgeon Lake in northwestern Ontario under their directorship. They had located and secured a lease for a former forestry research centre located approximately 90 miles from Thunder Bay. The site had all of the necessary buildings for an OB school and was available at no cost to OB. Outward Bound Ontario was incorporated as a separate entity from OB British Columbia and OB Canada, with its own Board of Trustees, and was tasked with managing the Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School, or COBWS.

The centre was named Homeplace—the same name given to the Voyageur Outward Bound School in Minnesota, also founded by Bob Pieh 13 years earlier. In that first year, COBWS ran nine courses from April to September. The area around Black Sturgeon Lake was perfect for extended canoe tripping—including challenging portages—and in subsequent years dogsledding expeditions throughout the winter. Bob's daughter Wendy Pieh was the first program director, and one of the first interns was Wendy Talbot, who stayed at Homeplace for over ten years, working her way up to program director. I had the pleasure of meeting Wendy Talbot in September 2019 at the Ontario staff reunion.

With the opening of Homeplace, Outward Bound began its national presence, being accessible to students from both western and eastern Canada. However, it would be a long time before the schools joined under a single organization.

## Outward Bound Canada

As early as 1969 OB Trust and other interested groups in Canada dreamed of creating a national organization, holding the first National Conference of Outward Bound in Canada on July 9, 1969, at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario (while the first course 'KI' was underway!). Sir Spencer Summers, British MP and chairman of the OB Trust Management Committee, had been in contact with seven groups interested in starting schools in provinces across Canada. Yet this initial project eventually failed for various reasons as the COBMS took hold.

By 1976, COBMS at Keremeos was in such good hands under Adrian Todd in the senior executive position that Art Rogers and John Hasell made a second attempt at creating a national organization of OB in Canada, both resigning from the council to devote more time to it. Art Rogers was made a lifetime member of OBTBC, and John Hasell, as the front man for OB Canada nationally, was to take some time traveling the world to promote Outward Bound. John was involved with Outward Bound internationally for over 40 years, receiving the OBI Distinguished Service Award (see 2012 OBI Journal, p. 57) shortly before his death in December 2011.

OBC was intended to focus on national fundraising, promotion, and student recruitment, as well as financial support for the eastern and western schools. However, there was much debate on whether it should use a centralized model like the OB Trust in the UK or a decentralized model like OB Inc. in the US. COBMS and COBWS could not agree and more time and energy needed to be devoted



to their schools, so by 1986 the second attempt at creating a national entity also failed.

It was some 15 years before the western and eastern schools were merged under the umbrella of Outward Bound Canada (OBC) in 2001. OBC now comprises six centres nationally: wilderness bases on Vancouver Island, in the Rocky Mountains, in Ontario North, and in Atlantic Canada. Additionally there are two urban centres in Vancouver and Toronto, and the NEST, the National Expeditionary Support Team, which I am part of, aptly named as we share our 16th floor with a family of peregrine falcons! Outward Bound Canada has the largest coverage of any Outward Bound school system, from coast to coast—and with one of the leanest staff teams too.

There is much more to be told of the history of Outward Bound in Canada, with more details of Homeplace and subsequent centres at Pemberton, Chetwynd, and others, each with their own fascinating stories engrained in the memories of staff and the over 150,000 students who have completed an OB course in Canada. Those stories may come out in future articles, or, more likely, around campfires across the country as we continue to host reunion weekends for participants and staff alike.

And for those who seem to be tied more and more to an office desk like me, it's good to remember: all you need to do to go on an expedition is "just buy a good pair of boots and go"! ▶

# SIMPLY SUSTAINABILITY:

Where Is That Magic Wand?

By Jason Ong

The word sustainability is often heard in today's demanding world. Though the concept may seem simple enough to understand, many people and organizations define it differently. To start us off, let me share what I found on the internet:



For a business, sustainability would probably mean an idea or plan to align practices, adopt strategies, and embrace changes (and other activities) in ways that benefit and meet the needs of a business (and its stakeholders) while protecting and enhancing the people, environment, and natural resources into the future. This proposition I truly believe applies strongly to Outward Bound. We cannot meet the demands of the 21st century without constant thought, planning, and adaptation.

## A STARTING POINT

As with any business, before everything else an OB school should have a business plan. A model. A description or layout for how your school will become viable. A business plan shows the delivery route of your value to your customers at an appropriate cost, and a well thought out one is crucial to the life of a business. While there should not be a single process for creating a business plan, "The 7 Elements of a Strong Business Model", an article by Larry Alton on entrepreneur.com, gives a good example:

- Identify your specific audience
- Establish business processes
- Record key business resources
- Develop a strong value proposition
- Determine key business partners
- Create a demand generation strategy
- Leave room for innovation

I've seen businesses start with no or very poor business plans countless times. It's as if somehow these people expect everything to magically fall into place. They might say that their business will definitely work because of this demand or that demographic. Well, the harsh truth is that it does not! In the movie World War Z, Ludi Boeken, who plays Jurgen Warmburn, the Mossad chief, explains a system

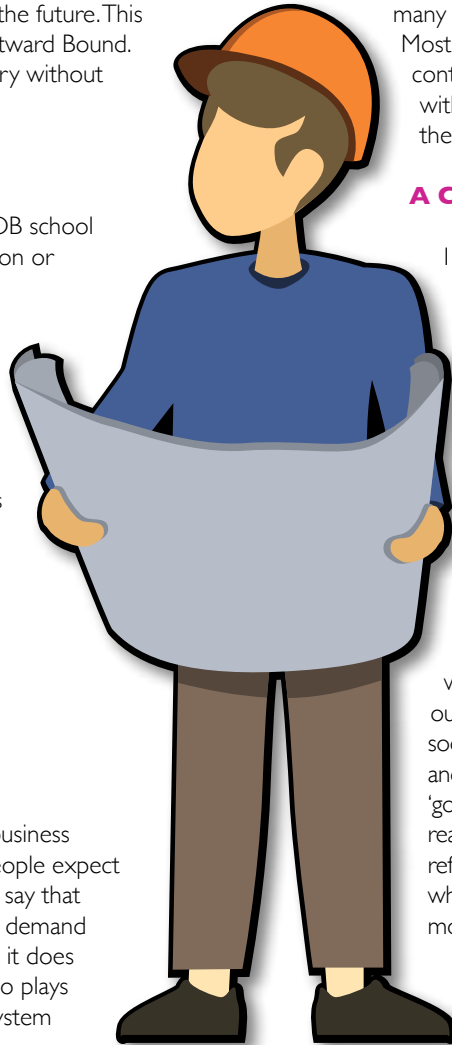
where ten high-ranking individuals are pooled to take every threat seriously. If nine agree to dismiss it, it is the duty of the tenth person to investigate further; even if the threat seems foolish. This is known as the tenth man rule! But as much as we wish to use this practice in each and every decision we make, it's never easy to do. Businesses always face the trade-off between what they would like to do and what they must do in pursuit of financial survival. While businesses traditionally seek precision and practicality as a basis for planning, a business plan needs to be flexible and dynamic. We would need not just a plan A but a B and a C and, if possible, all of the available alphabet as well. We need to look at both short- and long-term plans. We need to be ready for changes over time in response to increasing and evolving information and demands.

A good example would be the COVID-19 outbreak, which is ongoing as I write this. It has caught many businesses by surprise and many are still puzzled as to the next course of action. Most are fighting for survival and do not have any contingencies in place. Many businesses are now faced with financial difficulties and the ability to react fast is the key to sustainability.

## A CASE STUDY

I recently took a trip to a Bangkok, Thailand, as part of a management consulting team. The business we were working with is in hospitality. At that time (and for several subsequent weeks) hotel room sales were near zero occupancy due to the COVID-19 pandemic and there was no way for the owners to sustain their business in the longer term. They just couldn't afford to pay the fixed cost and would probably have had to close their business within six months.

Now, what would you do if you were in their shoes? Would you choose to run the business on a smaller scale (i.e., close a few floors and operate with only minimal staff and fewer food and beverages outlets) and hope for the global epidemic to fade soon, or would you close the business completely and wait? While there may not be a best solution or a 'go-to' answer for this, the owners took a step back and realized that now would be a good time to reorganize, refurbish, and renovate the premises for a fresh start when the storm clears. Of course there will be many more factors to consider, but the thing here which I would like to emphasize is that we must all learn to adapt to change. Embrace it!





## ADOPTING STRATEGIES: DATA AND METRICS

As boring as they sound, data and metrics are actually great in building up strategies and ensuring sustainability. As Sun Tzu the ancient Chinese military strategist puts it in *The Art of War*: "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."

Raw data input into a table or other metrics give a clearer picture of what is happening within a business, the next appropriate step for that business (and also which steps to avoid), and the business's destination. There are many different metrics which a business owner may adopt to assist in developing their business, including a competitive analysis, client analysis, trend-based analysis, a programme impact study, and many others. Being able to track developments enables owners to see the larger picture and not get sidetracked by the day-to-day issues of management. Thus, data and metrics are essential for creating or refocusing a business plan and also for ensuring the sustainability of a business. Remember, a great business is almost always run by a great team, and the only way to improve is through measurement. Good metrics should be actionable.

Metrics are also great tools for knowing your competitors and clients: what they have, what they are doing or planning, their distribution channels, their ... well, basically everything. With them, you can get to know (and understand) the people you will be dealing with, their needs, work culture, and training and staff development trends. Imagine you are assigned to approach a company for a sales call or to ask them for some funds for a charitable programme at your school. Wouldn't it be better if you knew their training needs, or how they have allocated for their training budget? If you knew their corporate social responsibilities (CSR) allocated funds and who they have been assisting, their current projects and trends? Maybe these others are looking for new ideas for their CSR projects, and perhaps the opportunity to sponsor some orphaned or under-privileged children to an Outward Bound course may be just what they are looking for.

Have fun with your metrics and remember the advice of William McDonough, the co-author of *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*, "... sustainability takes forever. And that's the point." No one can develop sustainable practices or a sustainable outlook without knowing their business, clients, and competition inside and out, and data and metrics are designed for just that.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

As an Outward Bounder, I will always stress the importance of sustainability in our environment! We are in a very unique business. We use the outdoors often as our classroom. Therefore it is very important that we do our part in ensuring it will still be there in years to come. This is the same with any business but business owners often just haven't realised it yet.

In any sustainability strategy there should be focus on economy, environment, and society. Once these elements are brought into balance by a business plan and business philosophy, sustainability will be achieved. Failure usually happens when a business gets greedy and

creates more supply than demand, usually in the form of unnecessary wastage of natural resources. Jungles and forests are often cleared more than is needed and rivers badly polluted.

In Outward Bound, we should all strive towards environmental sustainability, from the principles of Leave No Trace, to avoidance or total ban in single-use plastics, to ensuring our campsites are clean and refuse and waste properly disposed of. Could you imagine what our environment would look like if we didn't? How long would we have to look for a replacement campsite or hiking trail or, worse, a new centre? And would you dare imagine the headlines or viral news of the dirty, polluted trails and campsites left behind?

Seriously, if you don't like what you see, volunteer and pick up refuse. For things to change, it has to start with us. And if we want to ensure the sustainability of our lovely grounds and environment, make this a daily habit. I have come across some Outward Bound schools which have taken

a step further by creating annual events and, together with the public, spent a day cleaning up trails and beaches. Not only is this a great way to achieve environmental sustainability awareness, it creates public awareness for the Outward Bound school too.

## PEOPLE: THE OTHER SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE

As an Outward Bound Instructor, I truly loved the amazing experiences of working with people, especially youth. I enjoyed the excitement, passion, enthusiasm, energy, spirit, and satisfaction in their eyes. After over 30 years in the industry, I'll often bump into an ex-Outward Bound student, either here in Malaysia or abroad, and what delights me most is that I always hear about their great moments, adventures, and experiences in Outward Bound. Never underestimate the power of these people who have connected to Outward Bound even once. They truly believe in it more than anything else and will keep talking about Outward Bound with passion till the last days of their lives. Pretty soon I believe that everybody around them will catch the passion from them like wildfire.

If you have met V.A. Allan, one of the past wardens of Outward Bound Malaysia, you will be mesmerized when he starts talking about Outward Bound. This man is a legend and has been with Outward Bound Malaysia since the very beginning in the 1950s. Just recently, we arranged an interview with him for our 65th anniversary commemorative book, and when he started talking about Outward Bound, we had excited goosebumps hearing the joy that he had in his years with the Outward Bound circle and how it had stayed with him throughout his life.

Again, we see this sort of reaction countless times when we invite our alumni, our ex-students—and mind you, these alumni are one of our "centers of influence" for sustainability. As I would put it, "we are in the business of creating leaders", and many Outward Bound alumni are now leaders in the corporate world, NGOs, and even government. What we are doing bears fruit. Many of these leaders come back with their children, colleagues, subordinates, and friends as they wish to have them experience an Outward Bound programme like they did. They recognize that Outward Bound programmes provide a unique experience that is even more greatly needed today.

It is the same with Board members, committee members, and even sub-committee members. As we all know, "no man is an island". Therefore, in order to thrive, we play on each other's strengths to ensure sustainability. All of us here who volunteer at Outward Bound Malaysia are proud to sacrifice our time and forgo rest days to help in our own field of expertise. It really works well to not only get things done but to also spread awareness of the importance of Outward Bound. Being part of an OB school which has been around for more than 65 years means we are constantly striving for growth and sustainability. It is not easy constantly looking for 'businesses' (in our terms), yet with a strong team of various voluntary committees in our Board and school management, we are blessed to have come so far.

## EMBRACING CHANGE

A while back, during the Outward Bound Asia Regional Staff Symposium in Hong Kong, a great buddy of mine, Robert James, Outward Bound Malaysia's Head of Training and Staff Development, and I presented on "Back to Basics vs Moving with Times" For those who attended this symposium, you will probably remember that we spoke about many things, but what I would like to highlight here is that I believe that to compete in our market we do not need the state-of-the-art GPS devices instead of a compass while trekking or fire lighters instead of tinder and flint. Why not be different and use something local? It may be the unique experience that is much sought after, especially today; and it might reduce both capital and operational expenditure as well.

Back in September last year, I had the opportunity to be part of the World's Toughest Race, Eco Challenge which was held in Fiji. While there I noticed that during a section of the race the racers would have to sail on a camakau. These are the traditional watercraft of Fiji, similar to outrigger canoes. Ironically, despite the fact that the camakau originates from Fiji, most people there do not know how to use one nor have they even ever seen one—so the people producing the race decided to build the crafts on-site first, to showcase a local flavor and tradition as part of the race. After the race concluded, these lovely boats were left as a gift to the locals who can now sail them in their crystal clear blue waters. I must add that it has been a crowd puller ever since! While it may be nice to have all the latest gadgets in your school, do remember these are just tools for our process, and sometimes moving forward with help from traditional things is rewarding.

Remaining focused is equally important in any business model. Many businesses today deviate somehow from what is trending. Often, many of these deviations are relatively short term and do not bring the desired result, whether in sustainability or finances. There are even businesses which give in to clients' demands rather than standing firm and believing that their product is great. Yes, at times we do have to do some fine-tuning and compromise with our clients; but we should never deviate from our core business. We will most likely lose our identity if we lose focus of our core.

## CRITICAL STEPS

Today, with the help of the internet, you may easily find ways to create the best business model. There are also downloadable tools to help you in your business. Therefore I will not go into much detail on how to determine your audience or find funding. However, I would like to take this opportunity to stress that in every step you plan, make sure that it is something you can act on and achieve. Be flexible to changes along the way and have many contingencies in place. Set periodic goals and make a self-checklist to ensure that you are heading the right way. It's a lot like trekking in the jungle and constantly doing map and compass readings. If there is an obstacle along the way, get around it and come back to the path you desire. If there is a storm, don't just wait for it to pass, but learn to dance in the rain. And in any case, if you are somehow lost (or tired), it's always good to reach out to others to ride the waves. Keep focus on your destination because, as former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger says, "If you do not know where you are going, every road will get you nowhere".

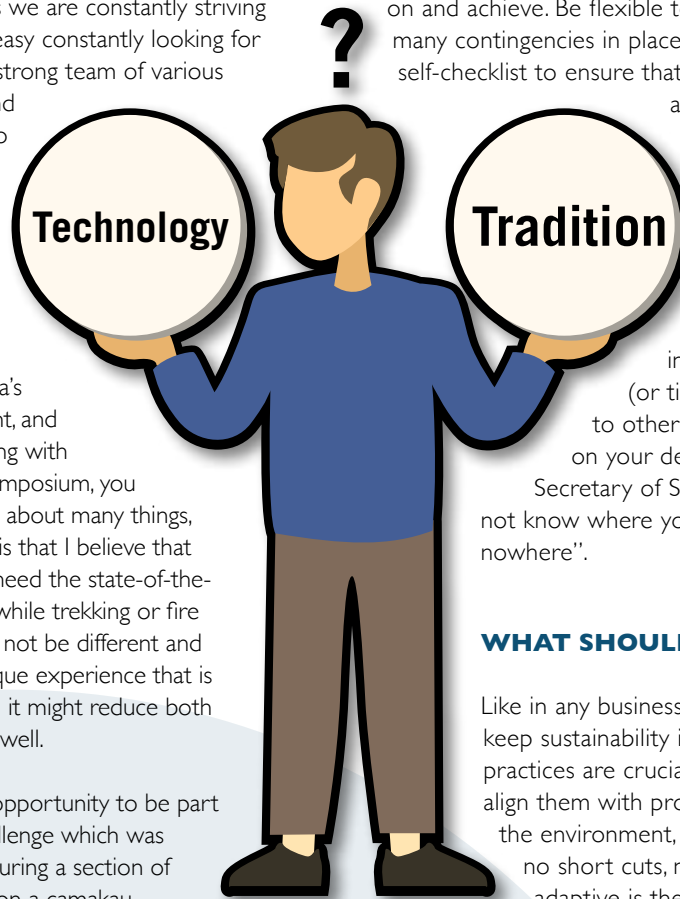
## WHAT SHOULD WE DO FROM HERE?

Like in any business, as we grow we should always keep sustainability in mind. Good sustainable practices are crucial and it is equally important to align them with protecting and enhancing people, the environment, and natural resources. There are no short cuts, no magic wands. Being ready and adaptive is the key. As motivational speaker and author Zig Ziglar says: "Expect the best. Prepare for the worst."

A number of Outward Bound schools have passed or are crossing their 50th year mark. So where do we go from here? My suggestion would always be to keep thinking of the following questions:

- "Will the next 50 years be the same?"
- "How can we improve ourselves and get ready to be desired by the future?"
- "Could we do more?"
- "How can we be sustainable, both viably and financially?"
- "What will be our next steps?"

The same goes for the new Outward Bound schools. Always plan with an end in mind. Act swiftly and grasp as much as possible whenever opportunity knocks. Similarly, the rule of thumb here would be the Scout motto, "Be Prepared". And as Norman Vincent Peale, author of *The Power of Positive Thinking* says, "Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars"—and please do remember in every plan, ensure that it is workable. ▶







# OUTWARD BOUND ASIA REGIONAL STAFF SYMPOSIUM 2020

By Tiffany Fernyhough & Peter Ward, Outward Bound Vietnam

Outward Bound Vietnam hosted the Second Asia Regional Staff Symposium on the weekend of February 7–9, 2020. The flagship OBV base located in Quy Nhon opened its doors in 2016, while our interim base camp in Ha Long has been operational for 10 months. As such, the regional symposium was a great opportunity and challenge for the Outward Bound Vietnam team. With an initial sign-up of 116 delegates from 12 Outward Bound schools, we as a team had our work cut out for us, and that was before the Coronavirus outbreak! As flights turned around midair and some countries imposed travel bans, the Outward Bound community showed true grit with creative rerouting of delegates that saw us welcome more than 75 Outward Bounders on opening day.

As we prepared our interim site for the event, four marquees, twenty-five tents, and six borrowed classrooms from the neighboring Singapore International School joined our three shipping containers. To facilitate this expansion, OBV brought its entire staff team together for the first time. Office staff from Hanoi and operational staff from Quy Nhon flocked to join the team in Ha Long five days before the symposium, working tirelessly to bring it all to life. The buzzing base camp set the scene for informative and invigorating symposium workshops that sought to *create connections, build bridges, and explore possibilities*.

## PRE- AND POST-EVENTS

In addition to last minute adjustments, the pre-symposium excitement continued with two main events. To kick us off, OBV co-instructed a Leave No Trace (LNT) Master Educator course, collaborating with NOLS, a US-based outdoor education school and LNT, a US-based organization that encourages people to travel outside responsibly while practicing outdoor ethics. The Master Educator course was a five-day expedition among the dense jungle and pine plantations of Ha Long. The participants of this course somewhat resembled a model United Nations with ten nationalities in one group! While this was underway, an equally diverse group headed to Cat Ba Island for a three-day climbing extravaganza which saw a wealth of knowledge being shared (on and off the rock) and some inspirational multi-pitching from Vladimir 'Dado' Mesaric (Safety Committee Chair, OB Croatia) and Iain Peter (Executive Director, OBI).

Delegates who didn't want the fun to end also had the option of attending after the symposium, the five-day Wilderness Advanced First Aid (Wafa) course taught by Jeff Baierlein (Owner, Viristar) and Damien Santer from Wilderness Medical Associates. (Shout-out to Robert Lyu from OB Hubei who was completing his training with OB Hong Kong. Robert joined the LNT Master Educator course, presented at the symposium, and attended the post-event Wafa program, the only delegate outside of OB Vietnam to hit the trifecta.)

## SYMPOSIUM BREAKDOWN

Day One of the symposium was built around Creating Connections, which started with some questionable dance moves in the opening circle and led into opening remarks from Aaron Funnell (Executive Director, OBV) and OBI updates from Iain Peter. The rest of the morning was followed with workshops, including discussions on how to integrate environmental education in outdoor adventure education. An opportunity was also given for all instructors to share their knowledge through a facilitated toolbox exchange, which proved to be a highlight of the event. In the afternoon, concepts of well-being from New Zealand, a virtual exploration of the Pacific Crest Trail in North America, and accreditation of new activities led us into a plenary of OB Vietnam's journey thus far. An eight-a-side, friendly football tournament wrapped up the evening with Sultan Alhasni from Oman bringing his team to victory.

The 5:45 a.m. start on Day Two saw one group head out for a sunrise paddle among some of Ha Long's famous limestone karsts and oyster farms while another group dove into the depths of a limestone cave. A third group experienced Vietnamese culture with a boat ride and hike to a pagoda followed by a traditional, farm-to-table roast chicken lunch. The morning excitement was followed up with presentations focused on Building Bridges, such as Jeff Baierlein's plenary on "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Outdoor Education" and OBHK's workshop on "Adaptive Paddling and Active Aging". The evening wrapped up with multiple groups heading out to various local hotspots. On Day Three the theme of *Exploring Possibilities* was well and truly explored starting with Dado Mesaric's presentation of the 1979

West Ridge direct ascent of Mount Everest. This was followed by a variety of workshops discussing evaluation as a critical process (Dr. Susanna Ho, Ministry of Education, Singapore), risk management for field staff (Jeff Baierlein), personality traits and career preferences (Kamna Mishra, OB India), and the benefits of introducing Outward Bound in China (Robert Lyu, OB Hubei). The weekend culminated in a mass sharing session hosted by the OBV senior team, reviewing the highlights, learnings, and memories from the weekend.

## TAKEAWAYS

As this was only the second ever Asia Regional Staff Symposium, each participating party took a lot away from the weekend. Most notably, delegates and the OBV team reflected on how the symposium helped us to truly understand the core meaning of Outward Bound and how we can adapt to changes while maintaining our foundation. The instructor toolbox exchange combined with inspirational stories from across the region reignited a passion to pursue adventures personally and professionally, and set into motion a strong desire to stay connected on continue development and to share adventures.

## MOVING FORWARD

Inspired by the ideas shared among the delegates, we find ourselves more motivated than ever to continue our development by:

- Continuing focus on outcomes over activities
- Including adaptive opportunities
- Empowering staff in personal and professional development
- Remembering to address the *why*.

OBV would sincerely like to thank the attendees who travelled from near and far in the face of uncertainty. We are grateful to the organizing committee comprised of representatives from Vietnam, Hong Kong, and Singapore who worked together to bring this event to life; but especially we are grateful to Outward Bound Singapore for their mentorship and help. Without the support of the OB community and the hard-working staff at OBV, the Second Asia Regional Staff Symposium would not have been the uplifting, joy-filled, and inspiring event that it was. We look forward to seeing everyone and sharing our developments at the next one.

## PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

- OB India-Bharat
- OB Croatia
- OB Hong Kong
- OB Hubei
- OB Indonesia
- OB International
- OB Japan
- OB Lumut (Malaysia)
- OB New Zealand
- OB Oman
- OB Sabah (Malaysia)
- OB Singapore
- OB Taiwan

Further regional staff symposiums are scheduled for Europe and the Americas later this year. These symposia are open to all within the Outward Bound community who wish to attend. ▶





# STRIVE



*Each issue of OBI Journal includes at least one article or image that connects with Outward Bound's past. The article that follows (East of Schoodic) first appeared in the winter 1970 issue of the magazine Strive. Published by the Outward Bound Trust in the United Kingdom during the 1960s and 70s, Strive is a rich source of historical information.*

OUTWARD BOUND

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# EAST OF SCHOODIC

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## HURRICANE ISLAND

Not far seaward from Vinalhaven and its even quieter twin, North Haven, lies Hurricane Island, where the ring of the stonemason's hammer once brought a now vanished prosperity. Today Hurricane Island rings with noise again, from May to October at least, but the sounds are young voices and the commodity its rocky shores and flooded quarries yield is not stone but self-reliance.

On a plank walkway that reaches to the centre of one of the Island's abandoned pits, I watched uneasily as an instructor tied a blond teenager's arms behind him and looped another rope tightly around his ankles. Then the boy hopped forward awkwardly to the edge of the walkway and splashed into 12 feet of cold, clear rain water.

He sank amid the welling bubbles, then rose gently like a jelly-fish, back barely awash, his face below the surface. Perhaps half a minute ticked away before he made a slow movement, straightening his back to bring his head above the surface just long enough to take a deep lungful of air.

For ten minutes I watched as the student hung there above the quarry's jagged bottom, rising as a turtle might, every few seconds, to breathe. Then the instructor dropped into the water beside him and loosened his hands and feet so he could climb out.

'That was the graduate test of what we call drown-proofing,' said the instructor. 'When these boys come to Hurricane Island we have to teach some of them to swim! When they're ready to

leave 26 days later we feel they will be able to save themselves under almost any circumstances.'

Hardship, excitement, authentic adventure—though without foolhardiness—make up the curriculum of Hurricane Island's Outward Bound School, one of five in the United States.

Hurricane Island 'makes instant men' as one graduate expressed it, through a challenging programme of rappelling down sheer cliffs, braving icy waters and seemingly impossible obstacle courses, navigating through fog and storm, and surviving alone on an island for three days with only the food and shelter each student can improvise himself.

### CROSS ISLAND VIA SCHOODIC BAY

An Outward Bound sea expedition challenges you to accomplish this in a 30 ft. open boat. The emphasis is placed not in where you go but how you get there.

A bold headland battered for millenniums by an obstinate sea, a ragged plug of granite forgotten by vegetation and animal life—a lonely, obdurate piece of creation. This is Schoodic Point, as much a barrier and a challenge to eastern yachtsmen as Blue Hill Bay is a familiar friend. Frequently the more daring will venture to the east quarter of Frenchman Bay, but it is only the brash who calmly suggest that the world is round or that the edge, should there be one, is certainly not at Schoodic. Why, then, the hesitation? Certainly the homefires can't be that warm or we'd be a nation of day sailors. Lobsters, seaweed, and sippin' whiskey are the same 'way down east' as they are just plain 'down east,' and



there are even a few population centres between Petit Manan and Eastport.

The challenges of Hurricane Island can be a granite face never climbed before, someone you violently disagree with, or three days alone on an island. It can be lasting out the 24 days, swimming under water for 50 yards or climbing the same cliff a second time if only because you feel there may be a better way. It may be jumping off a pier after a two mile marathon or it may be Schoodic Point.

A 30 ft. Hurricane Island open pulling boat is just that, 30ft. of planks, thwarts, seats, masts, sails, centreboard box, ropes and oars all neatly organised in a well arranged tangle by 12 Outward Bound students on a final expedition. To go below means merely to put on heavy weather gear, to flick on the self-bailing equipment means to prime a hand-pump and to cook dinner means to make sandwiches or to wait for a favourable shore. The auxiliary power is supplied, and many backs and arms are needed, and it follows the rhythm of stroke . . . stroke . . . stroke. There is no place to go when sick or depressed and moments of weakness are shared with honest frankness, just as moments of exhilarating accomplishment are shared with exuberance. A closed compartment in an open boat is hard to find.

In an open boat the wind and salt spray never leave, the fog is never pushed above because you are never below, the sun is usually warm and the oars are always heavy. In an open boat the group relies on itself or on one man, or on the boat, and eventually the challenge, the ocean, is placed in perspective.

The following is an impression carried away from that challenge after a typical 100 mile cruise that climaxes the Outward Bound programme.

After three hours of rowing we at last settled into our new world, an open pulling boat. Some slept, others timed their existence to the dipping oar, and a few kept track of our passage. The

eastern Penobscot was dreary with a pewter grey sea just barely willing to put up with us, and it seemed that Isle au Haut never would slip past our starboard beam. As if the drudgery of rowing was not enough for us, a cold, dismal rain set in. We put on heavy weather gear. There is no 'below decks' on a 30 ft. pulling boat.

There wasn't any wind. The other boat on expedition with us didn't have wind either. In fact, there wasn't so much as the slightest suggestion of wind . . . any place. In all our experience on the water, a total of 17 days since the beginning of the course, the sea had never been so calm—so hard and flat that we expected the oars to scrape the surface. The rain didn't actually penetrate. At first the drops hit with a loud, individual splash, but soon they collected their loose ends and decided to fall as rain and the splash and splutter moulded into a sustained 'shh.'

By nightfall we were in Merchants Row and by 2.30 we rowed clear of it and went into Jericho Bay. Same oars. Still no wind. Since we'd decided to keep going all night, supper was a few sandwiches and water. Positions at the oars were changed regularly as was the duty watch. Our rowing was smooth. We'd met 17 days ago and only three of us had had any experience in boats. But, somehow, somewhere during our training we'd learnt to work with one another, at least passably. The night was smooth; in fact, the sky and water just smoothed into one of grey-black. The horizon forgot us. Everything forgot us except the rain and blisters. Morning didn't really break. Rather what we were moving through stayed black and what we were moving into became slightly lighter. Soon the day was fully on us and was a slight breeze and the fog. The oars came in, the sails went up, and we relaxed as the boat heeled to a fresh south-east breeze, and we felt good. Already our two boats had covered a distance of 27 miles in just under 18 hours.



Our navigation was sufficient, just barely. We'd missed some buoys in Jericho Bay and never saw much of Casco Passage, though we must have gone through it because Bass Harbour light loomed up close to our port beam about mid-morning of the second day. Another cold meal, and then Baker Island was off port. A slight sea was running and we heard the island more than we saw it. No good reference point here, and that put us on edge. It's easy to start from some place you know and set off into the world of 'I'm not sure.' But to start from the 'I'm not sure' and go even further . . . somehow this challenge to get past Schoodic Head was taking shape as the one reason for our 12 man, 24-day struggle. Fatigue and an uncomfortable feeling of apprehension sat next to us. The wind veered to the south, picked up strength and we started sliding down east with a quartering sea under us. A few hours later the fog just blew itself away and we shot past Schoodic so fast one crew member asked if Schoodic was someone in the other boat. The air smelt deeper. Nights and days started to blend. Petit Manan light was a constant friend, and there is a great little island at the western end of Mooseabec Reach, Hardwood Island, I think it is called, but if this area is tough and hard it is also inviting. Not many boats, but one of the ones we did see seemed bolder and braver. We enjoyed a rugged but somehow sensitive quality, both in our surroundings and in ourselves, and we smoked along by Jonesport, past Mark Island, past the Brothers and Libby Light and into Cross Island. Someone said another group was due to arrive at midnight from a pulling boat expedition to Eastport, and as the wind died we settled down, with a quiet sense of satisfaction and almost triumph, into waiting for the sound of their oars.

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## LETTERS

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Outward Bound Moray Sea School,  
Burghead, Morayshire.  
12th January, 1970

Editor of Strive,  
Outward Bound Trust,  
Iddesleigh House,  
Caxton Street,  
London, S.W.1.

Dear Editor,

I have just read a new book *English Progressive Schools* by Robert Skidelsky. The book is interesting and fascinating, but, where it refers to Hahn Philosophy, Gordonstoun and Outward Bound it is full of glaring inaccuracies and mis-statements.

Skidelsky asks 'Has Outward Bound anything to contribute to preparing adolescents for life in the big city? Or is it just another flight from life masquerading as a social philosophy?' Would he care to ask *one* of the thousands of boys who have passed through our schools in the past five years? Or would he care to drop in on 'City Challenge'?

As for the statement 'In a very real sense Hahn himself is the greatest, indeed the only, product of his own system' this leaves me with the deepest conviction that it is time for all loyal disciples to sit down and publish a 'purple paper'. *Kurt Hahn is one of, if not the greatest, educational innovators of this century, yet he remains misunderstood and un-recognized.*

Yours sincerely,

J. G. Richards.



# MANAGING PERSONAL DATA — Yielding to More Requirements

By Colin Maund

Visiting the Outward Bound centre at Eskdale in the UK a couple of years ago I was fascinated by the collection of old course reports in the main entrance hall—black and white pictures of young men from the 1950s to the 1970s with their names and dates all freely available in reception. At the time the new European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was just about to come in and it hit me that even such an apparently harmless archive would potentially fall foul of the regulations if left as it was. Since then realisation has dawned on organisations about the width of the protections provided to individuals about their data, the impact upon physical as well as computer records, and the way in which the GDP Regulation has been copied all over the world.

A key question for Outward Bound relates to the data we hold on individuals who may be employees, donors, associates, delegates, customers, or other stakeholders. Whilst much of this information appears fairly harmless, there is much that is sensitive and confidential, ranging from financial information about donors to medical certificates of delegates. The growth of electronic storage and transmission of personal data poses new challenges but also means that regulators and legislators have become increasingly concerned about the use and misuse of personal data.

The EU has been at the forefront of drives to protect citizens from abuse of their personal data by people with commercial and other interests. Before 2018 each European state had had its own data protection laws. Then, in May 2018 the GDPR became law across the 28 Member States of Europe, creating one set of rules and making it easier for businesses to work across the EU. Furthermore the new regulations are intended to protect EU citizens throughout the world and this element of extra-territoriality is what makes the legislation

important for organisations based anywhere. Add to this that the GDP Regulation has been widely copied in other countries and it is clear that no organisation can afford to ignore the new rules.

## THE NEED FOR DATA PROTECTION

The GDPR recognises that, where personal data is concerned, the world has changed. Businesses now collect and monetise all kinds of data, and the risks of personal data leaking into the public domain are substantial. Businesses recognise that the more they know about their customers, the better they can tailor their offerings to them and it is no surprise that the world's most valuable commodity is no longer oil or consumer goods but data. Four companies in the world have market capitalisations that exceed \$1 trillion and all of those valuations are based on the perceived value of the data they hold. There is no room in this exalted company for the former titans of ExxonMobil, General Electric, or General Motors.

The GDPR makes it incumbent on organisations to prove a person's consent and raises the bar on what constitutes valid consent. It requires businesses to give individuals more information about how their information is used and introduces new rights such as the right to be forgotten and the right to data portability.

A further danger that has evolved in recent years is the growing threat of data theft through hacking. Unfortunately, the intrinsic value held in personal data makes it worth stealing. Data theft can also be used to hold businesses to ransom and threaten their ability to trade. This backdrop will continue to evolve and one of the aims of the GDPR is to keep up with an ever-changing data environment. Organisations that hold data also have new obligations to ensure that the data they hold is looked after and kept safe.

## SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

There are a number of specific rights given by the GDPR legislation to individuals (known as “data-subjects”). The new rules apply to data in any form, whether computerised or in manual records. Obligations fall on people or organisations who controls the means and processing of a person’s data (“data controllers”) and the people who process data for a data-controller (“data processors”). The key rights and obligations are set out below:

1. Data controllers must obtain the express consent of data subjects to store, handle, and process their data, and these rights must be easily withdrawn. For under-16s this consent must be from a parent or guardian.

2. Data controllers must be able to tell a data subject whether any of their data is held, where it is held, and for what purpose.

3. Data subjects have the right to erase all data held and halt any further processing unless there is a significant public interest.

4. Data subjects may obtain free of charge a copy of all data about them which has been processed.

5. Data subjects can further require the data in machine-readable form so that they can provide it to someone else.

6. In the event of a data breach where there is a risk to the rights or freedoms of individuals the data controller must notify them within 72 hours.

## DEMONSTRATING COMPLIANCE

Businesses must demonstrate how they comply with the GDPR. This will mean making compliance part of someone’s role in the business. Businesses that process personal data on a grand scale may need to appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO) to monitor internal compliance. Most businesses won’t need a DPO but will need to make demonstrating compliance through an understanding of the GDPR requirements the responsibility of someone in senior management.

## NON-COMPLIANCE IS DANGEROUS

Businesses that choose to disregard their GDPR responsibilities, or don’t take them seriously enough, face fines of up to €20 million or four percent of global revenue if that’s greater. Fines can be applied anywhere and the regime being created in Europe is transportable.

The regulations expect businesses to start by conducting a thorough audit of personal data. Once a business understands what data it holds or processes, with whom it shares data, and the legal basis on which it processes data, it is some way toward complying with the GDPR. Businesses need to build the GDPR into the way they do business and make it part of all future initiatives, carrying out

assessments to consider data protection risks and any impact on personal data and data subjects. This is not a requirement of the GDPR but a sensible way for businesses to conduct themselves and comply with the regulations.

Businesses must decide for themselves how much or how little governance is appropriate but the potential penalties and reputational damage resulting from a significant data loss should be borne in mind.



## GDPR BEYOND THE EU

The GDPR doesn’t apply only to businesses established in the EU. It extends to businesses outside the EU that process data:

- inside the EU
- outside the EU that concerns EU data subjects
- that is directed at EU data subjects.

The GDPR also provides specific rules about transferring personal data to countries outside the EU. This is relevant to many European businesses that contract with third-party data processors in the United States, or transfer EU personal data outside Europe.

Some states with OB schools have laws close to or modelled on the GDPR provisions, including Brazil, Japan, India, Canada, and certain US states including California. Whilst none of these countries have exact

transcriptions of the GDP Regulations, laws are certainly modelled on the GDPR and have many of the same requirements and similar penalties.

## CONCLUSION

Even the smallest of schools will hold much sensitive data, and examples could be:

- Forms related to delegates including reports on behaviour or medical issues
- Applications for jobs and interview notes
- Notes about employees and their history and performance.

All of this data is disclosable to the persons named and should be managed and removed at appropriate intervals.

The GDP Regulation is wide ranging and becoming an international standard. Whilst Outward Bound schools are not most at risk, we do hold significant amounts of personal data and much of it is sensitive, such as medical information, which is covered by even more stringent conditions. As we become more data conscious and more technically advanced we need to put in place procedures and systems that allow us to manage and control our data and prevent it from misuse.

*Colin Maund is a board member of Outward Bound International and the CEO of Hellios Information Ltd, a UK-based supplier information and risk management company. >*



# THE OBI REVIEW SYSTEM

By Iain Peter



One of the highlights of my role as Executive Director of Outward Bound International is that I get to visit member schools to undertake reviews. This gives me the opportunity to meet staff and board members, to engage with clients, and to find out what challenges our member schools face. Hopefully my visit (and those of our other reviewers) can also add value to the work of our schools and can help share good practice around the Outward Bound network.

The origins of our present review system trace back to discussions held during the late 1980s when OBI itself was being formed as a coordinating body for worldwide Outward Bound. Things began to take shape shortly after a 1988 safety workshop was conducted for attendees of the Third International Outward Bound Conference in Cooperstown, USA. And the importance of a consistent approach to assuring safety and quality was further solidified ten years later when the OBI Annual General Meeting, held in Kröchlendorff, Germany, agreed to a review frequency of once every two years for all member schools.

As readers might guess from the previous paragraph, in the early years our reviews were focussed primarily on safety. In the ensuing years, our approach to reviews has evolved considerably. It has become increasingly obvious to the OBI Risk Management Committee (who oversee our review system) that we need to take a broader view of risk—one that recognizes the interconnected nature of risks and understands that safety risks can't be considered in isolation—and that effective and sustainable Outward Bound schools need effective systems for managing safety, financial, reputational, and legal risks. The Covid-19 pandemic has really focussed our attention on our abilities to manage financial risk but the reality is that schools need to manage all risks according to their importance. To this end, next year we will implement our new approach to reviews—one that is simpler, strategically focussed, and designed to better address our schools' critical non-safety risks.

## WHY DO WE DO REVIEWS?

There are three key reasons why we undertake reviews:

1. It is a licensing condition. All schools are required to participate in reviews.
2. OBI has a duty to review the network of schools—we are only as strong as our weakest member. A negative event anywhere in the world could have a serious, adverse effect on the whole network.
3. Reviews are a key point of contact between OBI and our member schools. They provide excellent opportunities for sharing good practice.

## SOME BROAD REVIEW PRINCIPLES

Of course, any review is a snapshot in time. The reviewer only has a limited amount of time to undertake the review and, during any visit, there will only be a limited amount of activity going on.

We should remember that:

- Risk management is always the responsibility of the school—the OBI reviewer may offer advice or guidance, but the responsibility for implementing or rejecting that advice remains with the school.
- There is no absolute standard—reviews attempt to evaluate how effective a school's systems are for their target client groups and their operating environment.
- The overall goal of the review process is to confirm that a school's "Management, operating systems and personnel are appropriate to the scale and nature of the Outward Bound programs offered and their intended target population".

## WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE THROUGH OUR REVISED APPROACH?

Reviews need to confirm that schools are meeting the license requirements and, at the same time, we want to help schools to improve.

We want to cover four key areas of risk:

- Safety
- Financial
- Legal
- Reputational.

We want to confirm that in this new approach these four areas of risk are being managed across the organisation:

- At the board level
- At the management level
- At the operational level.

Integral to all of this is the governance structure of each school. Rather than compare schools to each other or their past performance, reviews will increasingly compare schools to the expectations outlined in the OBI [Governance Guidance](#). Our focus is on the systems that support risk management rather than the outcomes of those systems. In other words, we want to be sure





that things happen because there is a system in place that makes them happen, rather than depend on an experienced individual operating in isolation and without any agreed systems.

We want to pay the relevant amount of attention to the risk area that is most pertinent to the school being reviewed. As always, schools will be encouraged to identify the areas upon which they would like the review to focus. However, it is important that we cover all areas—and produce a report that is informative to OBI and helpful to the school.

Reviews will also look at how schools meet the key elements of program delivery as outlined in “What it Means to be Outward Bound” (our agreed definition of Outward Bound’s [distinctive features](#)). We will want to see how each school’s programs encapsulate core Outward Bound principles:

- The Distinctive Features: people, process, places
- Authentic Adventure: Natural environment, facilitated & deliberate learning, specific learning outcomes
- Courses linking learning outcomes, adventure & environment through the OB experiential learning model.

Our research shows ([Global Impact Report 2020](#)) that the most effective and most resilient Outward Bound schools have these at their core of their programs.

Finally, we want to produce a report that is relevant, concise, and easy to understand by all parts of the Outward Bound school, and which adds real value to the review process.

Reviewers will provide ratings, comments, recommendations, and considerations for improvement based on their knowledge and experience. The ratings will be for the school and its operational context (in other words, we want to help schools improve, not compare their performance to that of other schools).

We have simplified the rating system so that each rating will be represented by a colour from the RAG scale. RAG means Red, Amber, and Green and is modelled on a three-colour traffic light. The colours have the following meanings according to the stages of organizational development or “maturity” relative to the areas of review. We believe that this will make reports easier to read and understand.

- Red**: Low Maturity (*Needs attention*)
- Amber**: Medium Maturity (*Acceptable but could be better*)
- Green**: High Maturity (*Good*)



Where the rating is Red or Amber, reviewers will be encouraged to include comments, considerations, and recommendations (just as they do now).

Recommendations will only be made if the reviewer believes that a matter has been identified that really does require attention. It will be for the school to decide how they fulfil the recommendation(s) and what action they take to satisfy it. After all, a recommendation is made by the reviewer to the school.

We hope that the new reporting template will be easier to understand and will involve fewer words—making translation from English into other languages easier.



These are significant changes to our review system. They will require that schools think carefully, in advance of the review, about how they can best demonstrate that they have effective systems in place for managing risk. It will necessitate more involvement from senior staff, board members, and other staff. We are confident that the changes will be beneficial and that they will encourage improved communication and collaboration as well as more effective and more resilient schools.

In the first couple of years with this new system we will run regular training sessions for all schools (using TEAMS—our Office 365 communication platform that is available to all schools) during which we will demonstrate practical examples of how schools might attain Green (High Maturity) ratings across the board. At the same time, we are activity encouraging feedback—both about the revisions to the system and how effective schools find the reviews to be. We encourage our member schools to get involved in improving the review process so that what was begun in the late 1980s can continue to add value for our internal and external stakeholders. I encourage schools to get involved, let OBI have your feedback, and let us know where further guidance would be helpful. ▶

# THE OUTWARD BOUND OUTCOMES SURVEY HAS LAUNCHED!



By Sarah Wiley

Over the last few months OBI has been working with a team of external research advisors and with the OBI Research and Evaluation Committee to develop an outcomes measurement tool that will be piloted by member schools around the network. The Outward Bound Outcomes Survey (OBOS) represents the next phase in OBI's Research and Evaluation Strategy, following the development of the 2020 Global Impact Report. The Research Strategy supports OBI's strategic vision and is one of OBI's commitments to the global network made at the 2019 World Conference. The objective of this initiative is to provide evidence of

the impact of Outward Bound programs, to identify opportunities for increased program effectiveness, and to provide a framework to engage the network in evaluation and provide members with the support and tools to do so. Data collected and analysed will contribute to the 2021 Global Impact Report and will be used to identify aspects of the OB delivery model that are producing the most impact and areas where further work is required.

The following OB Schools are involved in the pilot, which started this September and will continue until next spring: Singapore, Oman, Canada, New Zealand, Vietnam, Hong Kong, UK, Croatia, Germany, and Brazil. [▶](#)

## Outward Bound International Launches **OB GLOBAL AMBASSADORS INITIATIVE**

By Sarah Wiley

As part of its 2020 Fundraising Strategy, Outward Bound International (OBI) is excited to launch the Outward Bound Global Ambassador's (OBGA) initiative. This initiative aims to recognize outstanding individuals within the Outward Bound community who have been involved in a significant way with Outward Bound either regionally or globally, and would like to continue to support and champion the global Outward Bound movement.

The OB Global Ambassadors are a distinguished group of global Outward Bound champions who are connected through their commitment to the mission and values of Outward Bound and to the long-term sustainability of the OB network.

Founding members of the OBGA are as follows: Jamie Anderson, Chair of OB Global, former OBI Chair and former Chair of OB Canada; David Kong, OBI Chair and former OB Hong Kong

Chair; and Colin Maund, OBI and OB UK Board member. Each of these founding members, representing different schools and regions in the global network, have made a multiyear pledge to support the necessary and important work of OBI.

Invitations to join the OBGA have gone out to individuals across the network and the globe. There are currently ten committed Outward Bound supporters, representing Canada, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, and the USA, who have joined the group with the goal to have 20 Global Ambassadors by this time next year. Global Ambassadors will be recognized for their inspirational support through a variety of ways and, when circumstances allow, will be invited to join the global community at regional and world conferences.

Interested individuals or those who would like additional information should contact me at [sarahwiley@outwardbound.net](mailto:sarahwiley@outwardbound.net). [▶](#)





**RESILIENCE**

**SELF-BELIEF**

**COMPASSION**

**COLLABORATION**



**OUTWARD BOUND  
INDIA - HIMALAYA**





# OUTWARD BOUND INTERNATIONAL



Australia  
Bahrain  
Belgium  
Bermuda  
Brazil  
Brunei  
Canada  
Costa Rica

Croatia  
Czech Republic  
Finland  
Germany & Austria  
Germany-Pro  
Hong Kong  
Hubei  
India-Bharat

India-Himalaya  
Indonesia  
Japan  
Korea  
Malaysia-Lumut  
Malaysia-Sabah  
Mexico

Netherlands  
New Zealand  
Oman  
Romania  
Singapore  
Slovak Republic  
South Africa  
Sri Lanka

Taiwan  
UAE  
UK  
USA  
Vietnam  
Zimbabwe  
OB Peacebuilding