

# THE LEADERSHIP OF RUCKSACK GROWTH GROUPS

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## ABSTRACT

A wilderness rucksack camp can be powerful to encourage self esteem, permit personal change, and to promote intimacy. The camp is based on a contract covering norms, activities, and a willingness to experiment with personal growth. Wilderness activities are planned to form units with campfire times so that ideas and decisions are built on and reinforced by memorable experiences. The keeping of a personal logbook of the camp provides frequent reference to the Adult, and data for the evaluation of the program.

### 1. THE ORIGIN OF THE APPROACH

1.1 I have grown up in the tradition of the effectiveness of the natural environment in psychological healing.

1.2 I was not able to experience this myself in adolescence

1.3 When I became a teacher it seemed appropriate to experiment with this tradition on my own behalf and use it to heal the credibility rift common between teacher and student and thus develop the rapport that is every teacher's dream.

1.4 My experiments were at first intuitive and exploratory. I was guided by feedback in the class room, from the parents of the youngsters, and the participants' evaluations in later years of their camping experiences. I have since developed some methods that gave me immediate feedback.

1.5 I now use in my camps a spectrum of styles and methods that are the product of thirty two years of experience and study, in which I have personally conducted hundreds of small group camps for adolescents. I do not claim originality, and I change my approach with the changing needs of the youngsters.

1.6 I am employed by an independent school which acknowledges the rucksack growth groups as valuable for both the normal and deviant adolescent. Though I am afforded by this institutional support and the opportunity to train other teachers in the style I use, the method is essentially dependant on individual instructors and does not require an institutional setting.

### 2. LEADER AND PARTICIPANTS HAVE A COMMON AIM

2.1 The success of the camp depends on the degree of overlap of personal aims.

2.2 There is more satisfaction to be gained by increasing one's capacity for growth than by the resolution of immediate needs.

2.3 In a satisfying camp, leader and participants set out to meet personal needs by making decisions that increase the capacity for personal growth and so the enjoyment of life in the camp and for the rest of their days.

### 3. MODELS IN USE

#### GROWTH

3.1 Personal growth is the development of humanness, self actualisation and interpersonal effectiveness. (Johnson and Johnson)

#### NEEDS

3.2 The resolution of needs controls motivation for personal growth. (Maslow)

#### DECISIONS

3.3 Human actions to resolve the perceived needs of the individual are decided as a result of internal negotiations between wants, values, and reasoning on the basis of models. (Transactional Analysis)

#### MODEL BUILDING

3.4 Personal growth depends on the building of progressively accurate and comprehensive models. (General Semantics)

#### ENJOYMENT

3.5 The enjoyment of life depends on the recognition of selfhood (Transactional Analysis) and the sense of connectedness with the world outside the individual (Maslow). These provide the maximum enjoyment for an individual who thinks and behaves as an integrated whole (Gestalt).

### 4. POSTULATES PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO RUCKSACK GROUPS

#### GROWTH

4.1 Personal growth will result from the development of awareness spontaneity, and intimacy. (James and Jongeward)

#### NEEDS

4.2 Needs can be ranked in an order of demand. namely, body, safety, social, selfhood, self actualisation.

#### DECISIONS

4.3.1 A person is whole as far as he is responsible for what he thinks, says, and does.

4.3.2 It is possible to change patterns of life by making new decisions.

4.3.3 Pleasant memories associated with a decision, make the repetition of the decision more likely.

#### MODEL BUILDING

4.4.1 Sensory data from all the senses is used in making models.

4.4.2 Non-verbal models are as valid as verbal models in providing data for decisions.

4.4.3 Enriched sensory data allows the building of more accurate models than does a paucity of data quantity or style.

4.4.4 Personal growth results from the evaluation of existing models in the light of new data gained from observation, prediction, and experiment and then changing the existing model to correlate with all data, old and new.

4.4.5 Models of human behaviour are valid if based on statistical probability, recognising the 'free-will' occurrence of low probability events.

#### ENJOYMENT

4.5.1 Recognition of selfhood can be gained from other selves, our own volitional acts, our sensations of the non-human world, and memories

4.5.2 Accurate models of group behaviour can be used to maximise recognition.

4.5.3 Behaviours can be ranked in an order of recognition richness namely, withdrawal, ritual,

pastime, activity, point scoring, intimacy.

4.5.4 Maximum recognition occurs in intimacy where people together are willing to affect and be affected by each other. Some people can achieve this relationship with the natural non-human world.

4.5.5 We are inseparably connected to each other and the world around us.

4.5.6 Joy is the sense of this connectedness

4.5.7 The more comprehensive the model by which a person sees himself the greater the range of recognition resources and the stronger the connectedness experienced, hence the more enjoyment available.

## **5. CONDITIONS FAVOURABLE FOR PERSONAL GROWTH AVAILABLE IN RUCKSACK GROUPS**

### **NEED RESOLUTION**

5.1 A situation that facilitates the acquisition of the skills required to meet individual needs at the various levels.

### **DECISION MAKING**

5.2.1 Opportunity for an individual to make choices and live with the results

5.2.2 A physical environment and a group of people, both of which contain the potential for much free, child-like enjoyment for the individual.

### **MODEL BUILDING**

5.3.1 E)q)Experiences that help increase awareness of sensations and ideas.

5.3.2 A broad range of new sensations.

5.3.3 Time and quietness available for non-verbal concept formation.

5.3.4 A non-threatening interpersonal atmosphere.

5.3.5 Permission to examine models, to experiment and to change.

### **ENJOYMENT**

5.4.1 A group that provides much unconditional positive recognition of selfhood for its members.

5.4.2 Opportunity for sensory involvement in the non-human world in a way that provides positive affirmation of selfhood for the individual.

**5.4.3** Group activities that depend on acceptance, trust, cooperation and harmony with the natural environment.

5.4.4 Experience in receiving positive recognition from various behaviours.

5.4.5 A group in which psychological point scoring does not occur.

5.4.6 Occasions that invite intimacy

5.4.7 A secure situation where the individual can live in harmony with the natural environment and sense his unity with the world.

5.4.8 Involvement in challenges and risks that require realism to evaluate and integrated personal effort to cope.

## **6. TECHNIQUES AVAILABLE IN RUCKSACK GROUPS TO PRODUCE CONDITIONS FAVOURABLE TO PERSONAL GROWTH**

### **CONTRACT**

6.1 Before the trip a contractual agreement is made between the members of the group and the leader.

6.1.1 Some commitment to personal development is required, though this may only be in such general terms as 'learning to be a leader'. Often personal contracts for change are hidden agendas for the camp program, and may only be disclosed during or at the close of the camp if ever.

6.1.2 Contracting ensures agreement about norms, which are used to generate a positive camp atmosphere. Some of these at least will be leader originated, and may have been used in 'selling' the trip to the participants. Clashes in value systems held by the group members can, in fact, must be resolved on this occasion.

6.1.3 In the contracting session, expectations of activities are discussed and accepted by group and leader. Thus the delight of anticipation adds to the impact of the activities. The leader takes care that the newness and strangeness of the activities is not lost, and that negative feelings are not aroused in the discussion.

6.1.4 There is some action which formalises the contract such as the group members signing a 'trip list'.

### **ISOLATION**

6.2 The use of an isolated wilderness environment reached by walking through untracked bush, lacking all facilities and contact with the group's usual familiar environment.

6.2.1 This encourages experiment and change by eliminating many triggers that fire old habits, and by offering new experiences in a new setting.

6.2.2 The individual is compelled to use his own resources and to form a working relationship with the group.

6.2.3. The isolation induces a commitment to cope with the contract.

6.2.4 The inescapable continual contact with the unyielding reality of the natural world inhibits negative feelings and encourages integrity.

### **SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS**

6.3 The experience of being part of a small group, at the most six people and an instructor, that lives together closely and continuously for several days. During that period they do everything together and are subject to positive impact from the leader by modelling and instruction.

6.3.1 Since recognitions of individuals in such a group are not diluted by contact with large numbers of people, the group size intensifies reactions and relationships.

6.3.1.1 The leader's impact is greater than with larger groups.

6.3.1.2 The pressure to conform to norms is felt strongly, since the group is not large enough to afford minority sub groups.

6.3.1.3 Positive recognitions build self esteem rapidly.

6.3.1.4 Intimacy is more likely.

6.3.1.5 These positive effects can be further amplified if the group contains some experienced participants who have enjoyed previous camps, understand what the leader plans to accomplish, and are able to help the newcomers get the same benefit.

6.3.2 There is sufficient variety of personality in most groups of this size to provide a variety of reactions and relationships.

6.3.3 Successful group behaviour such as cohesion, task accomplishment and conflict resolution, is easily seen, experienced and learned.

**NEWSWORTHY ACTIVITIES**

6.4 The participation in activities that are so far over the threshold of familiarity to the participants that the activities and all the reactions connected with them are 'newsworthy' to the individual. (Term by courtesy of Michael 'White')

6.4.1 The activities are chosen to produce sensations of risktaking through physical insecurity or strangeness as perceived by the individual.

6.4.2 These provide experiences that are attended to by the whole person and remembered long.

6.4.3 The elements of risk and responsibility exaggerate the reactions of daily life, thus increasing the individual's awareness of his patterns of behaviour.

6.4.4 Such activities provide powerful occasions for recognition through belongingness and achievement.

6.4.5 The experiences are powerful stimuli for revision of unsatisfactory models.

6.4.6 They may be 'mini-peak' experiences. (Term used as in Maslow)

**CAMPFIRE TIMES**

6.5 Regular times are set aside for the group to come together around the campfire with the leader to discuss and evaluate their experiences.

6.5.1 The content of each campfire time is designed to form a unit with an activity to integrate the experience into the personal models of the individuals in the group.

6.5.2 When used twice daily, morning and night such times allow pre-activity orientation of ideas and attitudes as well as post-activity consolidation of the experienced benefits.

6.5.3 These are opportunities to compare reactions, clarify values, examine how models have stood up in contact with reality, consider alternatives, and give recognitions.

6.5.4 The occasions are frank, confidential and without jargon.

6.5.5 Campfire times vary from a few minutes quiet input from the leader to an hour's spirited discussion of personal problems.

6.5.6 By their nature they lend themselves to becoming times of intimacy.

6.5.7 These prearranged times offer opportunity for the use and acceptance of role plays, quizzes, evaluations, fantasies, 'games', as well as discussions, as part of the camp.

**LOGBOOKS**

6.6 The recording of experiences and reactions in log-books

6.6.1 The act of writing facilitates contact with the reasoning faculty, making it easier to review behaviours and make fresh decisions.

6.6.2 The act of describing helps to clarify awareness.

6.6.3 Concepts are verbalised, allowing them to be communicated and discussed.

6.6.4 The record is available for later evaluation by the writer, and if he wishes, the leader.

6.6.5 Logbooks from these camps are a valuable resource to the leader and treasured memorabilia to the participants.

**7. USING THE TECHNIQUES****CONTRACT**

7.1 The contracting session lays the basis for the whole camp. It invokes the powers of norms and of imagination to make the camp a personal success for each individual. It is most effective as a

guided discussion with free input and questions

7.1.1 Consensus must be reached about the group membership and structure. The questions to be answered are, How many? Who? and, Is there an accepted leader?

7.1.2 Personal development may not be acknowledged as a need or relevant aim by an adolescent, if stated so plainly. Gaining an Award or Certificate or being trained as a leader, may be the needed permission to experiment with being himself.

7.1.3 For the group to go further, they need to recognise that their personal aims overlap. The most satisfying areas of overlap include a considerable degree of readiness to

7.1.3.1 Think for themselves

7.1.3.2 Care for themselves

7.1.3.3 Overcome fears and dislikes

7.1.3.4 Take some risks

7.1.4 A general program needs to be discussed, so that the participants know what activities they are committing themselves to. It needs to be emphasised that they do not have to be good at the activities, but that the experience of joining in and -trying it out is the important thing. Details are not needed. The element of surprise, and newness must be still there after the discussion.

7.1.5 The program includes:

7.1.5.1 Activities that are acceptable to the value systems of the group and compatible with their social model.

7.1.5.2 The same activities need to be perceived by the participants as providing recognition, by reason of their risk or achievement

7.1.5.3 Two training sessions daily, to be held round the campfire

7.1.5.4 Some unstructured time.

7.1.6 The activities need to be clearly defined and the group should have no doubt that the leader's competence and the available equipment render them a likely success.

7.1.7 The easiest time to set up norms is at the outset of group formation

7.1.8 Rather than use an authoritative approach, the leader will do better to use the language of norms: "Nobody enjoys . . . (camping with a guy who never washes)", "It's more fun if we all . . . (take turns leading)", "You always. . . (carry out any containers you cannot burn)".

7.1.9 It is worth spending time and energy trying to see the Personal needs of the party and studying the task needs as well as becoming aware of any existing norms that the members have been used to as individuals.

7.1.10 Overlapping individual norms can coalesce spontaneously and powerfully as the group forms to form a behavioural determinant that cannot be ignored

7.1.11 Norms are best formulated in such a way that they do not confront existing norms considered desirable by the party members unless it can be guaranteed the new norm will give greater satisfaction.

7.1.12 The basic norms built on acceptance, trust, cooperation and conservation:

7.1.12.1 Confidentiality of the camp. Conversations and discussions are not to be quoted elsewhere.' You can talk about anything you like and say what you think.' No-one will quote you out of camp There are no tales told out of camp.

7.1.12.2 Absolute consideration for each other. Nights are quiet. Person and property are sacrosanct. No practical jokes. Everybody looks out to help the other guy.

7.1.12.3 'Knocking spoils a camp. We do not want to spoil this one. You can say what you think and you will not get put down for it.' Nobody knocks on the camp.

7.1.12.4 Everyone joins in all the activities and jobs.

7.1.12.5 'We all keep a healthy cleanness at toilet, meals, and in all water supplies.'

7.1.12.6 Care for the natural surroundings. No unnecessary fires. All rubbish taken home. Plants and animals are protected.

7.1.12.7 Everybody keeps a log of the camp, and is prepared to share it with the leader.

7.1.13 Sometimes norms include rituals to help cohesion;

7.1.13.1 Some groups find valuable the old custom of grace at meals as an act that gathers the group together for a moment of thankfulness for life.

7.1.13.2 The campfire time can become a pleasant and satisfying ritual. In skilful hands it becomes a time to think and talk seriously about an area of life relevant to the group. As the discussion develops the atmosphere can take on the delight of intimacy.

7.1.14 The norms can be reminded to the party on the camp at appropriate times such as, confidentiality at a campfire time.

7.1.15 The leader's behaviour must be consistent with the norms. The camp runs most sweetly if the camp norms are the leader's personal behaviour patterns.

7.1.16 It is important to ensure that positive recognition that leaves a good feeling in the recipient is promptly given to a party member who uses the new norms. It is a good idea for the leader to remind himself that what leaves a good feeling in the leader may have a different effect on someone else.

7.1.17 An occasional negative reaction may be needed. Since negative reactions have more powerful personal effects than positive ones, they need not be so intense.

7.1.18 Powerful reinforcement of new norms is available in the sense of achievement experienced when the party is involved in environmental stresses that show the value of the new norms in coping.

7.1.19 Feedback about the way the group was run, obtained near the end of the camp will help the leader, and provide positive reinforcement to the members that will help them evaluate and establish their own satisfying norms elsewhere.

## **ISOLATION**

7.2 When using an isolated site the leader owes it to himself to be able to make certain guarantees to his party:

7.2.1 Group members behaviour will be compatible with the group aims.

7.2.2 The leader is competent in the skills required on the trip.

7.2.3 Weather emergencies can be coped with.

7.2.4 Medical emergencies can be handled properly.

7.2.5 Search and rescue can be activated.

## **SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS**

7.3 In the same way that the impacts of positive reactions are amplified in small groups, negative reactions, and recognitions have very powerful effects which may last a lifetime The leader

owes it to his group to take steps to foresee and forestall every possible negative impact. It may be advisable to structure the membership of the group to avoid stresses which the members would be unable to handle.

7.3.1 It is necessary for the leader to become aware of individual needs and hidden agendas as soon as possible.

7.3.2 The leader needs to share his company as evenly as possible with all members of the group.

7.3.3 The group will enjoy a leader who is in all the fun, on his terms.

7.3.4 The group will expect the leader to moderate any power differences as well as any compensatory activity they produce.

7.3.5 The leader should be prepared to lead out in any problem solving procedures if the group resources are unable to initiate them.

7.3.6 It is helpful to state clearly: the permissions under which the group operates. Every person on this camp is free

7.3.6.1 To be yourself your size, your strength, your culture, your background your sex.

7.3.6.2 To feel your feelings and enjoy them

7.3.6.3 To think for yourself, and say what you think without being put down for doing it.

7.3.6.4 To change your ways.

This can be combined with the main points of the contract. We all agree that

7.3.6.5 You can talk about anything you like and say what you think and no-one will quote you out of camp. There are no tales told out of camp.

7.3.6.6 Everybody looks out to help the other guy.

7.3.6.7 No-one puts another down.

7.3.6.8 Everybody joins in everything.

The members are asked to show that they agree with running the camp this way at the gathering point before they begin the walk in. A nod or a word of assent in front of the whole group commits them to experiment with this way of doing things.

#### **INTEGRATION OF ACTIVITIES AND CAMPFIRE TIMES**

7.4.0 These integrated units are built on one or more of these principles:

7.4.0.1 Good memories are best planned in advance.

7.4.0.2 Everyone will get the best out of camp and life, if they know what they are looking for.

7.4.0.3 Verbalising crystallises ideas and helps develop clarity of thought.

7.4.0.4 Choosing between alternatives clarifies value systems

7.4.0.5 People enjoy life more if they sort out their memories and treasure the good ones.

7.4.0.6 The happiest people have a highly developed capacity for intimacy and see themselves as part of the Scheme-of-Things.

Each unit has an aim for the group which may not be stated by the leader, but which guides the way the unit is developed and by which its value can be assessed. There follow some examples.

7.4.1

**Aim: To experience the differentiation of sensations and ideas;**

To recognise some origins of accepted ideas;

To experience the formation of new ideas.

Activity: An experience that is strongly sensory and unusual, even outrageous. It contravenes some old norms and yet provides positive recognitions in terms of fun, or achievement, or belongingness. For example, the initial entry to the campsite in the form of a walk through rugged untracked bush at night, by map and compass. The group leader instructs in the required skills as needed, for the party to experience finding its own way to the campsite.

Norms contravened: Sensible people do not walk through the bush at night. It is too dangerous to climb rocks at night. If you find yourself in unfamiliar bush at night fall you should stay put.

Positive recognition: 'I never thought I would be able to do this. It's fun.'

Leader nominates the positive feelings to be experienced: 'You are tougher than you think'. 'You have found a new freedom'. 'Very few people have ever done what you are doing tonight'. 'You will feel you have really been places tonight'.

Leader emphasises his own satisfaction and enjoyment: 'The stars are clear.' 'I can smell mint bush.' 'It is great walking on the ridges at night.' 'That was a good walk. It was beautiful fun.'

Discussion: How we build ideas:

1. Each writes down the sensations felt on the walk.
2. Each tells them to the group, while the leader checks that they have actually distinguished sensations from ideas.
3. Each writes down the ideas he had immediately before the walk.
4. Each writes down the ideas during the walk.
5. The group members tell these to the group, while the leader notes the differences and perhaps contradiction that occur in the same person.
6. The leader asks if the individuals had heard any of these anywhere before, and whether they could identify any voices in their heads that were telling them what to think.
7. Each writes where he thinks the ideas came from.
8. Each writes any new ideas that he had after the walk.
9. The leader asks each to talk about his new ideas, and why he changed.
10. Each writes in his log how he got the new ideas.

Log summary: I think more clearly when I separate sensations from ideas, and build ideas on sensations.

## 7.4.2

**Aim: To experience identification and evaluation of fears in an accepting environment, and group support for an individual's decision to overcome some fear.**

Discussion: In this example the discussion precedes the activity, and covers these points:

1. Each member identifies a fear.
2. Each locates the earliest memory of feeling the fear.
3. Each accepts the presence and origins of fears in himself and others.

4. The fears are evaluated for present value.
5. How to change a pattern of fear in yourself.
6. Helping someone else who is scared.

Activity: Teach the group basic rock climbing and belaying, putting into practice the steps clarified in the discussion.

Log summary: Each describes the climbing session under the headings of

1. What we did.
2. My sensations while climbing
3. My ideas before, during and after the climbing.

#### 7.4.3

**Aim: To increase the individual's awareness of the environment, and his relationships within it. To expand the world models of the group members.**

Activity: The group goes to an aesthetically stimulating environment not often encountered such as a ridge top with a view just before sunset.

Discussion: The leader proposes a topic or question that is open-ended and capable of sustaining local and abstract answers, such as 'Where am I?'

The group is asked to separate to positions out of sight of each other hut within the leader's call. Each takes his log book and spends about three minutes in silent meditation on the topic, making some notes in the log, and returning on the leader's call.

When reassembled, each tells his ideas. The leader facilitates communication paraphrasing, questioning, clarifying.

Finally he summarises, perhaps injecting his own viewpoint, leaving the group with a positive concept.

#### 7.4.4

**Aim: To give experience in the effects of different styles of reaction to interpersonal conflict, and so to allow individuals to evaluate their own behaviour and acquire new strategies.**

Activity: This topic is relevant after a group has been in close contact for a couple of days camping and walking, and there has been time for stresses to develop.

Discussion: Typecast role plays are used inductively in a series of situations that use a bush camp setting to illustrate the causes of conflict and methods of resolution.

#### 7.4.5

**Aim: To recognise the importance of how we live in the present.**

Discussion: This type of campfire time is suitable at the beginning of a busy day. The group is to set out early and their minds are on the planned activities. There is no actual discussion, only an introductory comment by the leader and a short poem such as "Salutation to the Dawn" (Kalidas) or "If" (Kipling)

Log summary Living well today makes good yesterdays and hopeful tomorrows.

#### 7.4.6

**Aim: To evaluate a day of the camp in terms of personal growth. To practice recognising self esteem builders and making them part of our memories.**

Activity: A day of climbing, walking, exploring.

Discussion: Each writes in their log, the beginnings of these sentences and completes them:

1. Today I . . . (What I did)
2. While I was doing this I felt . . .
3. Today I got good news about myself; it was . . .
4. My opinion of today is . . .

Each tells the group his good news. The leader emphasises how easy it is to get good news about yourself, and how good it is to remember it.

### **THE LOG BOOK**

7.5.1 The purposes of the log book are:

7.5.1.1 To provide a record of the activities and the environment of the individual, thus promoting awareness and communication.

7.5.1.2 To give an account of how the other members of the party reacted to the challenges and conditions met.

7.5.1.3 To describe how the individual sees his own reactions.

7.5.1.4 To give a permanent record of the thrills and pleasures of the occasion that can be relived as it is reread in later years.

7.5.2 A hard covered sewn notebook will withstand dampness and rough handling. It is convenient to keep it in a plastic bag with a ball point pen in a bushshirt pocket. A 15mm margin on the left of a page is used for headings, positions, times, and second thoughts when the page is full. It can include sketch maps, diagrams, pressed leaves and drawings as well as writing.

7.5.3 The record of a camp begins with a 'Beforethought' written before leaving home and telling the hopes, aspirations, and plans for the occasion.

7.5.4 The camp log is written during the camp with notes made every hour while journeying, or at other suitable times on a static camp. A good log contains the personal incidents of the trip, bits of conversation, as well as accounts of the activities and campfire times. There will be occasions when the participant will have time to set down his own ideas. Since the log is confidential he should not be afraid to express deep thoughts and personal views. The individual should try to put the experiences of the trip in place in his life. What effect is the expedition having on him? How are other members of the group responding to the challenges of the trip?

7.5.5 The 'After thought' is ideally written after return, bath, meal and sleep but no later than 48 hours after leaving the bush. The participant evaluates the trip, telling what he thinks the trip has done for, or to him. Has he changed? In what way? Why? What is the place of the trip in the participant's life?

7.5.6 It may be part of the contract that the leader receives the log for evaluation after the camp if the participant wishes to come again, or qualify for an award or certificate.

7.5.7 The content of the logs of a group is a valuable set of data by which the leader can assess the success of the camp. It can also give statistical information about the reactions of the constituency from which he draws the groups.

## **8. EVALUATING THE APPROACH**

### **RECONTRACTING**

8.1 Since the attendance at the camps is voluntary, the number of participants recontracting for further camps can be used as a measure of individual need satisfaction.

8.1.1 The following data are taken from the period during which I have operated 110 camps in Sydney, namely from February 1977 to May 1984. All camps which I conducted personally or in which I knew my methods were followed by trained leaders in that period, were analysed for recontracting participants. These were all boys' camps, and ranged in length from two days and two nights to five days and four nights.

#### 8.1.2 NUMBER OF CAMPS ATTENDED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING

BY A PARTICIPANT	THIS NUMBER OF CAMPS
1	16
2	30
3	18
4.	19
5	13
6	10
7	8
8	11
9	6
10	6
11	1
12	7
13	2
14	1
15	0
16	1
17	1
18	0
19	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>151</b>

8.1.3 From a total of 151 participants, 16 (11%) did not return for a second trip. It could be assumed that their perceived need satisfaction was not sufficient to warrant recontracting, though it is known that other factor factors intervened in some cases. However, 37 (58%) came for 4 or more camps and of these 20 (13%) came for 10 or more trips, with the highest attender logging 19 camps.

8.1.4 The dropout rate between the second and third trip (20%) reflects the fact that a large number attend two long camps totalling about 8 days 8.1.5 These data suggest that the camps are able to meet the needs of a great majority of the participants sufficiently well for them to wish to repeat and extend the satisfaction received.

#### LOG BOOK DATA

8.2 Log books kept by the participants provide a valid source of data that can be used to assess the effects of the camp experience.

8.2.1 The log, or interview, often displays indicators of the nature of the personality development

that has taken place up to that time. It may require some extra information, however, to decide whether factors beyond the camp experience itself are also active.

8.2.1.1 Some negative indicators:

1. Gold factuality
2. Persistent incompleteness or inaccuracy
3. Absence of references to people
4. Treatment of the trip as an endurance test.
5. No desire to repeat the experience
6. Use of cliches
7. No development of values
8. Competitiveness or individualism.
9. Ignoring the environment
10. No concept of cost/value of the trip.

8.2.1.2 Some positive indicators:

1. Environment description through the participant's eyes
2. Expressions of pleasure, fun, joy
3. Awareness of companions and their roles
4. Appreciation of the company
5. Sufficient technical competence and skill to enjoy the trip
6. Self evaluation, reactions, attitudes, changes
7. Decisions made
8. Imagination at work
9. The pleasure of anticipation
10. Sufficient time to be aware of the environment
11. A feeling of freedom
12. A show of trust within the party
13. Honesty in the log, and even confidentiality
14. Contentment with the experience
15. Appreciation of adult or other assistance
16. Mention of having sufficient time/skill to help someone else.

8.2.1.3 In using these indicators, the growth is shown by the changes in successive logs from an individual.

8.2.2 Specific entries made in the logs in response to leader originated questions. can allow statistical evaluation of the relative importance of factors as perceived by the participants. As examples of this:

8.2.2.1 Participants are asked at the beginning of the camp to write in their logs the incomplete sentence, "The best thing that could happen to me on this camp is . . ." and then to

finish it. Near the end of the camp, the same is done with the Sentence "The best thing that has happened to me on this camp is . . .". The responses may be interpreted as containing expressions of perceived self esteem needs and of the satisfaction of these needs experienced.

The following data are derived from 59 entries made during the period from December 1981 to March 1984. Some of them come from the same individual at different occasions and times. If several different types of events were listed in a response, all types mentioned were accepted since priority discrimination was seldom clear.

The events in the responses fall readily into four clear categories of which examples of typical responses are shown.

CATEGORY	BEST THING THAT COULD HAPPEN	BEST THING THAT HAS HAPPENED
	<u>Typical Response</u>	<u>Typical Response</u>
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Number</u>
<u>Social</u>	37	39
	Make new friends	Great fun making friends
	Get to know people better	Enjoyed getting to know more people
	Learn to live with other people	Learned to accept people as they are
	A camp with everyone respecting you	People not trying to hurt each other
<u>Physical</u>	15	31
	Learn to abseil	Going over the big overhang
	Learn how to be tough	Walking wet in rain and knowing I can cope
	Get tired, cut, dirty, happy	Enjoyed struggling through the bush
	Rock climb without breaking a leg	Achieving a climb I never thought I'd try
<u>Freedom</u>	12	11
	Mother not telling me what to do	Good to get away
	Real fun - independence	I felt free. I knew I achieved something big
	Free to do what I like	I don't have to depend on someone all the time
	Do my own leading	. . . because I did it by myself
<u>Fear control</u>	7	5
	Overcome fear of darkness	Overcome my fear of being out in the dark
	Overcome fear of abseiling	I have overcome my fear in abseiling
	Hang over a cliff without fear	I still have fear of heights but not so much
	Overcome fears	Not to be afraid
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>86</b>

The greater number of satisfactions than anticipations listed may be interpreted as unexpected satisfactions provided by the camp.

Social satisfaction ranked high in demand as 52% of responses, but fell to 45% of satisfactions though it still retained prime place in the perceptions of the participants.

Physical prowess came next with 21% of responses, in anticipated satisfaction and rose dramatically to 36% in the late evaluation. This may be taken to indicate that self esteem needs were met through physical avenues more than expected by the participants.

The activities that emphasised independence were anticipated by 17% of responses as fulfilling the most urgent needs, but this fell to 13% of the experiences rated as prime satisfactions.

Fear control was expected by 10% to be a major factor in self esteem but this fell to 6% of the experiences related as providing optimum satisfaction.

The significance of the distribution of these results shows in the unpaired events, that is the occurrence of an event in only one of the two responses from each person.

#### UNPAIRED/TOTAL

CATEGORY	COULD HAPPEN	DID HAPPEN
Social	11/37	14/39
Physical	4/15	18/31
Freedom	7/12	4/11
Fear control	5/7	4/5
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>40</b>

These show that 38% did not rate self-affirmation by the means anticipated as of prime satisfaction, and of these the largest numbers were in the Social and Freedom categories. However, 46% rated unexpected affirmations as prime, mostly through physical and social activities..

It is to be seen that 62% did rate the recognition expected as prime and sometimes other recognitions shared the prominence. Though any fear therapy carried out was pursued to produce clear behavioural results, this did not rank as high as at first perceived by the participants, while some others who did not nominate fear control as important found it more so than they thought.

A similar change in priorities shows in the Freedom category. This evaluation indicates that:

1. The camps provided perceived esteem building for the majority.
2. Being presented with an array of esteem building factors, a large group of participants found new and unexpected ways to self affirmation.
3. Self esteem in the group members was largely met by social interaction and physical activity.
4. The value systems of a considerable number of participants were undergoing change during the camp.

8.2.2.2 As part of the evaluation of a day, group members were asked to write, "Today I received good news about myself. It was . . ." and finish the sentence.

The responses may be interpreted as perceived confirmation of selfhood.

The data were collected over three occasions from February to April 1984, from 27 entries. They appear to fall into only two categories.

CATEGORY	TYPICAL RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
<u>Social</u>		19
	I am worth the friendship of other people	18
	I'm starting to control myself better	
	When K- told me I am a good bushwalker	
	Others are interested in my skills	

Physical

13

My knots have held someone when climbing

Two days out in the rain won't kill me

I can climb steep faces without a rope

I can enjoy my five senses.

This evaluation shows again that the major avenues by which the groups perceived self esteem needs being met were social interaction and physical activity, and of these the social satisfactions were more commonly noticed.

8.2.2.3 During the evaluation of a trip, the members of the group were asked to write how they had used their freedom to change

The data here are taken from a single large group with several instructors. The full list is given.

## SOCIAL RESPONSES

I've accepted some are happy not taking the risks I'd like to take

From being stubborn into accepting others

My way of understanding people

Changing to slower pace for slower members

My way of relating to M.

My way of working with a group , using their abilities

My way of walking, slowing down for a party member

I took more responsibility when I had to help T.

## TASK ORIENTED RESPONSES

I'm not getting as upset as I used to

My way of showing displeasure against prickles

My way of using a compass

My way of walking to avoid another fall

My way of packing and caring for my pack

When I was proved wrong I changed to get it right

This evaluation shows again the dominant concern with social effectiveness with the next and only other, factor in this group being Task-oriented success. This indicates the importance of skill development in the adolescent perception of personal satisfaction.

8.2.2.4 Near the end of a trip, the participants are taught to draw egograms, and assess how their egogram has changed during the camp.

There is almost complete agreement that their Free Child has increased and their Controlling Parent has decreased. Most report an increase in Adult and decrease in Adapted Child. If the camp has been a satisfying one for all, there may be other patterns. Some have developed their Nurturing Parent, and some Adapted child in response to their own needs.

8.2.3 The Afterthought is a revealing assessment of a camp, and its impact on the individual, as these examples show:

8.2.3.1 "One of the major features that really topped off the camp is the mateship that takes

part [sic] on our camps. It is unlike any form of friendship **experienced**. It is one of complete openness and feeling that you don't have to be on your guard the whole time. . ."

"Unreal. The atmosphere of the camp was great. Right through not a had word was spoken of or by others the whole weekend. I don't know why I wasn't doing this years ago. It might have kept me out of some mischief..."

8.2.3.2 "This camp has affected me in a number of ways. I have learned how other people think. I have learned new skills and built on old ones. It has been a great camp and very enjoyable. There were times I felt so great, I felt like yelling it out and telling everyone."

"I learned a lot about life . . . about others, how to treat them and how to treat myself."

"It was probably the most important weekend since I was born."



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