




# **OUTWARD BOUND** **INTERNATIONAL** *Journal*

- 
- ▶ **NoMoPhobia**
  - ▶ **Life is a Gothic Dog**
  - ▶ **Scenario Training in Hong Kong**
  - ▶ **Virtual Reality Storytelling in New Zealand**
  - ▶ **And ... not to yield! – OB in Zimbabwe**

**World Conference  
2019 in Oman**  
(see page 22)





# OUTWARD BOUND OMAN'

unlocking human potential



# From the Editor



As this issue of OBI Journal goes to press, Outward Bound Oman will be putting the finishing touches on its preparations to host the 2019 OBI World Conference. By the time the first copies of the Journal arrive at OB Oman's new Desert Learning Centre, delegates and leaders from OB schools on six continents will have assembled in the Sharqiya Sands desert, between Muscat and Al Ashkharah, to commence three days of sessions, workshops,

and strategic discussions organized around the conference theme, "Making Outward Bound schools more effective and resilient."

As the convening organization for the global network of Outward Bound schools, OBI understands how important it is to engage its members in ways that can lead to the creation of change and progress that are both sustainable and scalable.

We also understand the importance of "place" to a group-focused learning process. Throughout its nearly 80-year history, Outward Bound has been very good at selecting unique learning environments that encourage the exchange of ideas. Choosing to meet among wind-sculpted dunes far from the breezes of the Arabian Sea is no exception.

OBI Journal also hopes to play a convening role by regularly connecting Outward Bound's many communities of action and thought in word and image. This issue therefore includes a number of articles that focus, in one way or another, on culture, such as the instructor exchanges between OB Hong Kong and OB Germany (see page 62), and the mixing of nationalities through the lens of a 1971 article from the old Outward Bound UK publication, STRIVE (page 56), and also by creating an organizational safety culture through focusing on near-miss incidents (page 34). Also covered are the 2018 Asia Regional Staff Symposium, hosted by OB Hong Kong (page 12), and Bacon Chan's "Outward Bound through the Lens of Culture," which asks if Outward Bound's educational ideals have been allowed to change enough to meet the needs of local culture over their decades-long journey from the UK to Hong Kong (page 42).

We also switch from culture to strategy in considering Iain Peter's article about OBI's strategic planning process (page 60) and OB Germany Professional's story of working with Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles to provide a team-building experience (page 54) for 500 top global executives with the strategic objective of helping participants to engage with six new company values through a facilitated process of experience, reflection, and transference to a daily work context.

Lastly, learn about the lived experience of resilience at OB Zimbabwe (page 39), which since its founding in 1961 has determinedly persevered through war, political instability, economic collapse, and spectacular hyperinflation to emerge as a reliable contributor to the development of its country's young people.

We hope you enjoy this issue!



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Page 4, Steve Smith photo: Luke O'Neill; Contents page, clockwise from right: OB New Zealand, OB Zimbabwe, OB Hong Kong, OB UK Trust, Paper Plane Productions, OB Oman, OB Czech Republic, OB Oman, OB Hong Kong, OB Brunei; pages 6-8, OB Brunei; pages 9-11, Paper Plane Productions; pages 12-13, OB Hong Kong; pages 14-17 & 22-25, OB Oman; pages 18-21, OB Czech Republic; pages 26-29, OB Hong Kong; page 30, Paper Plane Productions & OB New Zealand; pages 31-33, OB New Zealand; page 35, upper left: Dan Meyer (1979) and Jed Williamson (1989-2018), bottom center: Steve Smith; pages 36-37, OB Hong Kong; page 38, top: Angie Moline ([www.molinecreative.com](http://www.molinecreative.com)), bottom, Steve Smith; pages 39-41, OB Zimbabwe; pages 42-45, OB Hong Kong; pages 46-47, 49, OB UK Trust; pages 48 & 50-52, Paper Plane Productions; pages 54-55, OB Germany Pro; pages 56-57, OB UK Trust; pages 62-63, OB Hong Kong; page 65, OB Romania; page 67, Jonathan Brady/PA Wire; page 69, Rob Chatfield.

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# C O N T R I B U T O R S



**Kate O'Brien**

*Diversity: Who Cares?*

Kate studied Outdoor Education in Scotland before working at a number of centres and programmes within the United Kingdom and abroad. More recently she completed a Masters in Applied Positive Psychology and is passionate about developing outdoor learning practice by learning from this widely researched area. Kate's current role is working with The Outward Bound Trust to explore workforce diversity.



**Jody Radtke**

*NoMoPhobia*

Jody Radtke has been involved with Outward Bound since 1992, in both field and administrative roles across the US and Canada. In 2001, she received her Master's degree in Transpersonal Counselling Psychology and went to work combining self-discovery and healing in nature and community-based settings. Today, Jody does field work with Outward Bound Canada, teaches wilderness therapy to graduate students of psychology, and runs a private counselling practice.



**Mitsu Iwasaki**

*Lessons from a 50-Year-Old Startup*

Mitsu started his Outward Bound career as an Assistant Instructor in 1996 at the High Sierra Program in California, USA. Since then, he has held roles ranging from Instructor, Course Director, Trainer, Program Director and his last role as Executive Director of Northwest Outward Bound School. As an auditor for Outward Bound International, he has had opportunities to see many expressions of Outward Bound internationally.

He has an under-graduate degree in engineering and a masters degree in non-profit management.

When not at work, he is pushing himself further to discover what's possible through climbing and skiing mountains across North America and around the pacific rim and running ultra marathon races ranging in distances from 50k to 160k.



**Nevin Harper**

*NoMoPhobia*

Nevin Harper is an Associate Professor in the School of Child & Youth Care at the University of Victoria, Canada. He holds a PhD from the University of Minnesota, is the National Research Coordinator for Outward Bound Canada, and contributes substantially to several other organizations, including the Child & Nature Alliance of Canada and the Adventure Therapy International Committee. He is also founder of the Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium. He maintains qualifications as an outdoor guide and instructor and researches the intersection of humans, nature, and outdoor activities.



**Stephanie Kuttner**

*Virtual Reality Storytelling  
a Big Hit for OB New Zealand*

While at school Stephanie always wanted to take part in an Outward Bound course and it felt like a dream fulfilled to join OBNZ as its Marketing and Communications Manager in early 2018. She can't wait to experience a course firsthand, as soon as she finds time away from her Wellington desk and family of four! Highlights so far include impromptu trail runs with instructors in Anakiwa, office yoga sessions, and reading the wonderful student letters to donors.

Stephanie has also worked as a sea kayaking guide, a camera assistant on the Lord of the Rings trilogy, and a trade fair organiser for Tourism New Zealand in Frankfurt, Germany.



**Norfazrin Nadirah Yahya**

*Discover Experiential Learning at  
Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam*

Norfazrin Nadirah Yahya is a junior instructor of Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam. She joined OBBD in 2015 after graduating from the University of Brunei Darussalam, the youngest instructor ever. She is very active in activities such as trail running and jungle trekking, and has a passion for natural rock abseiling and open sea kayaking. She hopes that, through OBBD, more Bruneian youth will become active and exposed to confidence-building outdoor activities.



**Steve Smith**

*Creating a Culture of Risk Management &  
Safety by Focusing on Near-Miss Events*

Steve Smith is the founder of Experiential Consulting, LLC, a risk management consulting company in Seattle, USA, where he can be found exploring the ridgelines and coastlines with an ice axe, kayak paddle, or camera in hand. He serves as the Chair of the Safety Committee for the Portland, Oregon-based Northwest Outward Bound School and served for three years as the Chair of the US-based Wilderness Risk Management Conference. He believes that the transformative impact of Outward Bound programs far outweighs any risks of participating in (or running) them. He had his own near-fatal near-miss climbing in the Cascades range of the Pacific Northwest 20 years ago and would like to hear how culture plays a role in your outdoor program and risk management systems.



**Zunnur Amni Awang Damit**

*Exposing Youth to Outward Bound  
in Brunei Darussalam*

Zunnur Amni Awang Damit has been a junior Training Instructor with Outward

Bound Brunei Darussalam since 2015. She also serves as OBBD's public relations officer, providing marketing, photographing events and training activities, and running social media. She has also helped with roadshows and exhibitions to create awareness about Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam.



**Mohamad Rosfazilah Yusly**

*Discover Experiential Learning at  
Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam  
and Exposing Youth to Outward Bound  
in Brunei Darussalam*

Mohamad Rosfazilah Yusly is Head of Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam. He first joined OBBD in 2015 and has been involved with youth development and physical activities since 2008, when he served as Assistant Chief Youth and Sport Officer at the

Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports. A graduate of the University of Brunei Darussalam, Rosfazilah has remained engaged with the university's student council activities as Head of the Sports Division. He is still active in sports as part of his healthy lifestyle.



**Bacon Chan**

*Outward Bound Through  
the Lens of Culture  
and Asia Regional Staff Symposium*

Bacon Chan is the Senior Programme Coordinator at Outward Bound Hong Kong. He started his career in human resources and later found his passion for the outdoors through an Outward Bound course. In 2011, he decided to join OBHK and has now worked with a wide range of clients, from small children to corporate executives. Bacon has an M.A. in Transcultural European Outdoor Studies and learning about the dynamic cultural perspectives on the outdoors informs his practice. Bacon became a father recently and has realised that being an outdoor educator makes him a better father, and being a father makes him a better outdoor educator. He is keen on sea kayaking, running, and parenting.



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# Exposing Youth to Outward Bound in BRUNEI DARUSSALAM



By Rosfazilah Yusly & Zunnur Amni Awang Damit

Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam is one of the centers in Brunei which organize various activities geared to self-development based on Melayu Islam Beraja, or the national philosophy of Brunei, in line with Brunei's national vision of Wawasan Brunei 2035, the country's long-term development plan. To achieve these goals, OBBD and these other centers use strategies of social welfare to enhance the core values of national identity, including quality of society and leadership.

Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam was established on July 22, 1993, with the aim of enabling youth to build on their physical endurance and mental resilience; to equip themselves with perseverance, courage, patience, discipline, independence, and responsibility; and to adjust to any life situation.


Over the years, efforts have been made to ensure that OBBD is able to achieve its mission, especially in introducing Outward Bound to young people. Most importantly, we have used our traveling "road show" program, held at schools and similar institutions, for many years. This program includes exhibitions, games, introductions, and a short briefing about Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam. To increase the excitement of the road shows, students are given opportunities to try some indoor activities with an Outward Bound flavor. Thanks to

these efforts, many young people have since participated in the various programs provided by OBBD.

This road show program not only helps introduce Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam to youth and cultivate their interest in nature-oriented outdoor education activities, it also has significantly increased community understanding of the concept of learning provided by OBBD, which produces students with leadership, discipline, dedication, and resolve in line with Wawasan Brunei 2035.

Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam will continue taking its road show program to schools, colleges, and other educational institutions, including private schools, to meet the objectives of its establishment and also to achieve the national vision of Wawasan Brunei 2035.

Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam would like to invite and welcome the members of Outward Bound International to visit us, and to enjoy the beauty of the tropical rainforests, untouched nature, and the chirping of birds during outdoor activities.

For further information about OBBD, please visit Facebook or Instagram: Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam. 







# DISCOVER EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT OB BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

By Norfazrin Nadirah Yahya (OBBD Instructor) and Mohamad Rosfazilah Yusly (head of Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam)

## History and Location

The idea of setting up an Outward Bound School in Brunei Darussalam was initiated by His Majesty of Brunei Darussalam in 1993. Based in the easternmost district of Temburong, Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam is in the most comfortable spot in Brunei, far from the bustle of the city and surrounded by nature, flora, and fauna. To reach the Outward Bound site in Batang Duri, Temburong, one must travel by boat across Brunei Bay and then along the Temburong River from Bandar Seri Begawan, the capital of Brunei, for around 45 minutes, then for another 30 minutes through tropical low forests by land vehicle.

***“The establishment of this School is to enable youth in building up their physical and mental capabilities, resilience, courage, patience, discipline, responsibility and adaptability to any kind of situation”***

— Speech by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Muizzadien Waddaulah, Sultan of Brunei Darussalam, on July 22, 1993

## Mission

Like other Outward Bound schools around the globe, OBBD's main focus is to educate youth in character development and to help the community, especially young people, by instilling, developing, and strengthening their character values and personality traits through experiential learning and adventure training in challenging and unfamiliar settings. We at OBBD are also focusing on Brunei Vision 2035 (Wawasan 2035), one of the aims of which is to create youths who are well educated and highly skilled as measured by the highest international standard.

## To Reach We Outreach

To ensure that we reach our goal, Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam started a program called Outreach in early 2018. The objectives are to instill understanding of the concept of learning as practiced by Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam and to explore the creativity of young people, as well as to develop critical thinking and team problem-solving, and to train youths in reflection and self-assessment. OBBD collaborates with other associations and agencies to run the Outreach program by facilitating short courses and briefings for participants.

Experiential learning is highlighted in this area, as we want young people to know and understand the Learning Concepts practiced in OBBD, which are unlike what they learn in the schools. The Outreach course is conducted by Outward Bound instructors, with a packed program that includes an ice-breaking session, team-building games, review sessions, and final projects. So far, the response is very encouraging. Young people are increasingly keen to participate in the courses held in Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam.

## Hopes and Desire

The hopes and desires of Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam are to achieve our goal in building a prestigious society by instilling core values in the youth of Brunei. OBBD also hopes that these young people can become a visionary and high-quality generation who can drive the country to be one of the most highly developed and respected country in Asia or even the world. 🇮🇵





# Lessons from a 50-year-old Startup

By Mitsu Iwasaki



In 2012, with gratitude and optimism, I took the helm at Northwest Outward Bound School (NWOBS), one of the schools in the Outward Bound USA network, as Executive Director. “Let your disabilities be your opportunity” became my mantra, paraphrasing Outward Bound’s co-founder Kurt Hahn. Becoming Executive Director created an opportunity to re-imagine many aspects of Outward Bound in the Northwest, to amplify those things we did well, and to correct those things we were not successful at before and during the 2005 Outward Bound USA network merger and the subsequent late-2011 separation. To continue forward, it became necessary to challenge narratives and beliefs that we held to be absolute and true, including everything from our definition of an Outward Bound course, our business model and structure, and everything in between. In other words, nothing was sacred except for the mission and the core values and beliefs.

During those first few years, we defined ourselves as a startup project with a 50-year legacy. I believe language and definitions are as important as business structure, as they inform how we look at, and how we might default

into, a decision. ‘Experimental School’ prompts us to question assumptions whereas ‘50-year-old school’ holds us to a more static viewpoint.

With this said, we knew static would not work as Northwest Outward Bound / Pacific Crest Outward Bound had been declining in enrollment and had not had more than two years of consecutive year-end operating surpluses for two decades.

We set out to prove the concept that we could build a solvent and inspirational school, one that produced a year-end surplus annually while continuing to make measurable impact on our students and staff. As we would expect with the strength of the Outward Bound brand and the passionate individuals surrounding Outward Bound, the leadership team we assembled and the field staff that came together were capable and passionate, invested in seeing the strongest School with the greatest impact and working tirelessly to rebuild it. I look back over our five years with infinite gratitude to a team that, with a sense of responsible skepticism, extended their faith and aligned into a vision with strong conviction, thoughtfulness, creativity, and a heroic amount of resilience.



In five short years, we established a foundation and grew with restrained optimism — always with long-term health and impact prioritized over short-term growth or comfort. With this, we grew the School from 1.2 million dollars of revenue (USD) to nearly three times that amount at 3.4 million dollars by the end of 2017, while tripling the number of students we served. During this time, the leadership team and field staff continued to deliver highly impactful courses and produced a year-end surplus every year.

Our largest challenges, from my perspective, could be placed into two buckets: culture and business model. There is a tendency in the United States for individuals to confuse business model with tax-status. As a nonprofit, Northwest Outward Bound can technically be considered a charity, a tax-exempt organization. However, with nearly 80% of revenue coming from fees for services and the majority of donations supporting scholarship spots which replace what would be fee-for-service spots, while we are exempt from taxes, our business model more closely resembles a business operating on goods exchanged for a fee. Because wilderness-based open enrollment courses can range in cost from \$200 to nearly \$300 per day, Northwest Outward Bound Schools' typical full-pay students come from the upper 5% of US households. However, because of our aspirations and tax status, our decisions are often guided more by altruism and a confused sense of mission than by the established business model, and as a result resources and expertise can easily become and had been, at times, misallocated. The operation of a private university is the best analogy I can think of.

Origin stories are important, and like many organizations, NWOBS (and most schools in the OB USA network) has its own. Well-known examples of origin stories include “the HP Way” with Hewlett Packard, Tata Industries' commitment to philanthropy with Jamsetji Nusserwanji, and Ingvar Kamprad creating Ikea, starting from humble matchseller to providing well-designed furniture to the masses, among thousands of other great origin stories. These stories help employees and customers connect emotionally to the organization's purpose.

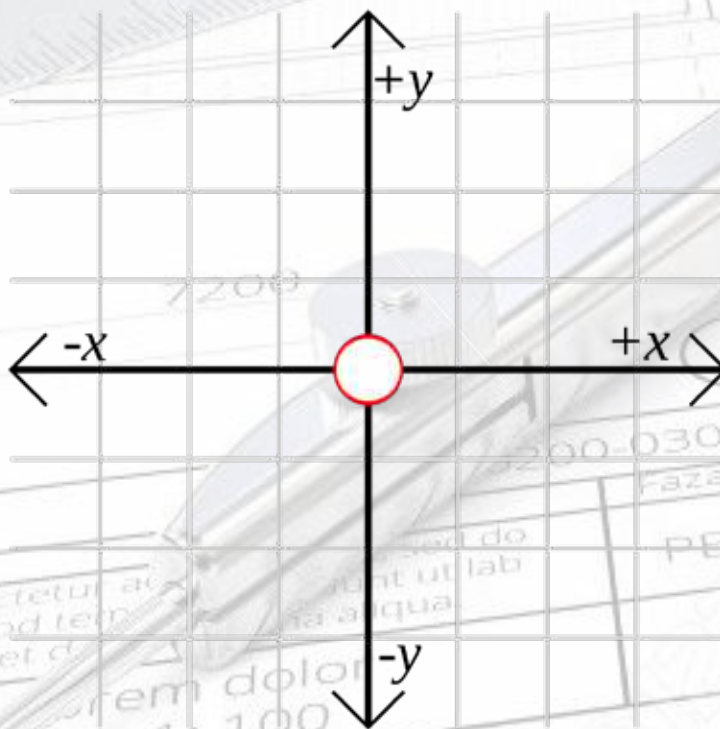
Outward Bound's origin story stood to be a challenge that I believe resulted in a long-term constraint on NWOBS. I say this with the upmost reverence for Kurt Hahn and his work which laid the foundation for experience- and adventure-based character education across the globe. I believe to my core that his pedagogy is sound and our work at Outward Bound is to cultivate curiosity. I wholly believe “there is more in you than you think” and that all of us has more courage, more strength, and more compassion than we know. I also believe our challenge at NWOBS came from our interpretation of, or lack of evolution as an organization because of, our origin story.

At Outward Bound USA, we often talk about Outward Bound's origin story as Hahn and his co-founder Lawrence Holt creating Outward Bound when they observed young sailors lost at sea while older sailors lived through the experiences of

sunken ships. This origin story is then described through Hahn's declines of modern youth, which reads as:

*There can be no doubt that the youth of today have to be protected against certain poisonous effects inherent in present-day civilization. Five social diseases surround them, even in early childhood; decline of memory and imagination due to the confused restlessness of modern life, decline in fitness due to modern methods of locomotion, the decline in initiative due to the widespread disease of spectatoritis, decline in care and skill due to the weakened tradition of craftsmanship, decline in self-discipline due to the ever-present availability of tranquilizers, and decline of compassion due to the unseemly haste with which modern life is conducted.*

These sentiments among others are important in defining Outward Bound's purpose, but also have unintended consequences within the construct of our organization: a resistance to evolving based on the meta-message in our origin story that says modernization has led to a decay of society. In the US, this is further amplified by hubris informed through being the first and largest, and among the most inspirational, character-building organizations in the country.





The resulting impulse to look inwardly with less regard to external audiences, coupled with an organization structured into operational silos, prevented talented individuals from being fully informed and nuanced in their understanding. Additionally, this inward focus coupled with a nonprofit board structure and a Western approach of viewing management through a paternal lens resulted, from my perspective, in an organization in which we stayed static while our market and environment evolved. I often still hear from Outward Bound stakeholders in the USA that Outward Bound's problems during the early 2000s in the US were due to the economy, more competition, etc.... I rarely hear acknowledgement that we, as OB, failed to evolve with the market.

In the interest of brevity, I will take one example of how our structure informed (or uninformed) decisions: we had developed a School in which programs directors (the principal leaders of NWOBS base camps) were not connected to revenue responsibilities; rather their responsibilities encompassed program delivery and controlling expense, with little structured interest in revenue. This unintentionally created an incentive for program teams to look inwardly for course development without regard to marketability. This internal mindset, joined with an origin story of 'the old ways were better', created an environment in which the School became increasingly obsolete while creating courses that were in fact great, efficient, and sadly less relevant within the evolving world around us. NWOBS courses were no longer necessarily centered around the holistic needs of our students and parents and we were not an agile or responsive organization. To this day, despite a handful of market studies, we still often do not recognize that time is our largest competitor.

I believe it is important to be rooted in our legacy but not let narratives and assumptions become a constraint on evolving with the market and the world. In other words, learn from history, honor our legacy, but do not be beholden to it. The world around us is changing constantly.

With an assumption that the external expression of an organization follows its internal priorities, NWOBS needed to improve its organizational structure, change its internal conversations and narratives to become more market-centric, and become agile, responsive, and relevant. The year we adjusted our course inventory, our enrollment jumped by nearly 30%. These adjustments, however, were brought about through multiple years of re-developing our foundation so that they could be made by the leadership team rather than by decree of the Executive Director. (In an organization like Outward Bound, such decrees do not work when seeking long-term change as there is an impulse to push back against authority figures and track back towards legacy.)

With all this said, we at NWOBS did a few simple things to become increasingly relevant and future-facing:

- The leadership team held the origin stories, core beliefs and values, and legacy as critical and important, and simultaneously recognized that the world evolves and we need to evolve along with it.
- The leadership team recognized that it is easier to look outwardly and blame external forces rather than ask what are we not doing, and we corrected for that.
- The leadership team reframed our mental model through incremental change in language and through education of staff to understand that our School is a business. We clarified the difference between business model, our mental model of a School, and our aspirations.
- The leadership team undid departments and directors working in organizational silos by building dependencies into our budgets and transparency into weekly administrative leadership meetings. We developed and encouraged communication across all departments, and matched authority with responsibility. Revenue and cost centers were now combined and programs were developed by individuals incredibly skilled in doing so, with an understanding of and access to information and interest in the revenue and marketability of programs. With increases in the leadership team's authority and transparency coupled to information, individuals became increasingly accountable to each other.
- The leadership team redefined the framework and mental model from what might best be described as paternalism, to an environment that accessed the talent, creativity, wisdom, and resourcefulness of its staff; and I transitioned my mental model to creating environments and becoming a utility player to the senior leadership team.
- The leadership team chose to be strategic and disciplined, and to play the long game despite impulses and forces that compel us to make decisions that benefit the school today; with seasonal cycles, strong and passionate opinions, and as a legacy organization, it takes time to move.

In the end, however, the largest contributor to Northwest Outward Bound's success over the last five years is a team of staff who themselves chose to leave safe harbor, test assumptions we had held as absolute, and shift our gaze from within the School to the outside world. The path to achieve this was through creating channels for communication, creating a safe space to challenge assumptions and beliefs, increasing access to information and learning, providing authority commensurate with responsibilities, initiating long conversations and incremental changes, prioritizing long-term health and impact, and implementing a problem-solving approach informed through humility. Five years ago, with a challenge to build an inspirational and thriving school, we took our greatest challenges and created an opportunity to evolve into what we are today. 🏆



# OUTWARD BOUND ASIA



## REGIONAL STAFF SYMPOSIUM

By Bacon Chan






**I**n mid-June, over 80 instructors and outdoor educators from Outward Bound Hong Kong and nine other Outward Bound schools in the Asia-Pacific region, including Australia, Vietnam, Taiwan, New Zealand, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Brunei, and Singapore, gathered at OBHK's Tai Mong Tsai base for the first-ever Outward Bound regional staff symposium!

The aim of the three-day symposium was to provide a platform for Outward Bound educators in the region to network, share best practices, and exchange ideas. It kicked off with a Maori song about peace, love, and harmony introduced by an Outward Bound New Zealand instructor, and a dynamic narrative of the history of

Outward Bound in the Asia-Pacific region. Blessed with beautiful weather, the symposium delegates had the opportunity to explore local places through means such as kayaking, climbing, and sailing. Delegates also had many engaging conversations on the future development of Outward Bound and outdoor education in the region.

The three days passed by quickly. Everyone left feeling refreshed and energised with more passion and ideas for future courses. The next symposium will hopefully be organised in two years' time at another Outward Bound school in the region. 





## *Creative Ideas for Fundraising and Awareness-Raising from Around the Network:*

Using challenging national and historical journeys to raise awareness of, and funds for, your school

By Mark Evans

I suspect many schools in the Outward Bound community may be in a similar position to us here in Oman, in being too small, and not having enough staff or budget, to do any meaningful sales, marketing, and fundraising beyond the bare minimum. The purpose of this article is to share a couple of creative ideas and thoughts that have worked well for us in this regard, and that with a bit of creative thought could be successfully replicated by many schools.

### **Think big; organising a media-friendly, challenging journey within your own country**

For the first four years of our life, few within Oman knew that Outward Bound existed in the country. When we had gathered enough evidence that our courses really were making a difference, we set about trying to raise awareness of who we were, and what we did. With a marketing budget of zero, we devised a challenging, headline-grabbing journey to connect the two major urban centres in Oman—Salalah, in the south, and Muscat, the capital, some 1,000 kilometers to the north. For maximum effect in terms of media coverage, we timed the journey to coincide with a major event in the national calendar, National Day.

We aimed to cover the distance on foot, by camel, and by rowing and sailing old-fashioned, traditional Omani boats. The route was first plotted onto a map, driven, and thoroughly risk-assessed, and then divided into eight separate stages of ten days. Each stage was 'sold' to a different corporate sponsor as a training opportunity for six of their emerging talent to truly test and demonstrate their leadership and teamwork capabilities. Ten sponsors at \$10,000 USD per sponsor amounted to a revenue of \$100,000 USD. A pair of OB instructors worked with each team, one driving a support vehicle, the second working and walking with the group, rotating each day.

Every night for 80 days was spent sleeping under the stars, and every day ended with a review and debrief, whilst every ten-day leg ended with a solo and an action plan to pull it all together.

Media coverage was extensive, and free. National press covered each team, national TV was present at the start and at the end, national radio followed each team with regular interviews, and each sponsor, using their in-house corporate communications team worked with OBO to promote their own leg of the journey as widely as possible, both internally and externally.

In addition to generating direct funds for OBO, the journey introduced us to ten different corporations and enabled relationships to develop that have led to more dedicated corporate training courses for them and for other companies who were now aware of the existence of OB in Oman. Arrival in the capital city Muscat saw a senior government minister welcome the boat crew ashore, ensuring also that senior government knew we existed and were doing unique training with the youth of Oman. When it came to asking for future support from the government, that contact proved to be invaluable.

Once each year we have replicated this model with great success on shorter journeys within Oman, always trying to give the journey some historical or geographical significance—for example, from the most easterly point of the nation to the highest (sea to summit), or from the coast to the place where oil was first discovered. For these particular journeys, team members had to work closely together, for example, to devise strategies to haul a four-wheeled cart across the desert, to carry their supplies and equipment. For OBO the results were the same: reasonable income, great coverage in the media and the corporate training comty, and a unique experience for professional development for the OBO instructors.





### Top Tips/Lessons Learned

Choose a route that is both challenging, relatively easy in terms of logistical resupply, and historically or geographically meaningful so there is a good story to tell.

Ensure each team is fully briefed prior to the journey. (This only really applied to the first two teams for us, as all the other teams were able to follow the progress and news of those who set off at the start.)

Rather than try to engage the media yourself, use the skill-set and resources of the sponsoring company, who will probably have their own in-house professional communications team. Make sure OB is mentioned in any press releases, with the details of a point of contact or website so people can find out more. Ensure that the OB logo is clearly visible on the side of backpacks, boats, cars, or camels.

When it is all over, ask one of the corporate communications teams to take up the role of acting as your pro-bono communications partner for a year as part of their corporate social investment programme.

Think bigger: organise a historically significant, super-challenging journey within your country or region

Many schools will have in their national history stories of pioneer explorers who did intrepid journeys. In Australia the travels of Burke, Wills, and Flinders are well known, for example, whilst in Canada, Frobisher, Hearne, and Hudson are part of the history of exploration. With a bit of research, most OB schools around the world can probably find at some point in history a significant journey that took place in their country or region. That is what we did in Oman, when in 2016 we set off to recreate the first-ever crossing of the largest desert on earth, the Empty Quarter. With a



budget of 1.3 million USD, all provided by external supporters and sponsors, two Outward Bound staff, including OB Oman instructor Mohamed Al Zadjali, spent 49 days travelling by camel and on foot from Salalah in Oman to Doha in Qatar.

Because of the historical significance of the original journey, and the fact that no one had done it for 85 years, media coverage was both extensive and global. Within one week 5,000 people were following the journey's Facebook page (updated via satellite link each evening), and by day 49 it was estimated that nearly 165 million people had followed or were aware of the journey. TV coverage included Sky News, Al Jazeera, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and the BBC. Radio coverage included the *BBC World Service*, and press coverage included *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Telegraph*, *Reuters*, and *Agence France-Presse*. All great coverage for Outward Bound in Oman, and all at zero cost.

Perhaps the greatest spin-off of all was that Mohamed Zadjali, now a national hero greeted at the airport by national TV and media, could embark on a nationwide lecture tour in schools,

thus raising awareness of OB in our core market. Within three months of our return, Mohamed had spoken to an estimated 6,000 young people. A royal premiere of our expedition documentary ensured that OBO gained yet more recognition within senior national government, which has subsequently resulted in us being identified as the in-country training partner for a national government initiative to identify and train the brightest

100 young minds in the country as Oman prepares itself for the artificial intelligence-led Fourth Industrial Revolution.

### Top Tips/Lessons Learned

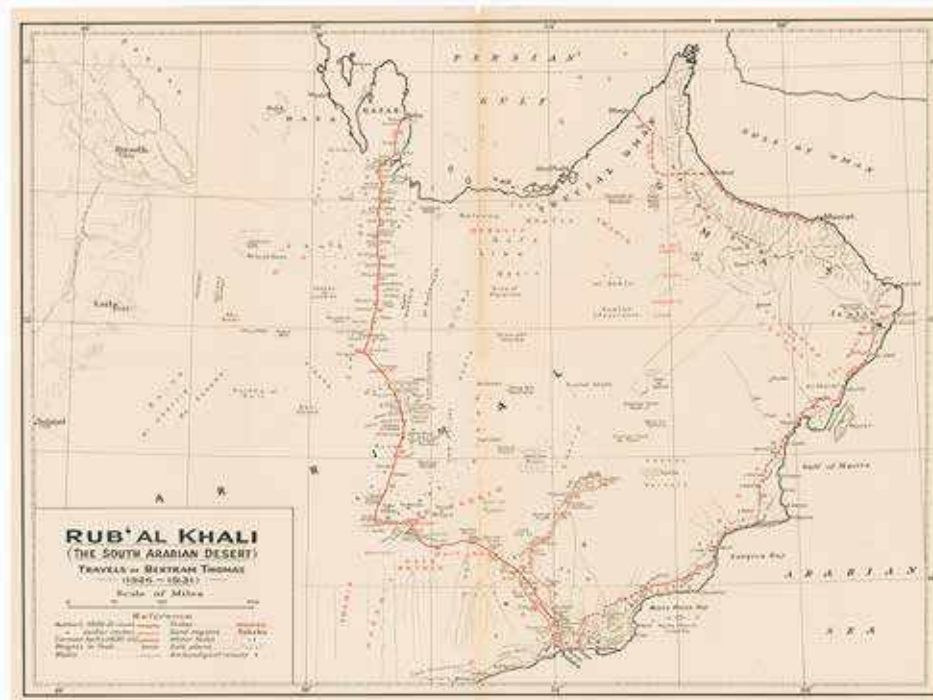
For maximum impact, curiosity, and media interest, select a journey that few, if any, have done for many years (in our case, we were the second ever, 85 years after the initial journey of 1931).

If part of your journey takes you outside of your licensed territory, remember that you require permission from OBI to do so.

Plan with the end in mind; in reality, the end of the physical journey was perhaps the start of the real awareness-raising opportunities for OBO.

Whilst these journeys come at zero financial cost, they do take time in terms of logistical planning and preparation, so it is important to ensure that you plan thoroughly to maximise every opportunity they present – our journey across The Empty Quarter ([www.crossingtheemptyquarter.com](http://www.crossingtheemptyquarter.com)) ended more than two years ago, but we are still benefitting from it today.

So, what are you waiting for? Get out the map of your country, research historical explorers and start planning, which is exactly what we will be doing in the next six months here in Oman as we make plans for an eye-catching journey as the nation celebrates its 50th National Day in 2020. 🇦🇴







# LIFE IS A GOTHIC DOG — A WINTER



## STAGE 1: COURSES HELD IN 2000 AND 2001

This was a winter project held at a cottage. Cross-country skis were used to move around. The primary objectives of the project were:

1. Skis as a natural means for survival and moving around in winter
2. Interest in public affairs (citizenship, being a European)
3. Folklore and traditions of people living in the mountains

## STAGE 2: COURSES HELD IN 2004, 2006, 2007, AND 2009

This stage was marked by our leaving the safe place of a training centre and heading for the raw outdoors. The course focused on staying outdoors in winter for 14 days. A winter trek with subsequent camping was the main form of activity used in this period. During this stage, we used the course name to define the main objectives of the course as follows:

*Life*: a region or specific place where the course takes place

*is*: the current situation in our society,

the issues that we or others face

*a Gothic*: beauty and its various forms in winter

*Dog*: winter and the art of living in winter

Winter courses have a long tradition with the Vacation School Lipnice, the predecessor organization to Outward Bound Czech Republic. The first of them took place 40 years ago in the east of Slovakia. Numerous others followed, in which we looked for new forms and methods of training and learning. Winter provides a new educational element: the outdoor winter. Winter sports and activities carried out in the outdoor winter have a long cultural tradition in the Czech education system, whether they include winter camps of the Rovers or Scouts or traditional skiing courses organized by junior high schools, high schools, or universities.

Personally, I love winter a lot. From the age of eight, I competed in cross-country skiing races and reached a fairly good performance level. The “Life is a Gothic Dog” winter course was a logical outcome of my sports career. When selecting a motto for the course, we chose one from Franz Kafka: “From a certain point onward there is no longer any turning back. That is the point that must be reached.”

The Life is a Gothic Dog course went through three major changes of its objectives, themes, and dramaturgy in its evolution.



# COURSE BY OB CZECH REPUBLIC

By Mirek Hanuš

## STAGE 3: COURSES HELD IN 2011, 2012, AND 2017

It was a dramaturgical challenge for us to achieve the objective of integrating a winter trek in the concept and context of ideas and thoughts so that it is not perceived as a winter survival or mountain trek event but as a pilgrimage — a winter pilgrimage to a destination or goal, yet primarily toward oneself.

Therefore, we designed the entire course as a biodromal project (bios = life, dromos = way), where a series of lectures held at evening bonfires served as a major dramatic element that spanned the entire time from the project's start during a preparation weekend to its very conclusion after a 12-day trek.

The conceptual line of the lecture topics included:

- Relationship between nature and culture
- Friendship and love
- Home and far away
- Faithfulness and adultery
- Journey baits
- Perception vs. experience of the present
- The mode of experience (pleasure vs. edification)
- Focus and concentration
- The horizon as a background or edge of our world
- The world as a horizon of all meanings

- The value of an objective determined by the value of the journey to it
- Life in moderation (not too much of anything!)
- Authenticity
- The natural life
- Genuineness
- The vertical dimension
- Resignation
- Activity
- Service

As you can see, the course themes, objectives, and dramaturgy have evolved significantly since the start of Vacation School Lipnice's winter courses.

Physical work forms an integral part of all our winter projects and nothing in an outdoor winter happens without it. Fire is the most important natural element during the winter trek, since it is an irreplaceable source of life-giving warmth and light. It is the fire that marks a sharp division between a winter project turning into a fight for survival or evolving as a safe pilgrimage. Therefore, in every evening of the course, we determine who will be the 'fireman' and the 'lumberjack'.

The task of the fireman is to select a place where fire will be made and to manage the overall work of shovelling out snow and preparing a place for the bonfire. It is key that the person





in this role knows the practical principles of starting a fire on snow. The fire needs to be made on the natural surface of the ground —on the grass.

Why? If you start a fire on snow, the heat of the fire will cause the fire to sag and the melted snow will tend to put it out. And it often takes the effort of several people to dig down through the snow (and sometimes ice) all the way to the ground. A circle 20 meters in diameter, with snow one meter deep translates into several hundred kilograms of snow, and all that at the end of a day's trek! On a daily basis for 12 days in a row!

The role of the lumberjack, of course, is to collect and supply the wood for the bonfire.

On an OB Czech Republic trek (or any winter adventure) you will soon realize that you cannot survive without physical strength.

You will often need to reconsider your priorities and subconsciously appreciate those who have the strength. Reasonably divided among the persons involved is the most effective way to spend energy to gain warmth. The community and the importance of the group are significant aspects that the participants very frequently mention after the course.

Physical work forces us to be who we really are. It brings everyone back to their own body and allows us to experience a life that does not happen at one





click. If you do something with your hands, it lasts and requires a concentrated effort. When the outcome is reached, it brings us joy and satisfaction from the work accomplished. It incites emotions that strengthen self-concept and self-esteem. On the other hand, physical work makes us tired and our hands and back ache. Sometimes we develop bunions.

In the modern world, physical work tends to disappear from our lives, as we live more digital lives and sit through most of the day. Sometimes we ride a stationary bicycle or go to the gym. However, that kind of physical exercise leaves no real footprints in the surrounding world. It is just a physical effort for the sake of exercising, for our benefit, supposed to make us look better. But such work will not change the world around us! Returning to physical work is essential to maintain the man as a physical being who shapes the world, and that is a cornerstone of the OB Czech Republic philosophy.


## SO WHAT WAS IT LIKE DURING 2017'S GOTHIC DOG?

The Eastern Carpathian and Bukovec Mountains form an arch of mountain ranges which starts in Romania and reaches to Slovakia. In early February of 2017, this was the region where the Gothic Dog course took place. From the total number of 44 registered participants, just 25 arrived at the project start in Medzilaborce. We had had a pretty freezing January and were to face a lot of snow, temperatures around the freezing point, and 124 kilometers of walking. Everyone had many expectations and worries at the same time.

In the first half of the journey, we made a one-day stop at the log house in Osadne to wash, re-pack things, replenish supplies, and relax. OBI Executive Director Iain Peter arrived on Sunday, February 5th. On Monday he joined us for a difficult trek section from Osadne to Cierniny and along the border to the top of Mt. Strop, a total of 11.2 kilometers with an altitude increase of 580 meters.

The best method of walking with 25 participants is to divide the people and instructors in three groups. The first one maps the terrain and 'paves' the way for the rest. The second group follows at a distance. The third group 'relaxes' since someone before them has already clearly marked the way. Every group has its rules of procedure, which define when breaks, for eating and drinking or for putting on or changing clothes, should be taken.

In the afternoon, the first group selected a camping place on a leeward slope and began preparing for their night in the snow. Iain, as a professional, quickly put up his single-person tent. He took the shovel and began to shovel off snow for the yet-to-be bonfire. That evening, flames reached high to the sky, everybody dried their sweaty clothes, stars spun in the sky, and families warmed water for a second supper, all while songs and guitars played. Iain stood in our circle and slowly hummed the melody of our song. It was nice to see many participants talk to Iain in perfect English, asking questions about his job, family, and experience in the mountains.

The following day we continued our trek by descending to the Russian Saddle. There our joint journey ended. After 12 days of trekking, the 2017 Gothic Dog winter course reached its successful conclusion. 





# OUTWARD BOUND WORLD CO

*'Making Outward Bound scho*

# Sultanate



# WORLD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

*tools more effective and resilient'*

*of Oman*





In January 2019, the Outward Bound International World Conference takes place in the Sultanate of Oman, providing a great opportunity for Outward Bound Oman to celebrate its tenth anniversary.

The conference, which has the theme of ‘Making Outward Bound schools more effective and resilient’ runs for four days from January 14–17, and each Outward Bound school in the network has been invited to send three senior staff, plus their board chair. The main workshops will take place at Outward Bound Oman’s new, purpose-built centre, located in an area of desert called the Sharqiya Sands (Ramlat Al Wahibah on the map) some two hours south of the capital city, Muscat.

The purpose of this article is to give those coming to the conference, and those with an interest in the region, some basic background information about the country where, in 2009, Outward Bound established its first school in the Middle East.

Oman is an Arab country located on the southeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula in Western Asia, sharing land borders with the United Arab Emirates to the northwest, Saudi Arabia to the west, and Yemen to the southwest. It shares maritime borders with Iran and Pakistan. From the late 17th century, the Omani Sultanate was a powerful empire, vying with Portugal and Britain for influence in the region, and beyond. At its peak in the 19<sup>th</sup> century,



Omani influence or control extended across the Strait of Hormuz to modern-day Iran and Pakistan and as far south as Zanzibar, and the capital city of Muscat became one of the most important trading ports of the Indian Ocean. Whilst English is widely spoken, the main language is Arabic, and the historical connections with Zanzibar ensure that Swahili is also a common language.

An absolute monarchy, Oman is led by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Al Said, who has been the hereditary leader of the country since 1970. Sultan Qaboos is the longest-serving current ruler in the Middle East, and the third-longest reigning monarch in





the world, and under his rule Oman was recently ranked by the United Nations Development Programme as the most improved nation in the world in terms of development during the preceding 40 years.

Modest oil reserves play an important role in the national economy. In addition to oil, a significant portion of the economy involves tourism and the trade of fish, dates, and certain agricultural produce. Oman is categorized as a high-income economy, and ranks as the 62<sup>nd</sup> most peaceful country in the world according to the 2017 Global Peace Index. The currency is the Omani Rial, with one Rial roughly equating to \$2.60 USD.

In summer, temperatures can reach up to 50° C (122° F), whilst in winter they can drop below 0° C (32° F) at nighttime on the mountains, where one or two days of snow can occur each year. The southern part of Oman experiences a short monsoon each summer, bringing rich greenery and cool temperatures, and providing a home for a diverse range of animals such as the leopard, hyena, and Arabian wolf.

### Outward Bound in Oman


Slightly bigger than the United Kingdom, Oman has a relatively small population of just over four million people, meaning that there is plenty of wilderness to utilise for challenging outdoor training courses. The diverse landscape includes limestone mountains that reach up to 10,000 feet, the largest sand desert on earth called the Rub Al Khali, frankincense-covered hills, and a coastline of more than 1,700 kilometres. This makes it an ideal home for Outward Bound, and in 2009 Outward Bound Oman became the first school to be established in the Middle East.

Set up with seed funding from Shell, BG, Dentons, and Suhail Bahwan, the Oman school has grown rapidly, in nine years increasing from a team of three staff with cast-off furniture operating out of a donated office, to today where it has 31 full-time staff and has just completed the construction of the first of three national centres for outdoor learning.

Depending on the time of year, courses are delivered in the desert or the mountains. All courses are journey-based, with no nights spent in a bunk or centre. Most courses are for Omani youth at school or in higher education, and are delivered either in Arabic or English. These courses are supplemented by a growing number of international schools in the region travelling to Oman for International Award expeditions, as well as by an increasing number of corporate training courses for apprentices and the emerging talent in the leading companies within the country and beyond.



As Outward Bound has grown, it has been able to deliver a wider range of courses specifically designed for job seekers, the visually- and hearing-impaired, orphans, young people recovering from drug related issues, and young entrepreneurs looking to set up their own business. Each winter, Outward Bound Oman delivers three desert courses endorsed by UNESCO that focus on peace building.

More information can be found about the conference at <http://outwardboundoman.com/outward-bound-international-conference/> 



# SCENARIO TRAINING WITH HONG KONG'S GOVERNMENT FLYING SERVICE

By Candy Yan and Donovan Chow

**O**n the morning of January 26th, 2017, Outward Bound Hong Kong engaged in a joint-exercise with the Government Flying Service (GFS), a department of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), to execute a live-winch (hi-line) transfer of a helicopter winchmen onto the deck of their flagship sailing vessel Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong. The exercise took place just off the Clearwater Bay Peninsula, notorious for its rougher sea conditions providing an excellent opportunity for the staff to engage in and train for a worst-case scenario at sea. This would also help to better equip themselves mentally and physically before the next offshore voyage.

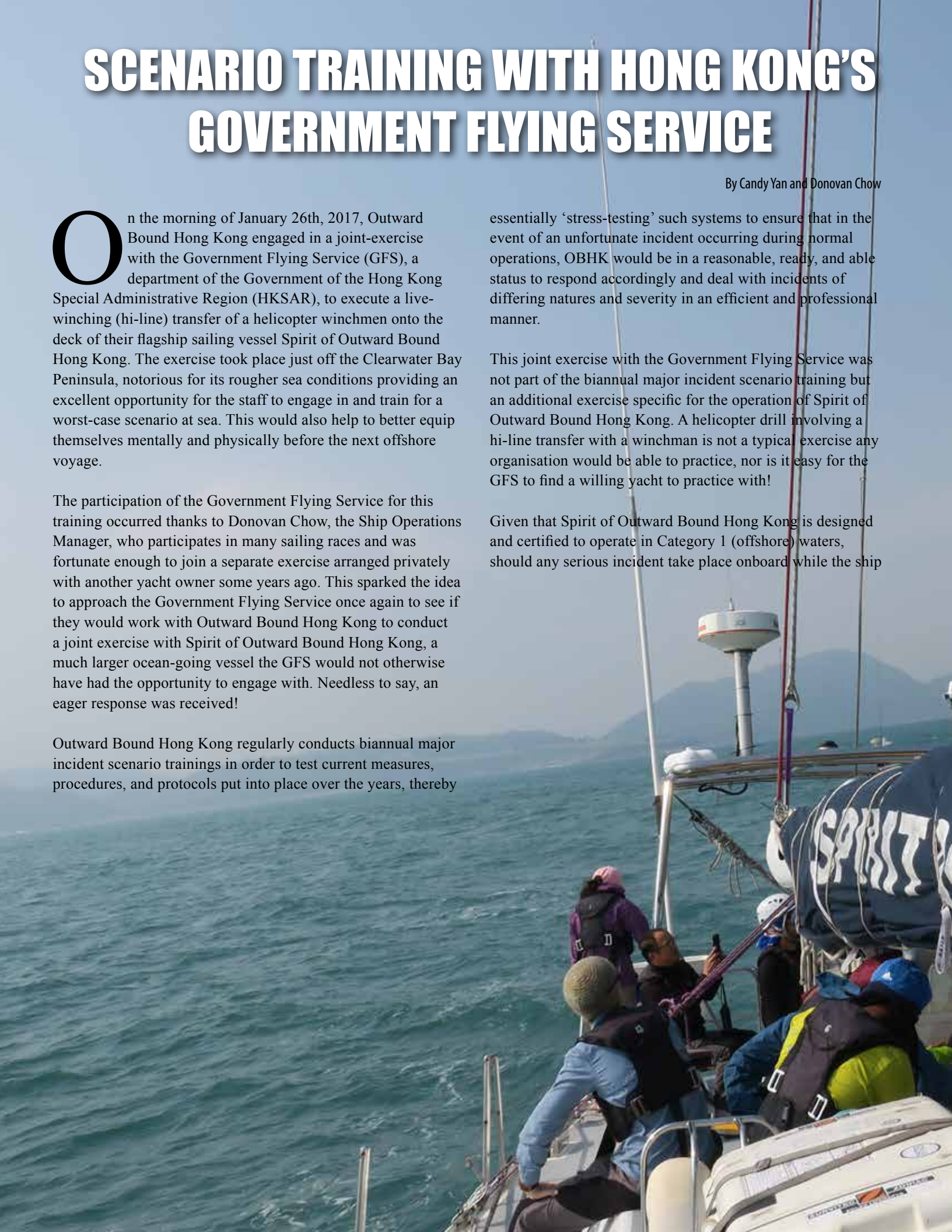
The participation of the Government Flying Service for this training occurred thanks to Donovan Chow, the Ship Operations Manager, who participates in many sailing races and was fortunate enough to join a separate exercise arranged privately with another yacht owner some years ago. This sparked the idea to approach the Government Flying Service once again to see if they would work with Outward Bound Hong Kong to conduct a joint exercise with Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong, a much larger ocean-going vessel the GFS would not otherwise have had the opportunity to engage with. Needless to say, an eager response was received!

Outward Bound Hong Kong regularly conducts biannual major incident scenario trainings in order to test current measures, procedures, and protocols put into place over the years, thereby

essentially 'stress-testing' such systems to ensure that in the event of an unfortunate incident occurring during normal operations, OBHK would be in a reasonable, ready, and able status to respond accordingly and deal with incidents of differing natures and severity in an efficient and professional manner.

This joint exercise with the Government Flying Service was not part of the biannual major incident scenario training but an additional exercise specific for the operation of Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong. A helicopter drill involving a hi-line transfer with a winchman is not a typical exercise any organisation would be able to practice, nor is it easy for the GFS to find a willing yacht to practice with!

Given that Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong is designed and certified to operate in Category 1 (offshore) waters, should any serious incident take place onboard while the ship



is engaged in an offshore voyage, the likelihood of another vessel able to render assistance in these waters is relatively low. Therefore, the Government emergency services must utilise fixed-wing aircraft and heavy-duty helicopters when dealing with inclement offshore weather conditions involving gale force winds and very rough seas, especially when those conditions are combined with a need for emergency medical evacuations or even worse, abandoning ship.

There are a multitude of potential risks while winching persons onto or off a sailing vessel, as chances are the weather conditions will not be favourable, which in turn would cause

the ship's equipment and rigging to move unpredictably and the yacht to struggle to maintain a steady course. Without proper training, the winchman could easily be swung into and tangled within the ship's rigging! There are also risks of electrocution of the ship's crew prior to the winchman landing onboard the vessel if a person were to touch the guideline before it has grounded successfully. Not to mention that weather conditions will also challenge the helicopter pilot's ability to maintain a steady course above the yacht, while anticipating wind gusts and controlling the effects of its downdraught onto the vessel, as well as simultaneously judging sea conditions and trying to lower or lift a person onto or off the vessel.







Once onboard, the winchman's primary role is to assess the situation and become the relay from the ship to the cockpit onboard the helicopter. They can also assist in providing instructions for the ship's heading and speed if there are any changing weather conditions. Moreover, the winchman oversees the deployment of a flight doctor from the deck of the helicopter down onto the yacht if there is a medical incident. Should any persons onboard the vessel require evacuation, the winchman will also oversee the safe securing and packaging of any injured or ill persons for winching up onto the helicopter for transportation to the nearest port for further medical assistance.


This exercise took much coordination between Outward Bound Hong Kong and the Government Flying Service in setting the date, time, and location of the drill. There was plenty of preparation work to be made onboard such as securing lines and removing items susceptible to heavy winds and loose items that could turn into deadly projectiles. Shortly before rendezvous at the arranged location, phone calls were made from the control room of the GFS to alert Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong that the helicopter was en route and convey the aircraft's designated call-sign allowing later communications to occur over VHF radio. Once communication was established, a channel was chosen by the helicopter captain and further communications took place on that designated working channel. All instructions for course headings, speed, required items, and preparations were provided over this radio channel. In the meantime, the helicopter circled overhead continuously until it was satisfied with the current weather conditions and the effect of its downdraught on the yacht.



A verbal confirmation given by the helicopter captain began the hi-line transfer and a guideline was lowered into the water with the helicopter hovering some 50 metres overhead

and to one quarter of the vessel. Satisfied with the height of the aircraft, the helicopter then moved in closer before instructing the ship's crew to take in the guideline onto the deck of the vessel and collect it in a bucket while keeping it loose before the winchman began to step outside of the aircraft and commence lowering onto the deck of the vessel using the aircraft winching system.

After the exercise the pilot and the ship's crew exchanged thanks for the opportunity to partake in this joint exercise, and the vessel was given confirmation that the exercise was complete so it could continue or change course as necessary. Further correspondence occurred over e-mail from the control room of the Government Flying Service to confirm the drill went as planned and for further follow-up matters if any.

It was a pleasure to work with the Government Flying Service who proved to be an exceptionally professional division of the Government of the HKSAR, from planning to orchestrating the entire exercise to their follow-up post-exercise. For Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong, even with full-time professional crew onboard, the training was immensely useful and greatly enjoyed by many operational staff who came out on their day off to take part in this unique exercise. Outward Bound Hong Kong will be looking to conduct many more exercises with the GFS for Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong and even consider in the future extending such training to their smaller fleet of 27-foot and 33-foot ketches which operate in inshore and coastal waters, or even seeking advice and guidance for potential drills involving their fleet of expedition sea kayaks. 





# VIRTUAL REALITY STORYTELLING

a Big Hit for OB New Zealand

By Stephanie Kuttner





For those of us who live and breathe the Outward Bound philosophy and product, it's easy to forget that many of our potential customers don't know what we do and why we do it, nor do they really know what to expect from an Outward Bound course. That fear of the unknown can create a genuine barrier to taking the important step of booking a course. We also know that we have a world-class, life-changing product but that traditional marketing doesn't quite sell the 'sizzle' of the unique OB experience.

With the launch of a new event strategy aimed at raising our brand recognition in schools and the adult fitness market, OB New Zealand needed a promotional tool that conveyed the OB 'X Factor' and established a genuine point of difference at trade and consumer events. The key goal was to have something that drew people in, provoked an emotional response, and left them wanting to go to Anakiwa to experience Outward Bound first hand. It also needed to communicate in a way that other competing experiences didn't.

Enter virtual reality, or VR. Unlike traditional user interfaces, VR places the user inside an experience. Instead of viewing a screen in front of them, users are immersed and able to interact with 3D worlds. By simulating as many senses as possible, such as vision, hearing, and touch, the computer is transformed into a gatekeeper to this artificial world.

For sales manager Amanda Fogarty, developing the organisation's first VR experience felt daunting; but she also knew it could deliver the visceral customer experience they wanted. "Selling a product that prides itself on switching off from digital noise, it felt counterintuitive to utilise progressive technology to promote our product, but the goal was always to do something out of the box and VR delivered on every level."



"Thanks to our production house, Wrestler, it was a positive and successful experience. They had our best interests at heart and VR is their speciality. They understood the brief, were excited to be part of the project, added innovative ideas to enhance the experience, and worked to our budget. The whole process took just four months from initial concept to finished product. And considering the number of variables at play, we were really happy with the result."





The key deliverables for Wrestler were to produce a two-minute, multi-sensory VR video that was flexible and cost-effective, modern, fun, shareable, on brand with the OBNZ values, and multi-platform, and which included a 2D-adaptable version for YouTube and Facebook.

For Wrestler director Hannah McOwan, the biggest challenge with the project was taking their 360-degree camera to places it had never been before.

“In order to capture the spirit and adventure of the course, we invented a lot of custom camera rigs from scratch, allowing us to wear the camera, attach it to a climbing harness and helmet or

mount it to the side of a rock face, kayak, or cutter. We learnt a lot from this extraordinary filming experience and it was a real privilege to experience the beauty and magic of Anakiwa alongside the awesome Outward Bound team.”

Filming took place over three days in December 2017 with six members of the Wellington office team becoming the ‘stars’ of the VR experience. Accompanied by the three-man film crew from Wrestler and a handful of experienced instructors, the crew filmed five classic Outward Bound activities chosen to give viewers a taste of the many different environments encountered on a course. Activities included sailing, river kayaking, rock climbing, tramping, and mud rolling.




Filming involved some pretty high-tech equipment, several outtakes, and of course a lot of laughs! The rock wall scene especially was challenging with instructors and our 'stars' having to climb wearing cameras and following specific instructions to nail the shots. And it's the rock wall scene that delivers the most 'oohs' and 'ahhs' from viewers, especially if they don't like heights! The full 360-degree perspective is incredible at stimulating movement and height perception.

Since the video's completion, the OBNZ team have been busy sharing their new virtual experience at a range of events including dragon boat festivals, school career expos, and marathon events. Relationship manager James Wilson has been excited by the response from the public. "We've really noticed how it's created a point of difference with competitors at consumer events. The futuristic-looking VR headsets certainly spark curiosity and having the 360-degree video playing in the background on a large screen is also eye-catching. The technology is easy to use and so far we haven't experienced many glitches."

VR headsets and compatible mobile phones are required to put the VR experience into action. Several headset options are available, from low-cost disposable cardboard versions to high-tech headsets like the Oculus, which can easily be hired from most production equipment houses.

To check out the 360-degree video in 2D format, check out this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7HgMyBbX00>

Remember to use your cursor to scroll around the environment! You can also contact Stephanie Kuttner, Marketing & Communications Manager at OBNZ, for more information about the project. [skuttner@outwardbound.co.nz](mailto:skuttner@outwardbound.co.nz)

Outward Bound New Zealand (OBNZ) operates from Anakiwa in the Marlborough Sounds at the tip of the South Island. Each year 1,800 students visit the school and are ably guided through their course by OBNZ's 40+ full-time instructors and support staff. The sales, fundraising, marketing, and accounts team of 18 work from a central city office in New Zealand's capital Wellington. 







# Creating a Culture of Risk Management & Safety

by Focusing on Near-Miss Events

By Steve Smith

As Outward Bound schools around the world continuously strive to refine our policies, training, and systems for safety and risk management, we should also remember to focus on the critical yet sometimes hard to measure role which organizational culture plays.

No discussion of organizational safety culture should overlook the vital role that Paul O'Neill played when he took over as CEO of the US manufacturing company Alcoa in 1987. The company had an above-average safety record (measured in terms of employee injuries and lost days), but was financially struggling. O'Neill's audacious decision to make worker safety the company's highest priority was met with shock and dismay from stakeholders, many of whom immediately began to sell off their shares based on assumptions that things could only go downhill from there. Little did they know that O'Neill's emphasis on safety would create habits, efficiencies, and new directions for Alcoa that would lead the company not only to improve its safety practices but also to quintuple its annual revenue at the same time.

Stepping to the podium to address the assembled crowd his first day on the job, O'Neill drew confused looks when he made the following announcement:

*I want to talk to you about worker safety. Every year, numerous Alcoa workers are injured so badly that they miss a day of work. I intend to make Alcoa the safest company in America. I intend to go for zero injuries.*

Setting a goal of "zero incidents" is not unheard of in the outdoor industry and can be seen as an aspirational (rather than actually achievable) goal, a way to establish that safety is a value for an organization. However, risk managers have come to realize that there can be unintended consequences that come from fixating on zero injuries as a safety goal (most notably, it often has the effect of suppressing actual incident reporting). In O'Neill's case, however, it was just part of a much larger, sweeping reform of organizational culture and habits. After O'Neill's unusual opening remarks, one of the key investors in the room attempted to turn the new CEO's attention back to the bottom line, profit margins, and new business opportunities in the aerospace industry. O'Neill simply wasn't having it:

*I'm not certain you heard me. If you want to understand how Alcoa is doing, you need to look at our workplace safety figures. If we bring our injury rates down, it won't be because of cheer-leading or the nonsense you sometimes hear from other CEOs. It will be because the individuals at this company have agreed to become part of something important: They've devoted themselves to creating a habit of excellence. Safety will be an indicator that we're making progress in changing our habits across the entire institution. That's how we should be judged.*

O'Neill had spent some time working for the federal government and was a keen observer of organizational routines, which he saw as the organizational equivalent of habits for individual people. "We were basically ceding decision making to a process that occurred without actually thinking," he said. At the same time, he believed that such routines could be replaced by more effective ones, which he called "keystone habits" driven by his emphasis on safety. Incredibly, by focusing on safety, what he really led Alcoa to do was to focus on communication, problem solving, innovation, and breaking down the hierarchies that led to a lot of accidents taking place. By becoming a more safety-conscious company, Alcoa became a team, and a very efficient, successful business as a result.

One concrete example where keystone habits came together occurred when O'Neill was notified about some safety issues going on in one of Alcoa's factories in Mexico. There had been some workers there who grew sick due to fumes and the incident was addressed locally but never reported to headquarters — essentially, a cover-up (or at least, a blind-spot for management).

Upon learning of the cover-up, which violated one of O'Neill's fundamental principles (incident reporting within 24 hours), the well-respected senior plant manager was immediately fired, much to the shock of others in the organization. "It might have been hard at another company to fire someone who had been there so long," O'Neill told me. "It wasn't hard for me. It was clear what our values dictated. He got fired because he didn't report the incident, and so no one else had the opportunity to learn from it. Not sharing an opportunity to learn is a cardinal sin."

Incident data from studies show that O'Neill is right about that. Failing to report incidents creates blind spots for management,

and takes away opportunities to correct the issues that are causing the incidents to occur. Even worse, failing to report near-misses creates even more missed opportunities, as some studies have shown over 300 near-misses occur for every critical incident.

## Are near-misses correlated with actual incidents?

The US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) defines a near-miss as “an incident in which no property was damaged and no personal injury was sustained, but where, given a slight shift in time or position, damage or injury easily could have occurred.” Near-misses may also be referred to as close calls, near accidents, accident precursors, injury-free events and, in the case of moving objects, near-collisions. We like to focus on their potential as “accident precursors,” as discussed in this 2012 article: <http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/6843--articles-6843-everybody-gets-to-go-home-in-one-piece>.

### POTENTIAL CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS IN OUTDOOR PURSUITS

A matrix designed by Dan Meyer (1979) and revised by Jed Williamson (1989-2018) ©

Potentially Unsafe Conditions Due To:	Potentially Unsafe Acts Due To:	Potential Errors in Judgment Due To:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate Area Security (Physical, Political, Cultural)</li> <li>Falling Objects (Rocks, etc.)</li> <li>Bad Weather</li> <li>Equipment/Clothing</li> <li>Swift/Cold Water</li> <li>Animals/Plants</li> <li>Physical/Psychological Profile of Participants and/or Staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate Protection</li> <li>Inadequate Instruction</li> <li>Inadequate Supervision</li> <li>Unsafe Speed (Fast/Slow)</li> <li>Inadequate or Improper Food/Drink / Medications</li> <li>Poor Position</li> <li>Unauthorized/Improper Procedure (Includes Failing to Follow Directions, Misuse of Technology)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desire to Please Others</li> <li>Trying to Adhere to a Schedule</li> <li>Misperception</li> <li>New or Unexpected Situation (Includes Fear and Panic)</li> <li>Fatigue</li> <li>Distraction</li> <li>Miscommunication</li> <li>Disregarding Instincts</li> </ul>

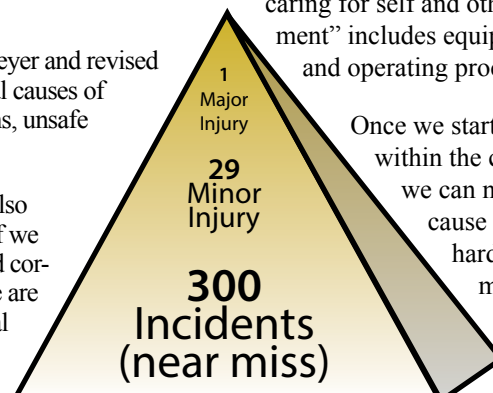
According to multiple studies (<http://crsp-safety101.blogspot.com/2012/07/the-safety-triangle-explained.html>), there is a statistical relationship between near-misses, property damage, injuries, and critical incidents (see Heinrich’s Safety Triangle in graphic below). These studies were done across many different settings, so it may be difficult to extrapolate directly to the context of wilderness or outdoor programs. Even so, the overarching lessons from these studies are nonetheless useful and salient for us at Outward Bound.

Different studies show different ratios, but a prevailing theme is that there are hundreds of near-misses for every major injury. This brings us back to the notion that near-misses can function as “accident precursors.”

## Why does all this matter?

Consider the matrix above, designed by Dan Meyer and revised by Jed Williamson, which classifies the potential causes of accidents into three categories (unsafe conditions, unsafe acts, and errors in judgment):

Simply put, factors that cause near-misses can also cause critical incidents. It stands to reason that if we treat near-misses as opportunities to identify and correct the factors causing the near-misses, then we are statistically decreasing the likelihood of a critical incident (caused by those same factors).



## Is it possible to still have a critical incident even if we focus on near-misses?

Of course, this approach does not guarantee any specific outcome, but it does help create a culture focused on learning. Critics of Heinrich’s Safety Triangle point out that his original calculation of the 300:1 ratio of near-misses to major injuries was actually based on incident reports which managers generated and that they may have had incentive to blame the workers or seek easy answers rather than looking at systemic factors that may have contributed to the incident or near-miss. I agree with this critique and emphasize that near-miss reporting is only useful if it’s used to look at all of the contributing factors, to seek out complex (not simple) answers, and to recognize that people operate within systems. Effective near-miss reporting focuses on the future: looking forward to prevent incidents, not looking back to assign blame.

## How do we best identify learning from near-misses and incidents?

Some Outward Bound programs utilize “root cause analysis” — drilling down below the immediate cause of an incident to identify an underlying cause — but a deeper look at the technique itself reveals pros and cons when seen through a cultural lens. One benefit to root cause analysis is that it invites deeper analysis and can stimulate conversation and potentially promote learning. A downside is that it invites us to oversimplify what is inherently complex, can yield very different root causes depending on who is involved in the discussion, and can ultimately arrive at pat answers which truncate learning from an incident — the opposite of what it intends to do. By arriving at a single answer, it decreases the chances of alternative answers presenting themselves or even for there to be incentive to find alternative answers. To quote safety expert and author Sidney Dekker, “There is no more a single root cause for why an incident occurred than there is a single root cause for why another did not occur. There is no root cause.” Incidents arise from complex factors including human, environmental, and behavioral factors, which leads us to another triangle.

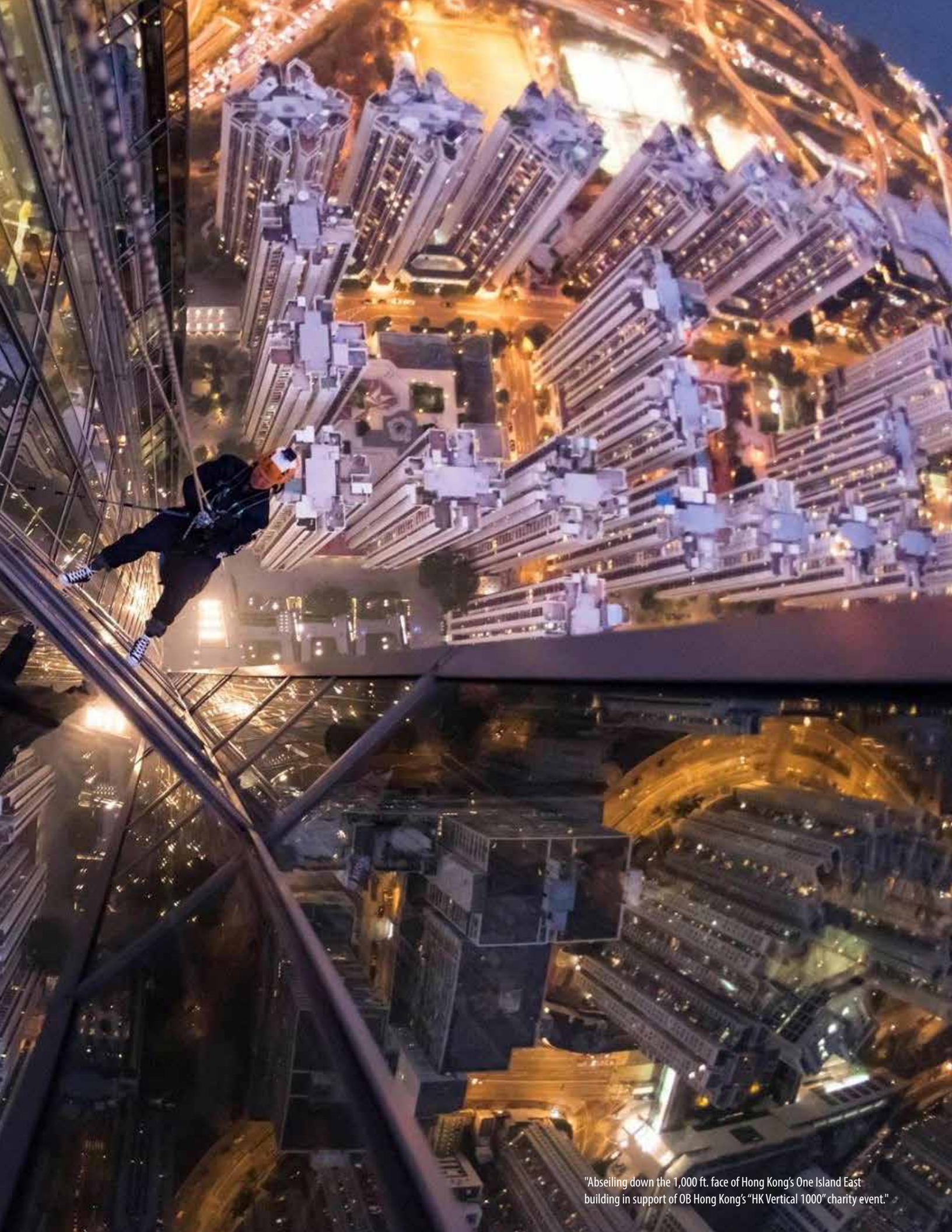
This “Safety Culture Triad,” (next page) as described by E. Scott Geller, focuses on three primary and interrelated elements. “People” includes inherent characteristics such as personality, knowledge, skills, and abilities. “Behaviors” include complying with policy, following training, communicating, and actively caring for self and others, as well as group dynamics. “Environment” includes equipment, policies, maintenance, standards, and operating procedures.

Once we start looking at incidents and near-misses within the context of a complex organizational culture, we can no longer say that there is a single root cause or blame one person. We must arrive at the harder task of seeing that the incident or near-miss occurred within the system we work within and can only be addressed through systemic learning and changes. Rather than imposing solutions from above





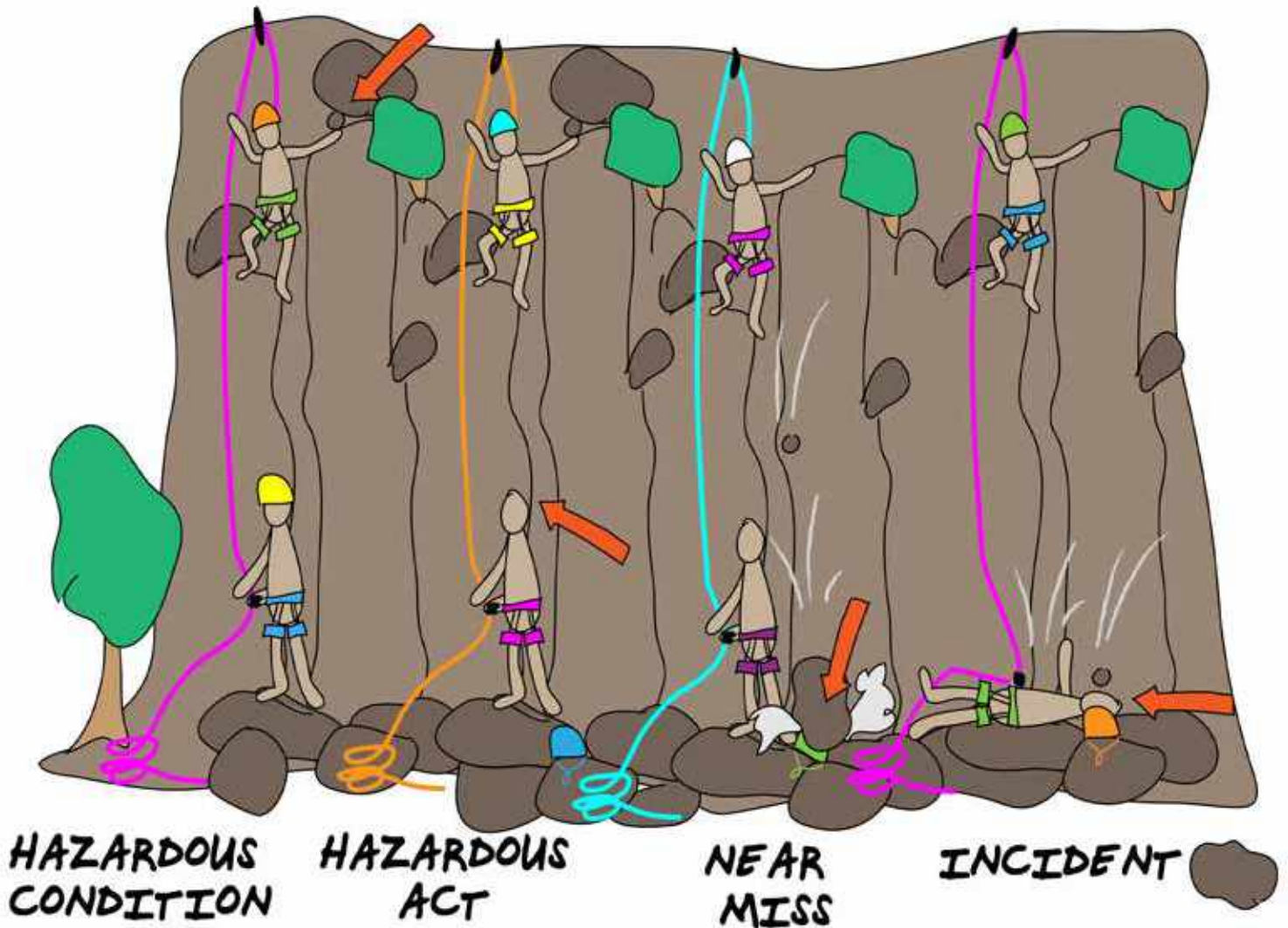




"Abseiling down the 1,000 ft. face of Hong Kong's One Island East building in support of OB Hong Kong's "HK Vertical 1000" charity event."

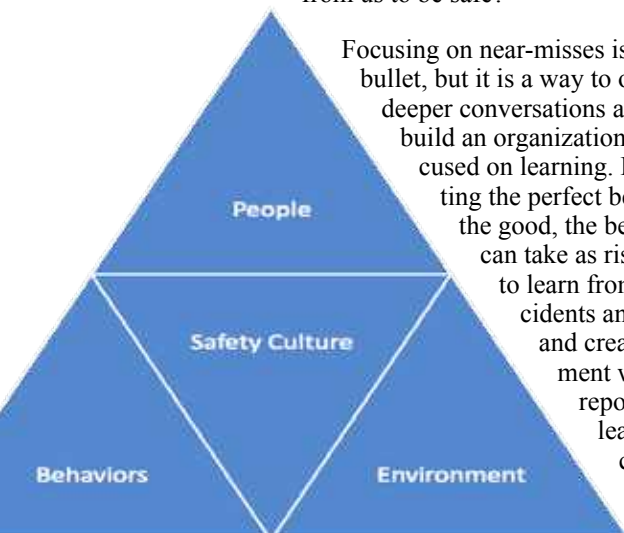


Outward Bound instructor and graphic artist Angie Moline summarizes the subtle distinctions between some of these elements in the following graphic:



and telling people what we need them to do to be safe, we can engage the whole organization and ask those involved in the incident, “what do you need from us to be safe?”

Focusing on near-misses is not a magic bullet, but it is a way to open up these deeper conversations and begin to build an organizational culture focused on learning. Rather than letting the perfect be the enemy of the good, the best approach we can take as risk managers is to learn from our own incidents and near-misses and create an environment which fosters reporting and learning, which can lead to prevention. 



To learn more about these concepts, the author recommends the following resources:

Dekker, Sidney. Field Guide to Understanding ‘Human Error’ (2014)

Geller, E. Scott. The Psychology of Safety Handbook (2001)

Duhigg, Charles. The Power of Habit (2012)

[The Safety Triangle Explained \(2012\)](#)

[Change One Habit to Change Everything. NY Times \(2017\)](#)

[Everybody gets to go home in one piece. Safety and Health Magazine \(2012\)](#)



# And ... not to yield!

## A brief history of the world's most resilient Outward Bound school

By Andrew Shoesmith

As the incoming CEO of Outward Bound Zimbabwe, the editor of the OBI Journal asked me if I would like to contribute to this year's issue. I was desperate to get the word out about Outward Bound Zimbabwe (OBZ) but I could not think of much to boast about. Frankly we have been struggling through economic and political situations for our entire history, and our facilities bear many of the hallmarks of serial financial neglect.

The editor, quite logically, said, "Why don't you write about that?"

OBZ received its charter to operate in 1961 (possibly the third or fourth international Outward Bound Centre worldwide). Derek Barbanell, who had been seconded from the Ministry of Education to set up the school, was its first Warden. The site chosen by John Ball, Manager of Charter Estates and Honorary Warden of the Chimanimani National Park, was on a perennial stream in an amphitheatre created by the Chimanimani Mountains in the southeast of the country, bordering Mozambique.

The mountains are what makes the OBZ site in Chimanimani so special. Chimanimani means "to walk in a single file" because that is literally the only way to travel. The region's topography consists of four major fold mountains. The mountains characteristically comprise quartzite or white sandstone crags. Each is separated by the relentless carving of perennial rivers fed by wetlands that sponge up water during Zimbabwe's short summer rainfall.

The result is a combination of steep jagged mountain ranges and peaks, each shouldered, generally eastwards, by rolling planes, and each separated by stunningly beautiful rivers, waterfalls, rapids, and pools. Caves are a common land feature and the terrain is nothing short of ideal for hiking and climbing.

The OBZ Centre was established at the base of the western side of the first range. The first buildings at the Centre were wattle and daub. The road to the centre was problematic and there was no water system. Permanent buildings were not erected until 1963. A committee of four estate managers was established to run the school and the first instructors were volunteers from all parts of the globe.

The breakup of the Central African Federation (Rhodesia and Nyasaland) in 1963 was a difficult time for the school. At the end of 1966, Bill Bailey took over as Warden. His energy, hard work, and inspiration did a great deal to make the Centre the instructional success it still is today—but it was never easy. During the liberation war years the Centre was closed, the buildings were booby-trapped, and the surroundings landmined.

After Zimbabwe obtained its independence in 1980, Denis Behrens, who had been on one of the first executive courses at the school, decided it was time to get the school going again. In 1986, with a great deal of work and persuasion, he managed to get several influential businessmen onto the board. With them and his perseverance and vision, the school opened its doors once again in January 1987.



Rob Johnstone became the next Warden. The fifteen years after independence were some of the best in living memory for Zimbabweans. Tourism flourished and Chimanimani benefited from this as Zimbabwe's most popular international tourist destination outside of Victoria Falls. The OBZ School enjoyed relative prosperity too under the excellent leadership of the then warden Rob Johnstone.

The late '90s were again a difficult time for Zimbabwe and the land redistribution programme of Robert Mugabe's government underpinned a period of economic collapse that culminated in inflation and a devaluation of the Zimbabwe dollar to something nearly worthless! The final value of the Zimbabwe dollar dropped to the extent that you would need 200,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, or  $2 \times 10^{35}$  Zimbabwe dollars to purchase our starting dollar at independence in 1980.

It's hard to explain what that means in terms of budgeting, accounting, and procurement when you are running a remote operation two hours away from the nearest city, but suffice to say that the then Warden, Guy Carey, achieved things that any lesser men would have easily yielded to! Anecdotal, in reality purchases would often double in price during the two hour drive from the centre to the shops (inflation running at 79,600,000,000% during these times)!

The year of 2008 saw a coalition government and US dollarization of the Zimbabwe economy. These were also tough times as bad habits of living in hyperinflation needed to be unlearned. OBZ continued to serve the nation's children, and a small

amount of corporates, by providing outstanding programmes in spectacular surroundings with amazingly resilient people! OBZ Principal Dave Meikle held the fort and his wife, Irene, did amazing work with the community by teaching children in the local community maths and English in a small shelter on the site.

Since then, thousands of young people have passed through the school and had their lives changed for the better.

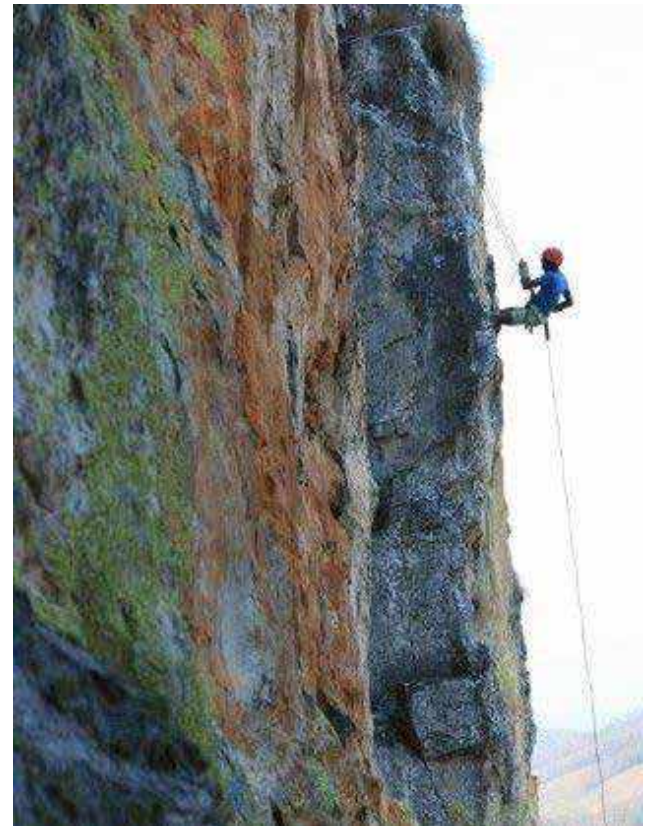
Recently Zimbabwe's foreign exchange reserves have dried up and the nation again faces inflationary times. As history has shown, training, maintenance, and development plans all get delayed and it looks like we are again moving into another austere period!

OBZ will strive on and Zimbabweans will remain fortunate to have a school such as Outward Bound with its long history of struggling to serve the development of young people in a setting which arguably could be the most spectacular in the whole world, and whose economic background could arguably be the most complicated!


The new president in Zimbabwe is leading "the new dispensation" and declaring Zimbabwe "open for business." Outward Bound Zimbabwe also remains open for business and we welcome the Outward Bound family to visit our most beautiful country and enjoy the hospitality of our friendly people. Make sure Chimanimani is on your bucket list! 🇿🇼









The background image is a full-page photograph of a sunset or sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds. In the foreground, several people are silhouetted against the bright light, standing on what appears to be a pier or a boat. The water is calm, and the overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

# Outward Bound THROUGH THE LENS OF CULTURE

By Bacon Chan

## FROM ABERDOVEY TO HONG KONG

As the programme coordinator at Outward Bound Hong Kong (OBHK), I usually welcome participants to Outward Bound by telling them about World War II, Kurt Hahn, Aberdovey, the young seamen, and the need for character building. I also tell them that character building is even more relevant nowadays in a continuously changing world, and in a metaphorical sense they will go through what the seamen experienced decades ago.

Last year I visited Aberdovey and shadowed a course there. I was impressed, but also surprised, by how much the operations, facilities, course objectives, and activities of OBHK were similar to that in Aberdovey, despite the geographical and cultural differences. As a matter of fact, OBHK has been under heavy British influences since the early years, as the colonial government was instrumental in bringing Outward Bound to Hong Kong. Wardens and instructors in the early years were seconded from the UK. On a positive note, it seems that we have managed to uphold the Outward Bound standard and preserve the educational ideals quite well. But from a critical perspective, are we doing enough to transform Outward Bound to respond to the local culture? This article is focused on the case of Hong Kong, but the lessons learnt are applicable to many other cultures.

## THE RELEVANCE OF RESILIENCE

Resilience is often a key theme in our courses, as Outward Bound is known for its hardship. We talk about resilience in our youth courses, school courses, and corporate courses. In 2016, there was a youth suicide trend in Hong Kong primarily attributed to high academic pressure. The government and many schools saw outdoor adventure to be an effective way to “toughen up” the youth. However, many local educators questioned if resilience was what Hong Kong youth needed the most. Hong Kong education is often criticised for its spoon-fed approach as students take little ownership in what and how to learn. Among other things, curiosity to explore, courage to make



mistakes, and autonomy to learn may be as important as resilience. Participants who finished a course often see nature as an intimidating place because of the hardship experienced. Perhaps a course that is less physically demanding but engaging and challenging in other aspects might enable other possibilities in terms of learning outcomes. Course objectives should be responsive to the local and current needs of the community.

## CONNECTION TO THE PLACE

An Outward Bound course is inevitably connected to the natural, historical, and cultural landscape of the surroundings. The skills to navigate and travel safely might be transferable from space to space, but the meaning and significance of the journey is unique in each place. A local village is not just a place where somebody lives, but also carries with it the wisdom and custom accumulated over the years. In a globalised world where cities are becoming homogenised and people are becoming rootless, Outward Bound courses offer unique opportunities for individuals to connect to the local place in a deeper level, and to showcase the life skills learnt in the course.

Recently, we have been more conscious in connecting with the neighbouring local villages.

One of them is a Catholic Hakka village called Yim Tin Tsai (literally Small Salt Farm) whose history is like a miniature of Hong Kong, illustrating very well how Chinese culture has become infused with Western ideas over the past century. As part of a typical Outward Bound sea kayaking course, we

"Everything  
constantly changes,  
as changes itself are  
constant."

—from a Hong Kong local pop song



organise service projects for participants from the city to learn about and contribute to the village. The participants not only learn more about local villages, but develop a stronger sense of belonging, and a clearer picture of their individual identity within the larger community.

## SENSITIVITY TO LOCAL CULTURE

For those who don't know about our trade, magic seems to happen in Outward Bound. We know that there are many delicate psychological and group processes taking place. Most of the knowledge and theories in outdoor education are based on experiences in WEIRD societies (a term coined by anthropologist Jared Diamond, (author of bestseller *Guns, Germs and Steel*), for Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, and Democratic). While many of these psychological models, like Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory, make a lot of sense even in other cultures, we should still approach them with a critical mind. Different cultures can vary drastically in dimensions such as level of individualism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance, as highlighted by sociologist Geert Hofstede.

For example, Hong Kong is a lot higher on collectivism than the UK. In Chinese culture, the concept of self refers not only to the individual self, but also collective self of family and local community. The group process of a Hong Kong group is probably different from a British group. From my observation at OBHK, participants are often more hesitant to express themselves and argue with others, and groups often skip the stage of "storming" in its development. Sometimes tension builds up in the team in a subtle way, and a structured way to storm is facilitated to help the team develop. More reflection and a wider body of knowledge are needed to make our practice culturally sensitive.

## THE FIRST STEP

In a recent active-ageing course where participants are in their 50s or 60s, we introduced the concept of 'slow journey'. The focus was put more on reflection and connection to local place than physical challenge since the key objective of the course was to explore the meaning of retired life. While some participants really appreciated the space to reflect on their life, some were disappointed and not very receptive to the idea of slow journey, as in their opinion Outward Bound should be physically demanding and high tempo. Their feedback was helpful for us to plan the next cohort of the course. As always, changes can be painful—but I believe that being more culturally sensitive and intentional in our practice helps us develop more impactful and relevant outdoor courses.


"The journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step." (Laozi, ancient Chinese philosopher)

Note: The article is based on my personal experiences and thoughts. It does not represent OBHK's organisational stance.

## IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DIG DEEPER:

Bond, Michael Harris. *The Psychology of the Chinese People*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2008.

Wattchow, Brian and Mike Brown. *A Pedagogy of Place: Outdoor Education for a Changing World*. Clayton, Vic: Monash University Pub, 2011.

The book can be accessed electronically for free at: <http://books.publishing.monash.edu/apps/bookworm/view/A+Pedagogy+of+Place/131/pp10000a.xhtml> 









# Remembering Moray Sea School

By Outward Bound UK Trust



It is a testament to the enduring impact of Outward Bound that 42 years after the doors had closed for the last time in 1976, over 120 alumni, former instructors, and wardens made the pilgrimage in June 2018 to the Burghead peninsula, to remember and celebrate their alma mater, the Moray Sea School.

The school trialled its first courses in 1949 as the Scottish counterpart to Outward Bound in Aberdovey, Wales. Under the watchful eye of Kurt Hahn, the founder of and the then Principal of Gordons-toun independent school, the Moray Sea School offered its students an intensive four-week course that included training in sea and mountain rescue, sea and mountain expeditions, rock climbing, and daily cold showers!

Moray encompassed Hahn's Salem Schule teaching philosophy through an education system promoting principles of independence and self-awareness through outdoor learning experiences and respect for community, as well as an understanding of the connection between the two.

Today, The Outward Bound Trust is the UK's leading provider of bursary-assisted outdoor learning. In 2016, 25,127 young people attended courses at centres on the Welsh coast, in the Lake District, and in the Highlands. For context, between 1949 and 1976, the Moray Sea School provided life-changing and transformational courses to approximately 25,000 young men.

The buzz at the now normally sedate harbour, where the Prince Louis training ships (both I and II, the latter affectionately known

as 'Spewy Louis') once moored and set sail from, was palpable. As the crowds gathered, the distance between memory and present day nostalgia shortened, the noise increased, old friendships were re-kindled, and new friendships were made.

Despite holding a special place in the hearts of many people in the region and its dispersed alumni, there was previously no official commemoration of the school in the village. Concerned about the memories of the school being forgotten, former Moray instructor (1967–70) and local Hopeman resident Ed McCann began raising money for a lasting tribute last year.

He said it was important that former pupils returning to the area had a place to visit and reminisce: "Lessons taught at the school set individuals up for life in terms of the huge impact on self-confidence, team work, sense of achievement and self-worth. The commemorative plaques will enable people to understand its history and importance — not only to all alumni and staff but also to the local economy."

And it was at the Burghead harbour, the site of the former Seaman-ship Department, that local Moray councillor Ryan Edwards unveiled an information board and spoke of the lasting presence of the Sea School in the region. Richard Lochhead, Scottish National Party Member of the Scottish Parliament for Moray, then unveiled a memorial plaque at the site, enshrined in rock housing, to acknowledge former beneficiaries and the continuation of the great and impactful work that The Outward Bound Trust delivers in Scotland.





When the Moray Sea School closed, Outward Bound Trust activities moved to Loch Eil on the west coast of Scotland in the foothills of Ben Nevis.

The buoyed crowd took time to take in the coastal air and look around the Burghead visitor centre and reflect with alumni and present-day staff before minibuses ferried guests the short distance (often run the other way by the boys to their daily 'jog & dip' at the harbour) to St. Aethans Drive, the site of the former Sea School, which is now a housing estate.


There, Lord-Lieutenant Grenville Johnson, the son of the first Sea School warden, Martin Leslie, unveiled a second information board, giving personal thoughts and memories as part of their speeches. The Lord-Lieutenant CVO, the Queen's representative in Moray, read out a note of best wishes from the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Philip, and spoke of how impressive and significant the legacy of the Moray Sea School is, and of the importance and relevance of Outward Bound's mission today to promote the Hahnian principles of independence, resilience, and self-awareness. Mr. Leslie recalled meeting Kurt Hahn as a child and the pride his father had in being given the job by Hahn to drive the establishment of the Sea School and become its first warden.

Attendees then travelled to Gordonstoun for a well-deserved afternoon tea and time to meet and relax with alumni. Attendees had the chance to see old and new Outward Bound equipment and browse photos and newspaper clippings from the archives. Speeches were

given by the Head of Gordonstoun, Titus Edge, and Outward Bound Scottish Director Martin Davidson. The Outward Bound Trust's Head of Legacy Giving, Dylan Carroll, interviewed a current-day course participant. Stephanie, who, inspired by her two Outward Bound courses, explained how she is now chasing her dream to train as an outdoor education instructor. A powerful part of the day was when members of the audience were then given time to recall and share an experience from their time at the Sea School.

The weekend finished off with a social evening at Burghead Community Hall and, for the brave few remaining, a walk on the Sunday morning to Cummingston Cliffs. It was a nostalgic and positive weekend, made possible by a community with a common transformational experience.

The Outward Bound Trust treasures and cherishes its rich history and is stronger as an organisation today for it. The event gave opportunity to look back, but also to look forward and understand that if the organisation is to continue to grow and support more young people, the support of its closest alumni is both welcome and essential.

In an era of screen addiction, where young people spend less time outside than previous generations, The Outward Bound Trust today is as relevant and as needed as ever before. At a recent presentation, the current Head of Centre at Outward Bound Eskdale spoke of staff as 'custodians': custodians of the legacy of Outward Bound and its mission to unlock the potential in young people through learning and adventure in the wild, a mission shared by its donors and alumni. 



# DIVERSITY:

## Who Cares?

By Kate O'Brien

We're a pretty inclusive bunch, right? In the United Kingdom (UK), many outdoor programmes and initiatives like Outward Bound exist to work with participants from a spectrum of backgrounds, religions, abilities, genders, interests, skin colours, etc. Such is the diversity of British society in 2018. However, it is less likely that you will find such a broad spectrum of people within staff teams designing and delivering such experiences.

No doubt we all have a strong belief in the power of the outdoors to educate, transform, develop, inspire... and often we talk about potential. Helping others to realise potential. Reaching our own potential. Considering our organisational potential. Understanding difference and how we humans respond to it may be one important factor in reaching our individual and collective potential.

At The Outward Bound Trust in the UK we have decided to think more deeply about the makeup of our instructional staff teams in relation to the participants we work with, in order to increase the impact of the work we do. We have begun by doing some research, internally, within the outdoor sector, and externally.

What we have found is that a lot of people care! Diversity, equality and inclusion are high on society's agenda across the worlds of business and education, within the charities sector, and everywhere in between. We are late to the party, but this means we have a whole lot to learn from those who have already embarked on this journey. People care for a whole host of reasons, beyond a more equal society simply being the right direction to aim for.

Research from the field of education is showing the positive impact of role models within the teaching workforce. In one study, having just one teacher of the same race during school years increased students' aspirations and reduced dropout rates. The power of seeing someone "like me" in a teaching or leadership position is not to be underestimated.

Also, you may know that in the UK business world companies in the top quartile for gender diversity at senior levels are 15 percent more likely to experience above-average profitability than those in the bottom quartile. Similarly, companies employing a higher proportion of people from an ethnic minority background amongst their staff are 35 percent more likely

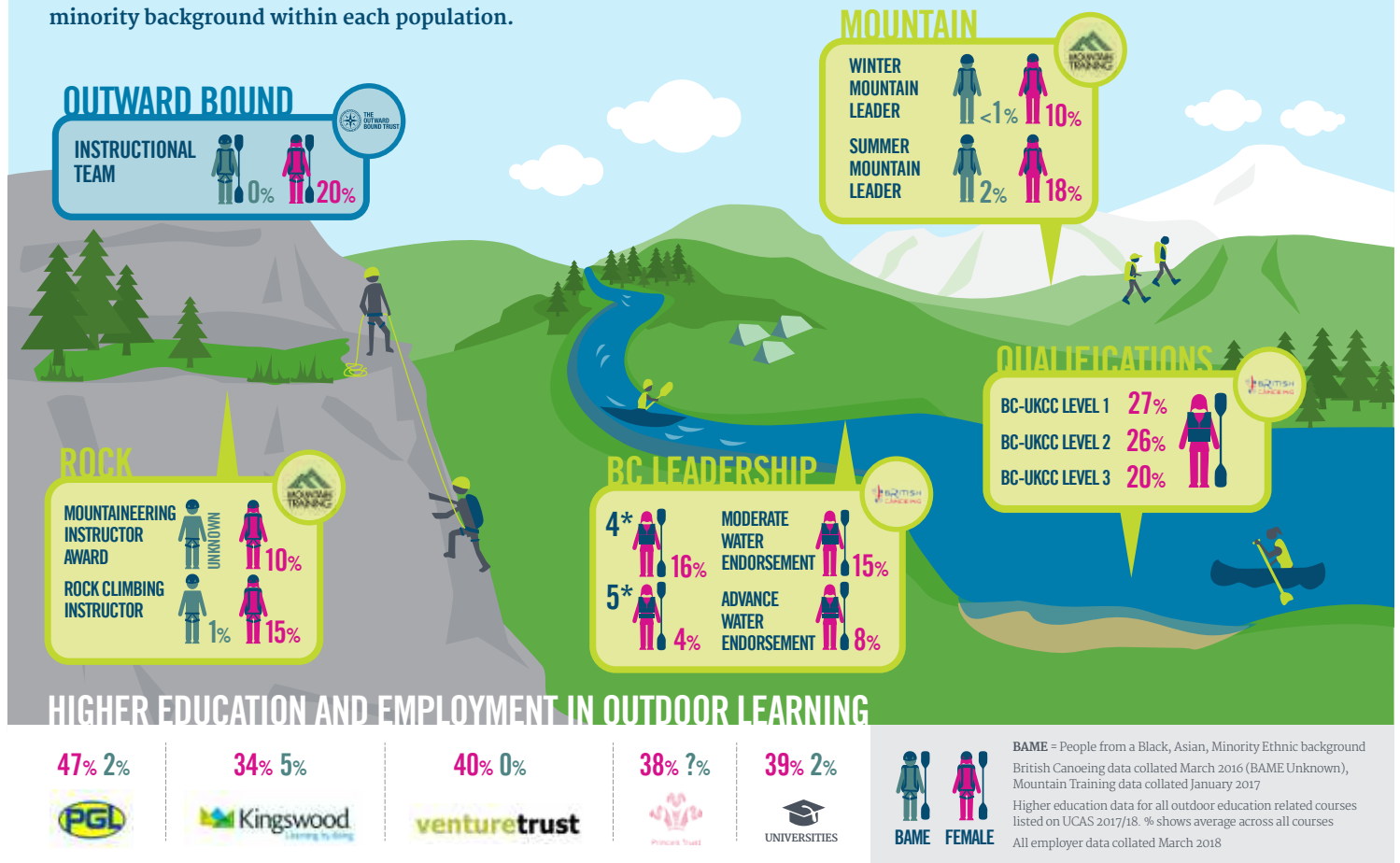




# OUTDOOR SECTOR DEMOGRAPHICS



This shows the % of women and people from an ethnic minority background within each population.



to experience higher profitability than those with less diversity. There is now a solid business case for the benefits of diversity.

Now you might be thinking, “What on earth has that got to do with the outdoors?” Most of us aren’t in this line of work for the vast profits we are making! What fascinated me was the findings which flowed from this result. Further research in the form of a Great British Diversity Experiment ethnographically studied 120 diverse people working on a real-world creative task together in order to understand what gives rise to the benefits found. This revealed that what companies with greater diversity have is not particular groups of people who hold magical talents, but a culture of openness and inclusivity to all.

They seek out and value different perspectives. When a range of views, ideas, and contributions are welcomed, celebrated, and nurtured in alignment with organisational mission, this reduces the pressure to conform behaviour to a particular way of being or working. It also reduces pressure to conform to stereotypes about whatever identity group people belong to. So, beyond whatever your skin colour, gender, or social class, whether you are a paddler, skier, furniture maker, climber, tango dancer, or obsessive football fan, introvert or extrovert, being authentic in

interactions with colleagues and young people will likely lead to better engagement and performance at work.

Welcoming diversity, plus inclusive leadership, increases the total human energy available to drive the mission of an organisation forward. Inclusive leadership describes leaders who are, “aware of their own biases and preferences, and actively seek out and consider different views and perspectives to inform better decision-making.” Whether these are leaders of young people, or leaders of staff teams, understanding more about who we are, how we relate to others, and the systems around us can only benefit everybody involved.

One of our first actions at The Outward Bound Trust, informed by the initial research, is to work with an external facilitator who will help staff to consider some key factors in developing inclusive leadership and working towards a more diverse workforce. We have also presented this work at the 2018 UK Outdoor Learning Sector Conference Equality Summit. If you would like to find out more about any of this work, please contact Kate at [katherine.obrien@outwardbound.org.uk](mailto:katherine.obrien@outwardbound.org.uk)

You can find out more about our research here: [www.outwardbound.org.uk/news/blogs/diversity-in-the-outdoors/](http://www.outwardbound.org.uk/news/blogs/diversity-in-the-outdoors/)



# NO MO PHOBIA

## ADDRESSING TECHNOLOGY ADDICTION AT OUTWARD BOUND CANADA

By Jody Radtke & Nevin Harper

**W**e have become accustomed to quick access to information and entertainment in the digital age, yet have been slow to comprehend the full range of problems this reality presents. From managing tasks, maintaining social engagement, and enjoying our leisure time, technology is changing the way we experience the world. While outdoor education and time in the natural world has been espoused as an antidote to this problem, we are increasingly distracted by technology on our field courses at Outward Bound Canada (OBC). A need exists to better understand and address this problem. This paper is a brief exploration of how technology, and its removal, may be experienced by students and staff during courses, the science and psychology of how we are affected, and recommended steps to assist in addressing management of technology at OBC.

Imagine you are the instructor, and your course is about to begin. It's day one and your students are about to arrive. You're excited and nervous. You pull out your phone to check the time, the weather, your email and texts, maybe you post a selfie, and forward that awesome video to a friend. Okay, now you're distracting yourself. You check your arrivals plan again and prepare for the first activity that you are leading. You check the time again—"Darn, when will they get here?" You message a few more friends to gripe about the bus delay, read some news, and remember to set your out of office message. The bus appears and you slip your phone into your pocket. Students disembark expressing all manner of responses—excited, bewildered, or hiding—behind their hoodies, cell phones, and shades. The first circle is formed and the welcome and basic rules talk begins: OB history, values, engagement ... and cell phones too.

Over the past few courses you've noticed that many students are having a hard time letting go of their phones. "It's my camera," many of them say, or "I need it to fall asleep," "It has all of my music on it," "They [admissions] said I could bring a small

book—it's on my phone," "It's my alarm clock; I don't have a watch," and on and on. You've tried the old "It's expensive and will be safer if we put it away in storage" line with a resounding response of "No worries, it's my old one," "I have a LifeProof case!"

What's up with all this resistance? It used to be so easy to pack away student valuables and move on with the course. Your reminiscing is startled by that familiar, comforting, but right now annoying, buzz in your pocket. "Who could that be, and what do they want?"

In the mental health field, behavioural addictions have been a topic of discussion since the early 2000s, typically focusing on gambling, pornography, and kleptomania. In recent years, awareness of addictive qualities of interaction with the internet, technology, and cellular phones has been a fast-growing topic of discussion. Youth today, especially those born after 1997 in North America, do not know what it is like to live in a world without pocket technology. The full consequences of this cultural shift are still poorly understood. We will share here a brief overview of the current literature.

### **Developmental issues with i- technologies**

Early introduction of technology and media in a child's life has been shown to thwart neurological development, especially related to parental attachments and other positive social-emotional capacities. Compromised parental attachment and reduced parental presence in children's early years, now more often substituted with i-technology and social media, further reduces a child's ability to socialize face-to-face and to self-regulate emotions and behaviours. Overall sedentary screen time, including online gaming and use of social media, now accounts for 8.2 hours of an average high school student's day in Canada.



the Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth from ParticipACTION. Regarding cell phone activity, a recent consumer survey showed users check their phone on average 47 times per day, with that number climbing to 82 times for 18-24 year olds. The most pressing concern for sedentary screen time, including mobile phone use, is the findings which associate these levels with increased occurrence of anxiety, depression, and issues of compulsiveness.

While increasing deleterious psychological and physiological effects connected to mobile phone use are identified, attachment and excessive use have increased and curbing the dependency has been found to be quite difficult. The resultant issue of detaching from one's cell phone is even under consideration to become recognized as a diagnosable condition. The problem behavior has been called Mobile Phone Dependence, Mobile Phone Abuse and the play on words nomophobia, for No Mobile Phone and Phobia. The effects of device use have been seen to parallel substance abuse symptoms, so alignment with a disorder of dependence has been suggested. Symptoms of nomophobia include preoccupation with the device and excessive use, use in dangerous situations (e.g., driving), adverse effects on relationships, functional behavior impairments, social isolation, use of device to avoid communicating with others, and withdrawal symptoms (e.g., anger, depression, craving, anxiety). Prevalence of nomophobia is suggested to be higher among those self-identifying as shy or lonely, as well as in those already experiencing panic or compulsive behavior disorders.

Of concern to us, in the context of education, and here especially for outdoor experiential education programs at Outward Bound Canada, is that the need to maintain student focus on activities and social relations is disrupted by device use. When i-technologies are leading users to avoid social contact, and in fact re-wiring brains in ways that reduce ability to read social cues and engage meaningfully with peers, we have a potentially significant, and growing, problem for our practice. What this brief research review suggests is of significant importance for OBC to understand, and in turn, to respond to.

## What Are We Doing About It?

So how do we go about responding to this emerging challenge? OBC's path forward will likely need to be addressed on many levels beginning with marketing and admissions all the way through field leadership and course closure. We offer the following suggestions as starting points. As we continue to explore how to best serve our students in regard to technology management, these practices will evolve to meet the broad needs of our program areas and student populations.

## Marketing

Search for 'adolescent phone addiction' and you will find numerous articles online from sources ranging from *Psychology Today* to the

CBC.ca As this growing awareness becomes mainstream, OBC is well-positioned to address this current 'crisis of youth'. Also, search 'outdoors health' and one will find a multitude of articles on the healing power of nature. OBC is already doing what the doctor ordered—unplug from technology, connect with self, engage with others, and be in nature. Marketing has a unique opportunity to be at the forefront of this growing body of knowledge—both from student and parent awareness of the challenges as well as education about a direct path to health and wellness.

## Admissions

Admissions is the bridge to help begin the transition process from mainstream technology consumption to living off the grid. Students and parents need to be well prepared for the potential challenges that can occur when separating from one's technology. Just as protocols exist to assist participants in smoking cessation prior to a course, similar guidelines can be offered to all participants regarding management of screen time prior to a course. As admissions puts this conversation on the table, students

and parents can explore their own relationship to technology use and begin to make plans for pre-course phone management.

## Program

Program areas without cell service still exist, but are diminishing every year. Programs can continue to operate in current terrain and adjust to the technology access or move physical locations to increasingly remote regions. Either path requires adjustments to how we manage phones and other devices. Addressing the process of separating from one's device, as well as responding to the stress symptoms we anticipate seeing as a result of this parting of ways, is needed.

Pre-season preparations, from contracting staff to securing necessary logistics, allow program leadership to set the stage for the season. Distributing reading material or offering Mental Health First Aid training can support staff in learning about technology withdrawal. Instructional teams are not only challenged with supporting students in letting go of technology, but they too must manage this process for themselves. Field communications are a necessary part of risk management; from emergency calls to checking weather, there is no doubt that having technology in the field provides additional levels of security. The temptation to check personal information, or communicate with family and friends, brings up the age-old dilemma of how best to model behaviour, while also recognizing that instructors are doing a job, and their role is also different from students. Highlighting this challenge and offering guidelines to staff for how to manage personal technology use could be quite helpful and a rich staff training topic. Maintaining accurate course area maps and charts that contain information on cell phone coverage areas both inform staff of potential communication points for risk management, but also help instructors anticipate whether their route will be impacted by cell phone access or not.



Many of us relate to using technology to manage the stress of transitions. We scroll through social media while waiting for a plane, standing in line, or procrastinating on a project. The opening Course Director talk can acknowledge the 'normalness' of this response which helps to soften natural defenses and open curiosity to learning. As field staff anticipate and address this increased social awkwardness at course start, more time on intentional activities designed to increase social-emotional learning can be employed. Focused use of icebreakers reduces barriers of contact and serves as an assessment tool, thus helping staff to determine appropriate next-step learning progressions. Taking time in the early stages of a course to honour transitions and increase participant connections paves the way for releasing phone attachments.

At the course's start a gear review has traditionally been the time that we physically separate from phones. There are several things that we can do to ease this process. One is to offer each student a camera or other transitional object to use while on course in exchange for their phone. Once the phone is with staff, we can create structured times of technology use during the first 72 hours of a course. Just as we prepare students for solo by integrating sit spots, we can offer students access to their phones in a structured manner.


Responding to technology withdrawal looks much like many stress-based interventions. Key components include safety and emotional regulation, community connection and peer support, finding deeper purpose and meaning through self-discovery and reflection, and intention for addressing reintegration. Seen through the lens of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, we could call this: our basic needs (food, water, shelter and safety); connection; contact and an experience of love and belonging; and movement toward our higher purpose, self-esteem, and self-actualization.

Emotional regulation is often affiliated with our most basic needs but can be triggered at any stage. If a student is accustomed to using their phone to do a task (e.g., music, gaming, text) before bed and no longer has access to this resource, the core need for sleep may become dysregulated which over time leading to a broader sense of personal instability. Teaching new ways to manage bedtime by reading to the group at night or by practicing gratitude during an evening circle builds new skills and meets this basic need.

A sense of community and belonging is integral to the success of an OBC course. When students' understanding of community at home is directly connected to their 'streak' [for those of us not in the know, a streak is an uninterrupted series of posts on social media - Ed., OBC JoE], they need support to manage the stressor of potentially losing this connection as well as new tools to engage in in-person relationships.

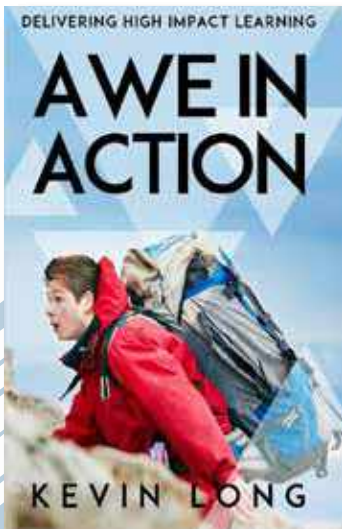
Self-discovery and connecting to one's sense of purpose and ability is often expressed post-course with phrases like, "I didn't think I could do it, but I did." Helping students relate this to their technology use and make conscious choices about who they want to be and how they want to live is at the top of the hierarchy. This highest level of functioning can only take place when more basic needs of security and belonging have been met. At this point, we can address the negative impacts of technology (the psychological, physiological, social, and behavioural issues outlined earlier)—but unless we understand how something is negatively affecting us, we are unlikely to carry that change forward in a sustained way to everyday life. It is here, therefore, that addressing reintegration may take place, and we find that if this is not attended to, students may regress in distressed states at the thought of going back to technology-overwhelm. Gradually reintegrating phones during the final 48 hours of the course and having discussions about how to manage cell phone use post-course, increases conscious consumption of technology. Transferring the felt sense of "I can do anything!" to a direct action with technology management provides the tools for students to practice a new relationship with technology once they are home.

## Conclusion

Significant technology use, at times to the point of abuse, is on the rise. We see it in the news, we see it on courses, and we experience it firsthand. So, what is OBC's response to this new challenge going to be? Succumb to societal pressure to integrate more and more technology into programs? Be stalwart in our historical practices and remove student distractions such as their technology at course start? Find a middle road? To answer these questions, we must be willing to take a close look at our practices and the purpose behind what we are trying to do. This issue is not going away, but we are at the forefront and we have the tools. Outward Bound, once again, has an incredible opportunity to lead. We hope this paper has provided a starting point for conversations at OBC and across the outdoor experiential learning field. 



# BOOK REVIEW



## AWE IN ACTION: Delivering High Impact Learning

By Kevin Long

From The Outward Bound Trust, Penrith, Cumbria, UK. 2018. \$19.99 US. Paperbound. 248 pages.

Kevin Long's latest book, *Awe in Action*, is a set of essays aimed at making the connection between values in learning and the emotional experience of awe. Presented in two parts, the book begins by looking at the human condition, our interconnectedness to others, and the world around us, then considers the impact of action on learning and describes how truly indispensable adventure is to effective high-impact learning. It concludes with a call to action for teachers and other educational leaders to address values within education and to consider awe and personal growth as practical additions to traditional measures of educational value, such as returns on investment and intellectual achievement.

Throughout the book, Long argues that each of us has a natural tendency to create the conditions for experiencing awe, and if we (and our educational institutions) could only become more practiced at recognizing, embracing, and developing these conditions, there would be greater potential for transformative growth, individually and collectively. Working in collaboration, students, teachers, and schools would therefore cooperate to become active partners in addressing values in an inspired setting of moral and academic excellence.

The reader is also connected to the educational vision of Outward Bound's co-founder, Kurt Hahn, and how it has helped spread positive ideas such as compassion for others, service, and the virtues of courageous and resilient character. As Ron Berger, EL Education's chief education executive, writes, *Awe in Action* "... describes the beautiful vision and heritage of educator Kurt Hahn and Outward Bound, and how the spirit of that work can be brought into schools to revitalize purpose and success for teachers and students. . . . [I]t is about bringing out the best in students as learners, citizens, and human beings. . . ."

*Awe in Action* is a book for school leaders, teachers, and all the outdoor practitioners who would like to step up their approach to high-impact learning. Reading it will deepen your appreciation and understanding of the purpose of education.



## Handbook of Experiential Education

By Werner Michl and Holger Seidel, ed.

From Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, Munich, Germany. 2018. \$57.37 US. Paperbound. 410 pages.

*Handbook of Experiential Education* is a comprehensive treatment of an increasingly broad and far-reaching educational approach. Professor Werner Michl and volume editor Holger Seidel amass an amazing collection of articles deriving from the work of 71 authors who create a cohesive picture of historical and contemporary experiential education in Germany.

After an introduction to the concept of experiential education, chapters cover everything from its basics and historical development to international developments and national and international organizations (e.g., Outward Bound, United World Colleges, the European Ropes Course Association, etc.) to the educational fields of experiential action. Also covered are topics such as experiences in prevention and therapy, typical target groups, experiential education as a research field, safety, standards, and quality and experiential education's journey from vocation to profession, including elements of education and training. The breadth and detail of this handbook is impressive and varied.

Experiential education, most commonly associated with learner-centered experiences occurring in demanding environments where structured reflection accelerates the transfer of learning (and where the learning experiences are often transformational), is for some a fuzzy concept that seems to work but is often hard to explain. *Handbook of Experiential Education* makes this wide-ranging and sometimes ill-defined topic much more accessible and comprehensible to the interested and motivated reader.

This book is available only in German under the original title, *Handbuch Erlebnispädagogik*.



# OB Germany Pro



## HELPS VOLKSWAGEN MEET ITS GOALS AT THE 2018 ANNUAL MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

By Dieter Reinig

In June 2018, Outward Bound Germany Professional — the Outward Bound organisation in Germany that focuses on corporate executives and other professionals — was invited by Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles to provide a team-building experience for 500 of its top global executives who had assembled in Hannover, a city in northern Germany, to attend the company's annual management conference.

Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles builds the bigger vehicles for families or tradespeople. They have their headquarters and plant in Hannover and employ about 21,000 people. Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles is one of 12 brands of the Volkswagen Group, as are Porsche, Audi, VW, Skoda, Lamborghini, and Scania.

Outward Bound Germany Professional has worked with Porsche for ten years and succeeded to win more brands in the Volkswagen group as customers since.

Volkswagen's status, objectives, and future initiatives. One goal was to experience and internalize the six new elaborated company values: courage, togetherness, efficiency, mindfulness, openness, and customer focus.

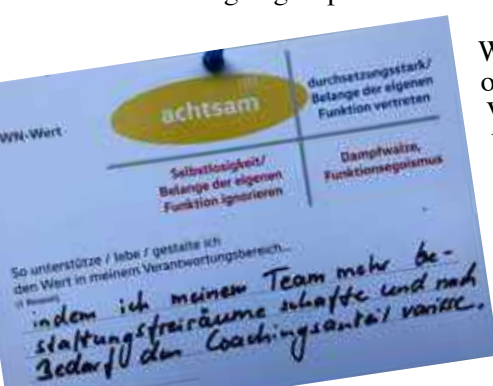
Outward Bound Germany Professional convinced the board of Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles to use outdoor activities as a method to experience these values, to reflect on them, and to transfer them into daily work. They gave us three hours, 25% of the conference time (from noon of day one until noon of day two).

Our concept was to split the 500 managers into six groups so each participant could experience his or her favourite value. This gave us six clusters (one per value) of about 80 participants and therefore we needed 36 trainers (six value clusters times six teams) plus three trainers for coordination. As there were participants who only spoke English, we also invited several international Outward Bound trainers to join our core team in delivering this program. Each of the invited trainers has many years of experience with us and could therefore quickly adapt to the client's needs and the venue.

Firstly, we asked each cluster to position on a line and — with the position they took — give a statement of how they saw the status of the value today, from excellent to poor.

We were delighted at this opportunity to support the Volkswagen family of brands at this important conference.

The meeting lasted two days and focused on







Secondly, we split each cluster into six teams of 13 and offered an experience related to each cluster's value. For "togetherness", for example, we established a retrieval activity, where different teams had to coordinate via a meeting point. Each value was designed to change how the teams experienced the relevant value. All the activities were outdoors in the huge city park, which lies next to the conference centre in which the management conference was being held.

Thirdly, we introduced a model to encourage participants to reflect on values: the Value and Development Square. The model is based on Paul Helwig and Friedemann Schulz von Thun's Value Square (Wertequadrat), which enables the balancing of various and sometimes competing values as a method to generate insight into creativity within the corporate environment. Outward Bound Germany Professional's Value and Development Square approach further refines the idea by encouraging people to be tolerant, to pay attention to the opinions of others, and to seek compromises. This model, also delivered in the relaxing atmosphere of the park, was earlier introduced to the international Outward Bound community by

Dieter Reinig during the 2016 OBI World Conference in North Carolina.


Finally, each participant wrote down an example of how he or she would transfer the value into concrete action at the workplace.

In the evening, we presented photographs of the activities, the written reflections, and the written takeaways in an exhibition in the conference centre.

After the conference, we got great feedback by the participants and the Volkswagen board. They saw Outward Bound Germany Professional's part as an excellent contribution to their objectives about values; as a vitalising, activating, and teambuilding part of the conference; and as a perfect mix of experience and intellect. The participants rated the conference as a whole as the best conference in Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles' history.

For Outward Bound German Professional, this event was also a great success as well as a wonderful experience in bringing together so many German and European Outward Bound trainers.

We have now been able to contribute to conferences of about 200 participants or more every other year. This one was our biggest and we hope for more.

In our corporate world, we do not depend on impact studies. If our clients rebook us, we know that we have made an impact. 





# CONFLICT

The Mixed Course — Rhowniar — 1971

JEANNIE HAMMERSLEIGH

Strive: Each issue of OBI Journal includes at least one article or image that connects with Outward Bound's past. The article that follows (CONFLICT: The Mixed Course — Rhowniar — 1971) first appeared in the summer 1971 issue of the magazine Strive. A "mixed" Outward Bound course in the UK of the 1970s referred to when boys and girls were assigned to the same group. Located near Aberdovey in the Snowdonia National Park, Rhowniar was a girls-only Outward Bound school established in 1963 that began experimenting with coeducational course at the end of that decade. The school closed in the early 1990s as the popularity of single-sex courses declined.

Published by The Outward Bound Trust in the United Kingdom during the 1960s and 70s, Strive is a rich source of historical information.

The mixed course at Rhowniar this year was certainly full of drama; sometimes comedy, sometimes tragedy, but an action-packed spectacle. The fundamental ingredient was conflict, that which changes the straightforward experience to dramatic experience. Conflict is not always physical but can also be emotional, mental or social. We encountered the whole range.

The students on this course were, for us, an unusually wide gathering, consisting mainly of Americans, Germans and British, between the ages of 16 and 23. Although we made an attempt to break down the national groupings they persisted. One ought not to generalise but it cannot be ignored that each of the three groups had its own individual character. There were, of course, extremes and exceptions in the groups, but they were in the minority.



*Jeannie Hammersleigh joined the Girls' School during October 1970. She is a qualified teacher, and worked for one year in repertory to obtain practical experience in the live theatre.*

*Instructors check runners*





*Students rest after the cross-country race*

The Americans were generally older than the average and were all students from the Department of Recreation of Illinois University. They were comparatively well-travelled and independent young people. Their approach to the course was mainly a positive one as they showed in their thoughtful concern for all that occurred. The effective speaking sessions proved the Americans to be confident vocally, for they found little difficulty in expressing themselves and building up an audience relationship. They were able to speak fluently on such topics as interested them; including education, marriage, the future and pollution.

They upheld the casual approach to public speaking, preferring to sit on a table, to lean or lounge about when addressing an audience. The Americans, particularly the boys, were probably the most extrovert of our students, yet beneath their confidence it was clear that they were still seeking for a purpose and meaning in life.

The Germans provided the youngest group and were all students at the same Gymnasium (Grammar School). Like the Americans they were well-educated and widely read. Their understanding of the English language was to be marvelled at and there was very little barrier to communication. However, they preferred to keep together, and seemed to find it difficult to make close relationships with the others. They



seemed unprepared for the demands of Outward Bound, knowing very little about it before they arrived. They appeared to dislike the organisation and the authority, and spent rather more time than the other groups arguing, questioning and complaining.

The British group were a true crosssection of society, some still at school, many working. Perhaps because we were more accustomed to our own young people they presented less of a problem. They emerged as sane, imperturbable and yet still impressionable teenagers. They were not as confident or as expressive as the Americans, but nor were they as 'mixed-up' inside. They were certainly not as rebellious as the Germans and in fact seemed to accept most parts of the course without fuss. So much so that one wondered how conditioned to obedience our educational system had made them.

With such a wide range of age, education and life style, conflict amongst the students was inevitable. The mixed sexes were no problem whatsoever for boy/girl relationships overcame all barriers! It was some while before the national groups began to integrate. The boys' dormitories had their American, German and British sectors, with intermittent shows of force between each.

There was conflict, too, between staff and students as we tried to protect that which they called the 'system'. We were attacked from all sides, although it seemed that it was not the most important aspects of the course that came under fire. Every session, every encounter, was a challenge. At times the questions, the complaints became too much, and when the same arguments arose again and again we found ourselves retorting 'Don't ask why. Just do it!'. But we tried not to impose from a position of authority. We tried to answer honestly, always to have a reason, always to be sure of our mo-

tives and our facts. It meant rethinking things in which we had grown to believe; we had to question ourselves before the students did. To preserve some of our convictions took some fighting, some of the old were thrown out and new points of view took over. There was conflict within each one of us.

Surely never before had we been so involved with the students, and with Outward Bound. The Germans presented us with the phrase 'Es macht nicht' (It doesn't matter), whenever times became hard, but we knew that it really DID. The staff cared. They talked and worked unceasingly, united in their efforts; yet not afraid to introduce and overcome conflict to get things done.

Drama was no less of a conflict than any of the other activities. It was a battle to win the interest and enthusiasm of the students; one was met with apathy rather than a tangible resistance. They found it difficult to be carried into participation without those endless questions. Drama certainly has its reasons, its answers, but it is essentially a practical experience, the very word means 'doing'. To enjoy it fully one has to 'do' before intellectualising. We began the sessions through mime, and then continued by working to a sequence of sounds, and on to speech. Some of the scenes were built around single lines of script, such as the ever popular 'It doesn't matter', which made drama a vehicle for social comment.

At the end of the course we planned to put on a production. Although the choice of this is usually left to the students, we felt that the mixed course might like to do 'West Side Story'. It has music, modern dancing, fight sequences, love interest and a good story line, in fact something for everyone. But no, support for this was anything but high, and there seemed nothing else that the students could suggest instead. So we

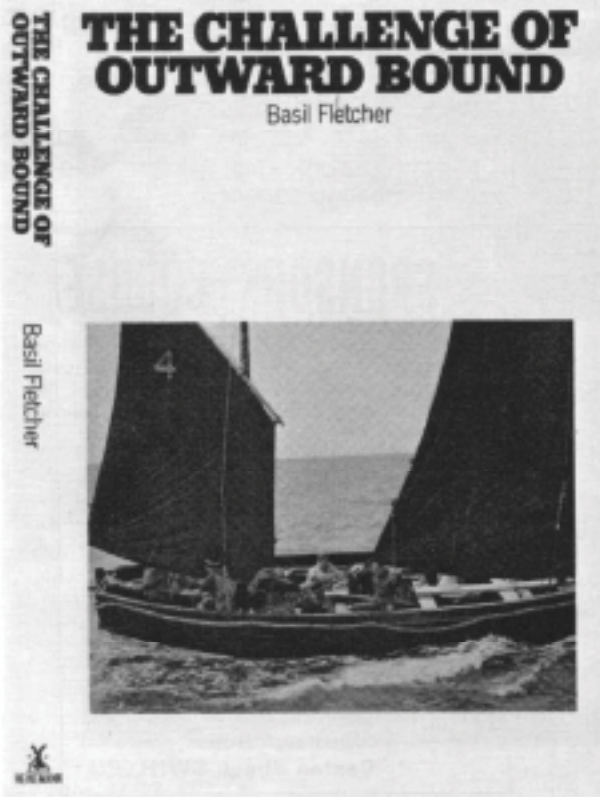


began writing our own drama, based on 'West Side Story', which was, of course, itself based on 'Romeo and Juliet'.

Our up-to-date version concerned two groups, labelled for convenience 'Hell's Angels' and 'Hippies'. They contrasted not only in dress—black sweaters and denims versus colour and beads—but in attitude. The Hell's Angels sought power through strength and violence, while the Hippies tried to be peaceful. I feel that there was a measure of character identification present in the students' choice of sides. The experiences shown in the play were not far removed from their own, and settings of the pop festival and coffee bar also familiar. The story concerned a Hell's Angel girl and a Hippie boy who were drawn to each other. Their friends reacted with violence, and with the death of their own leader and of the girl as a result. The Hippies were drawn into a battle against their will. Ironically the couple had only met on a few occasions, which did not merit the ensuing slaughter as events got out of hand.

The play was short, and maybe superficial. The audience sat expecting more. But one feels it was a success. Maybe the cast were playing inwards; they needed more time for confidence in their ability before they could project themselves outwards. Maybe it was not up to their potential, but it was a beginning. The students were working together, not as national groups or the ones into which we divided them, but really together. All those bits and pieces of ideas, and scenes, and characterisations were welded by them into a whole. Just for a short time they were creating, they were involved, they were committed. It was a beginning; the barriers were breaking down.

Perhaps those students, perhaps the staff, will remember the conflict of the course; the struggles, the trials could hardly be forgotten. Isn't it through conflict that we are stimulated to extend our horizons? ➡



**Published by Heinemann**

The distinguished author confesses that he accepted the invitation to study Outward Bound in a 'distinctly critical frame of mind'. How he became enthusiastic in his admiration of the work of the schools is mirrored in a fascinating narrative which will have wide appeal to all concerned with education and youth. The book is a timely and inspiring contribution to recent social history.

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# “A goal without a plan is just a wish.”

– Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, writer and pioneering aviator

by Iain Peter

## Strategic Planning and Outward Bound

**O**utward Bound International has organised two World Conferences — in Baad, Germany in 2014 and North Carolina, USA in 2016. These conferences created the opportunity for the network’s strategic leaders to get together to think about Outward Bound. We are now working towards the next conference, hosted by Outward Bound Oman, scheduled for January 2019.

The conferences have been crucial in helping to clarify thinking about what the needs of Outward Bound are likely to be in the years ahead. From its position at the centre of the Outward Bound community, OBI has come to rely upon the conferences to help us formulate our strategic direction.

Back in 2017, the Board of OBI decided that, rather than organise our work plans from conference to conference, we needed to take a longer term, more strategic view. The decision was made that we needed the discipline that a strategic planning process would bring to our thinking and consequently to our work.

## Why do we need a plan?

There are five key reasons:

### 1 We need to clarify our direction and priorities.

Determining direction and priorities forces us to think clearly about what is important. It helps us to determine what we should be doing and, perhaps equally importantly, what we don’t do. It also enables everyone to have a clear view of what we have agreed success will look like and what areas of work programmes are a priority when it comes to delivering success.

### 2 We need to communicate our vision to our members.

The Outward Bound community can be quite disparate. If we are to continue to improve the quality and impact of Outward Bound programs around the world, then we need to have a vision and a direction that everyone supports and understands. Without a written plan this is very difficult to achieve.

We want to share our vision with instructors and supporters and we don’t want to have to rely on face-to-face discussions. Equally, we want to stay focussed and we want to be consistent. Our plan will help us to measure our success in these areas.

### 3 We need to simplify our decision making.

We need to be clear about what we do and why we do it. OBI faces a variety of opportunities and challenges. Additionally, we only have limited resources and need to have clarity around how we make decisions and what we hope to achieve.

### 4 We need to improve alignment.

A consistent outcome of the World Conferences has been a request from members for “more alignment”. This doesn’t mean that all Schools should be the same but rather that there should be consistency in what we mean by Outward Bound and also how we deliver Outward Bound programs. A strategic plan will guide and focus our alignment efforts.

### 5 We need to ensure that our work transcends Board and staff transitions.

It is very easy for work plans to be personality driven. A strategic plan ensures that the priorities are consistent and that, irrespective of Board or staff changes, the work progresses without significant swings or changes.

## Strategic Plan or Business Plan?

It is easy to confuse a “strategic plan” with a “business plan”. Both documents are essential planning tools for any business. A strategic plan sets out the priorities and objectives that a business or organization wants to achieve over the period of the plan, in OBI’s case for the next three years. A business plan, on the other hand, is usually focussed over a shorter period (often an operational year) and helps identify the resources (financial and human) needed to deliver the strategy.

Generally, the strategic plan comes first and the business plan operationalises it.

The OBI guidance document “Towards Good Governance” recommends that all of our member Schools should have a strategic plan.

## How did we set about developing the plan?

Developing a strategic plan can seem like an overwhelming process. It takes time — and remember, strategic planning is a key role for the Board and so it takes a lot of both Board time and senior management time. To make the planning process more manageable, we broke the exercise up into a series of steps:

**1. Establish the current position.** This can take some time, since one must first collect objective information that allows a real evaluation of the current position. It is easy to shortcut this phase and to assume that things are “as you would like them to be” rather than as they really are!

We spoke with our Operations Committee and with Executive Directors from around the network and relied heavily on the



interactions that we have had at the World Conferences. From this we identified our strengths and weaknesses. At the same time, the Board conducted an audit that looked at all areas of our operation: staffing, interaction with members, finances, governance, etc.

**2. Identify what's important.** The OBI Board committed a full day to a facilitated analysis of what we thought our priorities should be. In the lead-up to this day, the Board were supplied with a wide range of documentation (collected at stage 1) and the facilitator undertook a detailed analysis of Outward Bound International. This meant that everyone arrived at the day well informed and with their own clear vision of priorities. The challenge, then, was to share these visions and, through facilitated discussion, slowly arrive at agreed priorities for OBI. The difficulty was to focus on where we wanted to take Outward Bound over three years and not on shorter term, more immediate goals. This helped us refine our vision, mission, and values for the organisation. From this we were able to determine our priorities: the issues that were so important to the well-being of and our vision for Outward Bound that they require the full attention of the Board and the staff team over the next three years. We decided that we should have an absolute maximum of five priorities.

**3. Define what success will look like.** We drilled down into our priorities to identify key performance indicators that we could use to measure success. At this stage, these were not too detailed but they set realistic targets across the three-year period. These targets would next inform the business or operational plan that would turn the Strategic Plan's priorities into reality.

**4. Sense check.** When we had a good first draft of the plan, we felt it was important to confirm that we had correctly interpreted the vision and views of the organisation. The Board reviewed and refined this draft; it was then shared with the Operations Committee, who are broadly representative of Outward Bound Schools across the network, for their comment. Finally, we created an online survey to collect the views of all of our member Schools.

The conclusion of this process is a considered plan that enjoys strong support from the network. Crucially, it is concise, focused, and devoid of jargon — in other words, it is written so as to be accessible to as wide an audience (Schools, Boards, supporters, participants, etc.) as possible.

**5. Review** Finally, we will need to agree on the plan's format and presentation and make plans for its distribution.

We will launch our plan at the World Conference in Oman in January 2019. After that comes the real work — the implementation of the plan and the on-going review to confirm that our priorities are still relevant and that we are on route to achieving our success targets.

## What have we learned from the process?

- It has brought clarity to our thinking and it has really focussed our vision for Outward Bound. Not only is our vision clearer, but we are better able to articulate and share it.
- Requires time and thought. Perhaps most importantly, it requires an honest examination of all that we know and do.
- Working through the various stages outlined above requires careful planning and organisation. It is important to set realistic timelines that everyone commits to meeting.

- We enjoyed the services of an excellent facilitator and this really helped keep us on track and focussed on the task.

Copies of the plan are available from OBI or can be viewed online at [www.outwardbound.net](http://www.outwardbound.net)

## Mission

We enable our member Schools to be more effective and more resilient and we promote and protect the name and trademark "Outward Bound".

## Vision

- An effective worldwide network of high-performing Outward Bound Schools
- Outward Bound Schools that increasingly make a real difference to the lives of participants through adventure and learning in the natural environment

Over the three years of this strategy, we will build a stronger worldwide network of more effective and resilient Outward Bound Schools by focussing on the following key priorities:

### Priority 1

We will promote and protect the brand name of Outward Bound around the world and in doing so, we will ensure that Outward Bound is recognised as the world leader in high quality adventurous, outdoor learning.

### Priority 2

We will increase OBI's capacity so that we can provide more direct support to our members. We will do this through investment in our fundraising capability.

### Priority 3

We will facilitate collaboration across member Schools so that they can more effectively serve their target populations.

### Priority 4

We will work with our members to collect evidence that proves the effectiveness of Outward Bound programs. We will use research and impact studies to help Schools demonstrate the effectiveness of their programs to clients, funders, and stakeholders.

### Priority 5

We will improve our licensing model to ensure that we can continue to develop our network. We will support new Schools through to full licence status so that they deliver top quality Outward Bound programs to more people in more areas of the world. 1





# A NOVELTY: *an* OUTWARD BOUND INSTRUCTOR EXCHANGE BETWEEN GERMANY AND HONG KONG

By Philip Heckmann, Lena Richter, and Dan Chan

**T**he connection between the Outward Bound schools of Hong Kong and Germany started back in 2016 when Bacon Chan, a Senior Programme Coordinator at Outward Bound Hong Kong (OBHK), did his Masters in Transcultural European Outdoor Studies in Germany. Bacon worked as a freelancer for a few Outward Bound courses in northern Germany and shadowed two courses in southern Germany where he met Philip Heckmann, Deputy Center Manager at the OB Germany (OBG) location in Schwangau, Bavaria. Soon Bacon and Philip started working towards the idea of having an instructor exchange between those two OB schools with the goal of bringing OB schools in general closer together.

In the beginning of 2018 the optimal dates for the exchange were set and organizational questions were taken care of. How do we manage insurance? Do we need a contract between the two schools? What visas do the instructors need to apply for? What kind of itineraries can we tailor? What kind of experience do the instructors need? How can we support the instructors best?

First, Dick Chan, a Senior Instructor at OBHK, made his way to Germany and arrived in Berlin at the end of May. After a few days in the capital of Germany, he joined a center-based course in Kröchlendorff, located an hour north of Berlin. From there he travelled across almost the whole of Germany, with a quick stop in Munich, before arriving in



Schwangau, close to the Austrian border. The location of this center enabled Dick to also get to see the Austrian city of Innsbruck for a daytrip. From Schwangau, Dick joined a mobile canoe course in the Altmühltal before shadowing a center-based course in Schwangau. Two weeks passed quickly and then Dick travelled via Prague to Vysoka Lipa, in the Czech Republic, for his last adventure of two courses at an OBG base for mobile courses in the area bordering Germany. For his final week in Germany, Dick felt comfortable enough to lead one group from an international school. All courses lasted five days. At the end of June Dick travelled back with many more experiences and ideas in his backpack.

Dick summarized his experience with the following points.

1. I am inspired by their instructors as they came from different areas such as geography teacher and ski instructor. All of them have something I can learn from and experience to share.
2. I am impressed by the course area of OBG. I was instructing in Germany, the Czech Republic, and Austria, which are places with amazing natural environment and outdoor facilities such as well-developed campsites.
3. I am glad to meet lots of helpful and friendly colleagues in OBG, who provided translation, explanations of the base, and activities instruction, which are important factors to maximize my working and learning experience at OBG.

Lena Richter, a Senior Instructor at OBG, actually started her journey in Germany by practicing the kayak roll to prepare herself for the courses in Hong Kong! At the end of July she arrived in Hong Kong and was welcomed by Dick, whom she had met already at Vysoka Lipa. Besides getting to know OBHK, Lena's goal was also to collect data for an exploratory study comparing the ethics of China and Germany.

In the first two weeks Lena was lucky to join an in-house training session covering topics such as foundational skills, safety skills, facilitation skills, in-base activities, environmental skills, local-water activities, low ropes course, and organisational skills. This gave her a good foundation to co-lead a five-day center-based course and a three-day journey course.

Afterwards Lena participated in an intermediate sea kayak practice before joining a five-day kayak and land expedition. In her days off Lena was able to discover the districts of Hong Kong by public transport, by foot, and by sea kayak.

In the end she was asked by Bacon Chan what three adjectives best describe her experience and she came to the following conclusion:

1. I am inspired by the experienced instructors and am happy to share the gathered information with staff and try new approaches/activities back in Germany.
2. I am impressed by the historical development of the city and its ambivalence between Eastern and Western influences, as well as the contrast of the vibrant city bordering the beautiful solitude in nature.
3. I am grateful for the staff of OBHK who was so welcoming and made sure that I felt belongingness over the whole duration. Consequently, the exchange became a form of personal and professional development, as well as a bridge between those two OB schools.

Overall, the exchange was evaluated as a very successful project which will be continued and developed. Generally, the instructors could learn from one another's expertise and could develop their own teaching. Further, new friendships were built and the cultural exchange was enriching. This project shows the strengths of a globally connected and performing organization, and both schools look forward to many more exchanges to come. Outward Bound Hong Kong and Outward Bound Germany thank all the people involved in making this such a pleasant experience for Lena and Dick. 🇭🇰





## Kokatat Neptune Personal Flotation Device

The Neptune PFD is a touring vest for designed for sea kayakers. It meets standards requirements for the US Coast Guard, Transport Canada, and the International Organization for Standardization. Available in women's and men's sizes, it also comes in three colors: Leaf, Red, and Reef.

This front-entry design life jacket was introduced in Denver, Colorado, at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market 2018 tradeshow. Its features include front duplex pockets, hand-warmer pockets, a folding-knife stash pocket, and a VHF radio pocket. It is compatible with hydration systems and well adorned with reflective tape. The adjustment points are visible while wearing the vest. High-tenacity rip-stop nylon fabric covers articulated Gaia® PVC-free floatation foam. While the Neptune is not a rescue vest, it can be used with a towing tether.

In 1971 Kokatat started manufacturing paddling apparel and equipment in small-town Arcata, California, USA. The Neptune will be available in 2019.

\$165 US [www.kokatat.com](http://www.kokatat.com)



## Salewa Apex Wall

New for 2019 is Salewa's latest backpack specially designed for improved breathability. The problem: people sweat while exerting themselves, but typical backpack design doesn't enable enough air circulation to ensure that evaporation can keep the wearer dry. The solution: a backpack designed to reduce contact points while enhancing mechanical ventilation through molded suspension channels. The result: wearers who are drier during strenuous activity. In other words, no more super-moist back during your well-deserved summit rest break!

The Apex Wall's new ventilated carry system, called Contact Flow Fit, helped Salewa claim a Gold Award at the 2018 OutDoor Trade Fair in Friedrichshafen, Germany. The volume-adjustable pack also features a magnetic buckle designed to open and close using one hand. It also includes ski attachment points and a place for your ice tools.

Designed for alpine climbing as well as ski mountaineering, the pack's fabric is made from ROBIC®, a high-tenacity nylon with a good strength-to-weight ratio. The pack is also light, weighing in at 950 grams for the 32 litre and 1040 grams for the 38 litre capacities.

Salewa was founded in 1935 as a saddle maker and leather wares manufacturer. Originally located in Munich, Germany, the mountain sports company now operates from a new facility in Bolzano, South Tyrol, Italy.

\$180 US [www.salewa.com](http://www.salewa.com)







**OUTWARD BOUND**  
INTERNATIONAL

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2017



# CHAIR'S LETTER



David Kong and Andrew Smith - Chair and Vice Chair of OBI at OB Romania

It is my privilege, on behalf of the Board, to report on the activities of Outward Bound International (OBI) in 2017.

OBI was created to oversee i) licensing of new Outward Bound Schools; ii) risk management and programme quality standards for all Outward Bound Schools across the network; iii) brand management; and iv) the promotion of communications and networking amongst OBI members. Our mandate states that OBI exists:

To promote and protect the good name of Outward Bound throughout the world, and to assist in the establishment, development, and support of Outward Bound Centers able to provide safe, high-quality programs that fulfill the Mission of Outward Bound.

2017 was a year of transition for OBI:

- We held two Board meetings, one in Singapore (where we helped celebrate OB Singapore's 50th

anniversary) and one in Costa Rica.

Mary Thomson's period as Chair came to an end at the AGM in Costa Rica and I was elected as Chair of OBI.

- John Atkin (Australia), Pamela Fralick (Canada), Hilal Al Mawali (Oman), and Henry Morse (USA) were elected to the Board.

- Andrew Smith took over as Chair of OBI's Nominations and Governance committee.

- Sarah Wiley succeeded Jon D'Almeida as Chair of the Operations Committee.

At our meeting in Costa Rica, the Board and the Operations Committee recognised the enormous contribution that Mary Thomson has made to the work of OBI by presenting Mary with our highest honor — the Kurt Hahn Award.

During her time as Chair, Mary transformed OBI. She oversaw the Executive Director transition that resulted in the appointment of Iain Peter. She instigated the World Conferences, an opportunity for the network's strategic thinkers to get together every two years to think about how we can develop Outward Bound and she built a strong, focused, and committed Board.

It is with great pleasure that I tell you that, more recently, Mary was made a Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order by the Princess Royal at Buckingham Palace in London in recognition of all that she has done for Outward Bound. We will miss Mary's wisdom, guidance, and commitment.





Mary Thomson is made a Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order by the Princess Royal at Buckingham Palace

## Work Programs

Following on from our World Conference in North Carolina in 2016, OBI has been moving forward with the following projects:

- Development of our Global Portal platform for sharing ideas and knowledge between members
- Further definition around “What it means to be Outward Bound”
- Ongoing collaboration between Schools
- Researching: What does “Good Governance” look like in Outward Bound?
- Revising the system of Program Reviews

We have also begun a strategic planning process that will result in a three-year plan (2019–21) for Outward Bound International. It is our intention that members will have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the plan.

## Licensing Matters

A central part of OBI’s core activities, along with brand management and risk management, is the provision of oversight for licensing activities across the network. No full licenses were awarded in 2017 and we continue to support Outward Bound Vietnam, who hold a Provisional Licence. Outward Bound UAE and Outward Bound Netherlands, upon recommendation from the Operations Committee, were awarded Provisional Licences. We will continue to provide support to these schools as they progress with their Outward Bound journey towards licensure.

## CONCLUSION

Special thanks to Iain Peter, our Executive Director, and our Associate Director Rob Chatfield for their countless hours of travel and dedication. Thanks also to our Board and the members of the committees responsible for Operations, Risk Management, Finance, and Nominations & Governance.

The Board looks forward to the year ahead, starting with the World Conference in Oman, January 2019. We will continue to chart our course to make our worldwide network more effective and resilient.



David Kong  
Chair, Outward Bound International

# MISSION & SCOPE OF OUTWARD BOUND

## Mission statement of Outward Bound International:

“We enable our member Schools to be more effective and more resilient and we promote and protect the name and trademark “Outward Bound”

Outward Bound International is on a global mission to help improve the effectiveness and fitness of its network of schools through a variety of ongoing and special initiatives. The following five priorities guide the organization's efforts in supporting Outward Bound worldwide.

### 1. Protecting & promoting the Outward Bound brand.

Outward Bound International ensures registration of the trademark in any country with current or potential Outward Bound activity, and manages the organization's reputation by monitoring infringements on names, marks, logos, and designs related to Outward Bound. In recent years domain name protection has received increased focus. To strengthen brand visibility, a website is maintained that serves as a global portal for those seeking information about Outward Bound.

### 2. Maintaining a focus on quality & innovation.

In the last decade, Outward Bound International has developed Risk Management and Quality Review systems. Every two years a detailed risk management assessment is made in each country in which Outward Bound operates, by teams of experienced Outward Bound staff trained by Outward Bound International. While this system is unparalleled in the adventure program field, Outward Bound International has developed a complementary process that systematically examines ways to improve the quality of service development and delivery processes.

### 3. Strengthening risk management standards.

Outward Bound International produces an annual Global Risk management Report on operations. Through its Program Review system, it also works with its member schools to continuously upgrade standards across the world.

### 4. Strengthening financial health.

Outward Bound International is continually trying to expand the number of sources from which charitable contributions are made to the organization. These efforts include offers of Guest Expeditions to interesting regions of the world for supporters who are willing to make a tax deductible contribution to Outward Bound beyond the trip cost; and the establishment of an endowment campaign to ensure the future of Outward Bound worldwide.

### 5. Fostering free & open communication and collaboration.

In partnership with the schools, Outward Bound International hosts events such as world conferences and staff symposia. Additionally, an annual journal, this one, is offered electronically and in print; and an expanding internal website, which offers many resources and ways for sharing them, is available to Board members and the network of schools.

Every year numerous requests are made to Outward Bound International from individuals and organizations interested in bringing Outward Bound to their country. This is a clear tribute to Kurt Hahn and those who have pressed on in service of his bandwagon.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



David Kong  
Chair (from Nov 2017)  
Hong Kong



Mary Thomson  
Chair (until Nov 2017)  
Canada



Sarah Wiley  
Chair, OpsCom  
Canada



John Atkin  
Australia



Pamela Fralick  
Canada



Colin Maund  
UK



Hilal Al Mawali  
Oman



Tim Medhurst  
Australia



Henry Morse  
USA



Andrew Smith  
New Zealand



# SERVING OUTWARD BOUND



## OBI Boards Worldwide

Each country in which Outward Bound operates has a slightly different board structure depending on the cultural norms and government structure for charitable organizations. The essential element is that each Outward Bound school serves a diversity of young people with a governing board comprised of volunteer, non-paid community members who oversee its mission and operations.

## Governing Board

The Governing Board of Directors is given the legal corporate authority and responsibility for an organization's formation and operation, for its stability, and for providing links to other organizations and parts of the community. The board can mean the difference between public understanding and support of programs and public apathy or even antipathy. Boards that understand their role and fulfill their responsibility are essential to the well-being of not-for-profit organizations such as Outward Bound.

## Operations Committee

The Operations Committee (Ops Com) is made up of experienced executive directors from around the network. Membership, at the invitation of the chair, is of a fixed-term and members are invited so that Ops Com is broadly representative of the network. Ops Com advises the OBI executive director, and provides technical guidance on operational matters to the board.

# TREASURER'S REPORT



I am pleased to be able to report again that the Outward Bound network has continued to thrive, with overall school revenue yet again exceeding \$100 million and signs of progress in a number of areas. Coordination within the network has improved dramatically in recent years and particularly since the advent of regular World Conferences.

Each Outward Bound school is financially independent and has responsibility for its own financial performance, so the accounts presented here are solely for Outward Bound International (OBI). OBI acts as a coordinator for the schools and awards, and maintains licences as the agent of Outward Bound Global, the ultimate trademark owner of the Outward Bound name and process.

In 2017 we saw OBI funding from schools rise as our move to a new funding structure became live. Direct revenue increased to \$281,769 US from \$226,627 US in 2016. This is misleading, however, as the new fee arrangements incorporated OBI paying for all program reviewer travel expenses whereas previously, schools funded reviewer travel themselves. For that reason direct travel expenses jumped to \$50,470 US from \$14,537 US in 2016. Overall our income rose from \$244,350 US to \$312,410 US and expenses also rose from \$304,841 US to \$354,562 US.

The core elements of OBI's service to the network remain in line with cost expectations. The areas that have been driving increased costs are three-fold: the additional costs explained above caused by OBI taking on direct responsibility for funding travel by assessors, the costs of continuing legal fees associated with the company's move from the US to Canada, and work on the projects identified by the World Conference in North Carolina.

Operating losses in the year amounted to \$41,520 US (\$60,833 US loss in 2016) with a consequent reduction in net assets to \$707,632 US (2016 \$749,152 US). We expect 2018 to show a further reduction in the loss attributable to reserves. The Board believe that with the steps already in hand to maintain cost efficiency, the finalisation of our move to Canada, and a new fundraising initiative underway, the company will be able to balance expenditure against income in the long term and so will be able to meet the increasing requirements of our member schools and fulfil our contract with Outward Bound Global.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

### Outward Bound International Inc. Comparative Statement of Financial Position As of December 31st, 2017 (Expressed in US\$)

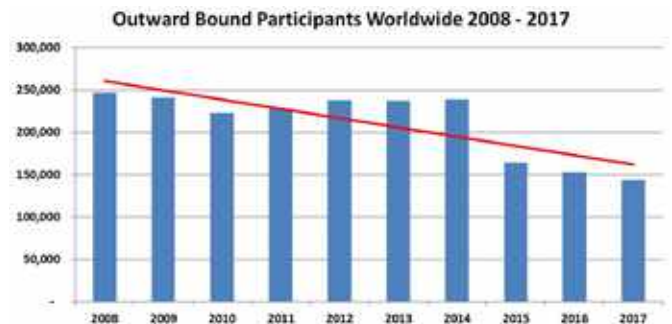
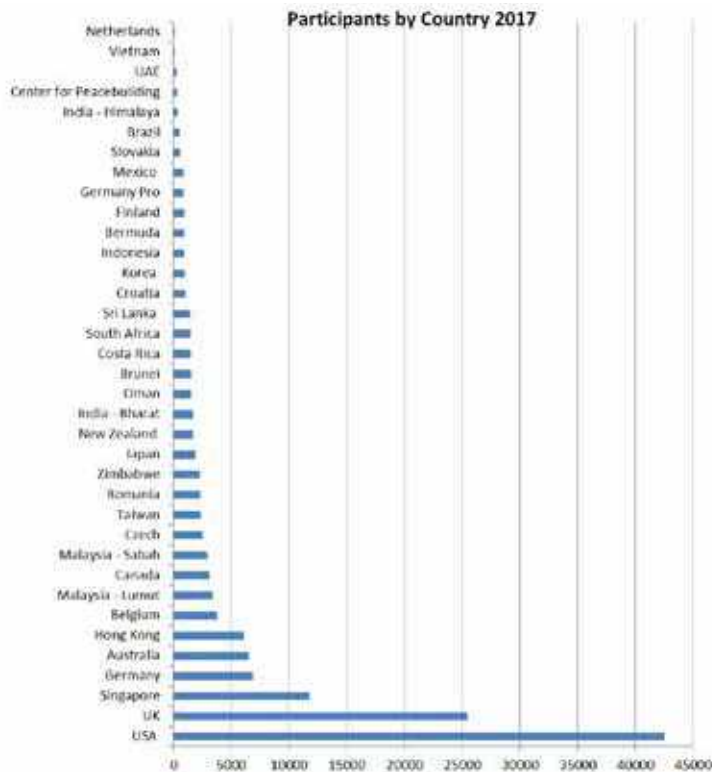
	2017	2016
<b>Assets</b>		
Current Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents - unrestricted	\$731,620	843,375
Prepaid Expenses	5,240	2,757
Receivables from OBI Schools, less allowance for doubtful accounts of \$3,000 and \$12,017 for 2017 and 2016, respectively	117,705	77,440
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>854,565</b>	<b>923,572</b>
Property and equipment	3,759	3,759
<u>Accumulated depreciation</u>	<u>(1,128)</u>	<u>(375)</u>
Property and equipment	2,631	3,384
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$857,195</b>	<b>926,956</b>
<b>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	\$135,237	163,004
Funds held for others	14,326	14,800
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>149,563</b>	<b>177,804</b>
<b>Net Assets:</b>		
Unrestricted	707,632	749,152
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>707,632</b>	<b>749,152</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$857,195</b>	<b>926,956</b>

### Outward Bound International Inc. Comparative Statement of Activities For the Year Ended December 31st, 2017 (Expressed in US\$)

	2017	2016
<b>Revenue &amp; Support:</b>		
Fees from OBI Schools	\$281,769	226,627
Contributions	13,456	17,723
Other fees	17,185	152
<b>Total Revenue &amp; Support</b>	<b>312,410</b>	<b>244,350</b>
<b>Operating Expenses:</b>		
Bad debts	5,951	-
Bank charges	3,987	5,298
Depreciation	753	376
Legal & professional	71,994	49,746
Office supplies and miscellaneous	4,794	1,036
Personnel	198,686	189,110
Printing and publications	14,078	9,023
Rent	8,010	14,455
Software	-	4,568
Telephone and internet	1,790	3,039
Travel	50,470	14,537
World Conference	-	13,653
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>354,562</b>	<b>304,841</b>
<b>Operating income (loss)</b>	<b>(42,152)</b>	<b>60,491</b>
<b>OTHER INCOME (LOSS):</b>		
Investment income	634	357
Loss on currency conversion	-	(699)
<b>Total other income (loss)</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>(342)</b>
<b>Increase (Decrease) in net assets</b>	<b>(41,520)</b>	<b>(60,833)</b>
<b>Net assets - beginning of year</b>	<b>749,152</b>	<b>809,985</b>
<b>Increase (Decrease) in net assets</b>	<b>(41,520)</b>	<b>(60,833)</b>
<b>Net assets- end of year</b>	<b>\$707,632</b>	<b>749,152</b>

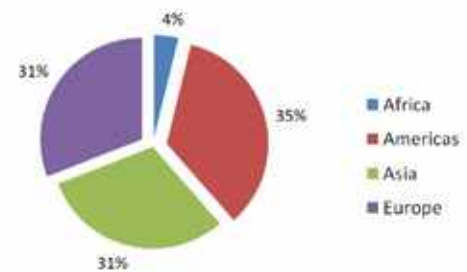


# PARTICIPATION



Participant numbers after 2014 reflect a reduction of 70,000 due to the withdrawal of Expeditionary Learning from OB USA

## Participants by Region 2017



# OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOLS WORLDWIDE

## Australia

[www.outwardbound.org.au](http://www.outwardbound.org.au)

## Belgium

[www.outwardbound.be](http://www.outwardbound.be)

## Bermuda

[www.outwardboundbermuda.org](http://www.outwardboundbermuda.org)

## Brazil

[www.obb.org.br](http://www.obb.org.br)

## Brunei Darussalam

[www.kkbs.gov.bn/program.htm](http://www.kkbs.gov.bn/program.htm)

## Canada

[www.outwardbound.ca](http://www.outwardbound.ca)

## Costa Rica

[www.outwardboundcostarica.org](http://www.outwardboundcostarica.org)

## Croatia

[www.outwardbound.hr](http://www.outwardbound.hr)

## Czech Republic

[www.outwardbound.cz](http://www.outwardbound.cz)

## Finland

[www.outwardbound.fi](http://www.outwardbound.fi)

## Germany

[www.outwardbound.de](http://www.outwardbound.de)

## Germany Professional

[www.outwardbound-professional.de](http://www.outwardbound-professional.de)

## Hong Kong

[www.outwardbound.org.hk](http://www.outwardbound.org.hk)

## India-Bharat

[www.outwardbound.org.in](http://www.outwardbound.org.in)

## India-Himalaya

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

## Indonesia

[www.outwardboundindo.org](http://www.outwardboundindo.org)

## Japan

[www.obs-japan.org](http://www.obs-japan.org)

## Korea

[www.outwardbound.co.kr](http://www.outwardbound.co.kr)

## Malaysia

[www.outwardbound.my](http://www.outwardbound.my)

## Mexico

[www.obmexico.org](http://www.obmexico.org)

## Netherlands (Provisional License)

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

## New Zealand

[www.outwardbound.co.nz](http://www.outwardbound.co.nz)

## Oman

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

## Romania

[www.outwardbound.ro](http://www.outwardbound.ro)

## Sabah

[www.outwardbound.com.my](http://www.outwardbound.com.my)

## Singapore

[www.obs.nyc.gov.sg](http://www.obs.nyc.gov.sg)

## Slovak Republic

[www.outwardbound.sk](http://www.outwardbound.sk)

## South Africa

[www.outwardbound.co.za](http://www.outwardbound.co.za)

## Sri Lanka

[www.obsl-lk.org](http://www.obsl-lk.org)

## Taiwan

[www.obtaiwan.org](http://www.obtaiwan.org)

## UAE (Provisional License)

[www.outwardbound.ae](http://www.outwardbound.ae)

## UK

[www.outwardbound.org.uk](http://www.outwardbound.org.uk)

## USA

[www.outwardbound.org](http://www.outwardbound.org)

## Vietnam (Provisional License)

[www.obv.vn](http://www.obv.vn)

## Zimbabwe

[www.outwardbound.org.zw](http://www.outwardbound.org.zw)

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