

## ADVENTURE BASED LEARNING PROCESS MODEL

We believe that by having a solid theoretical understanding of why adventure based learning works, and what the components of a successful experience are, you can explain your program to people who are not familiar with experiential learning, plan courses, and make decisions. This will enable you and your participants/clients to have positive gains from your time together.

The following is a brief explanation of each of the components of this process:

1.     The Individual: People come to the structured experience with a preconception of what it is going to be like. Generally, the expectations that they have set the stage for a meaningful learning opportunity. For some individuals, the anticipation causes a sense of internal stimulation. Others do not experience this feeling until they are immersed in the experience. This internal state that permits learning to occur is referred to as...

2.     Disequilibrium: disequilibrium refers to an individual's awareness that a mismatch exists between old ways of thinking and new information. It is a state of internal conflict that provides motivation for an individual to make personal changes.

Disequilibrium must be present for learning to occur. By involvement in an experience that is beyond one's comfort zone, individuals are forced to integrate new knowledge or reshape existent perceptions. These qualitative and quantitative changes are referred to as the processes of accommodation and assimilation. Individuals experience the state of disequilibrium by being placed in an appropriate level of stress....

3.     Novel Setting: Placement in an environment that one is not familiar with helps to breakdown individual barriers. When this factor is combined with the underlying conditions of effort, trust, a constructive level of anxiety, a sense of the unknown, and a perception of risk within a....

4.     Cooperative Environment: Establishing an atmosphere and method of reaching that makes use of cooperative rather than competitive learning fosters opportunities for individuals to develop group cohesiveness. This bonding cultivated through a structure that focuses on shared goals and the provision of time for interpersonal and intrapersonal communication. This foundation exists while each individual and the group continually are presented with....

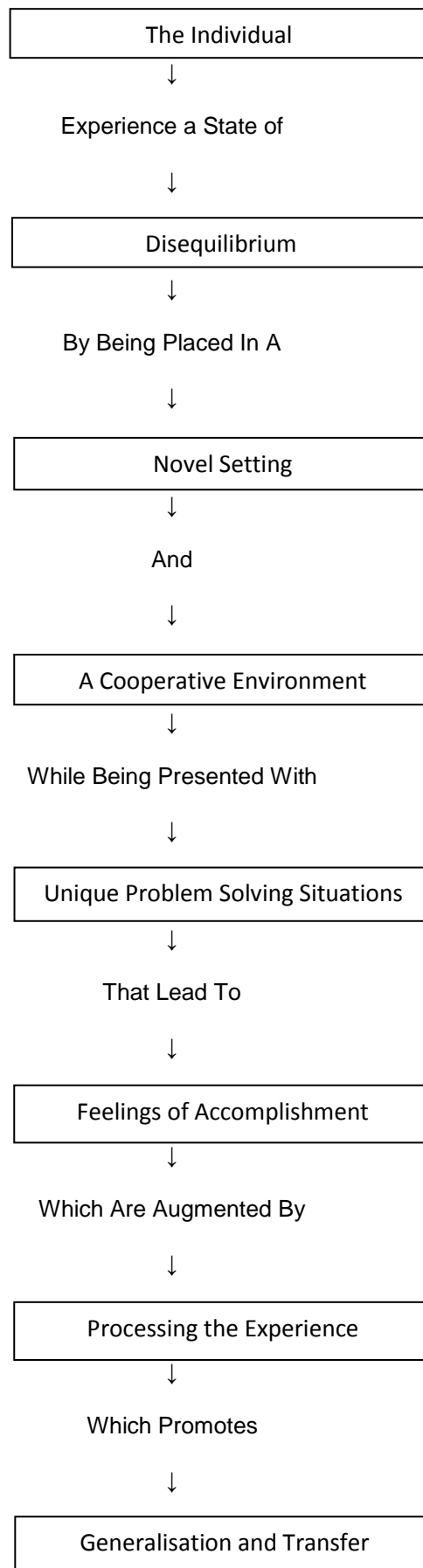
5.     Unique Problem Solving Situations: New skills and problem solving situations are introduced to individuals in a sequence of increasing difficulty. The learning opportunities are concrete and can be solved when group members draw on their mental, emotional, and physical resources. Completion of such tasks leads to ....

6.     Feelings of Accomplishment: Success can lead to increased self esteem, an increased internal locus of control, improved communication skills, and more effective problem solving skills. The meaningfulness of these success experiences is augmented by....

7.     Processing the Experience: Individuals are encouraged to plan and reflect and in some manner express their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that they experience. Processing is essential if there is going to be ....

8.     Generalisation and Transfer: The ultimate goal of the adventure based experience is to assist individuals in providing their own linkages, bridges, and connections to what they are learning, so that they can integrate their personal sights and desired behaviours into their life style during the remainder of the experience and when they return home.

## Adventure Based Learning Process



To Future Endeavours

### THE FIVE PRINCIPLES

#### PARTICIPATION

Participation asks that the person be present at each activity and participate at whatever level he/she is comfortable. For example, if the activity is the high ropes, we ask that people be present and participate in belaying or supporting on the ground if they are choosing not to go up high. Participation encourages people to be with the group to work together to achieve both individual and group goals.

#### RESPECT

Respect involves respect for others, respect for yourself and respect for the environment. We ask for a commitment to work towards changing behavior that is in some way putting down yourself or others.

#### SAFETY

Safety – Participants need to know that they will be safe. Safety needs to be both emotional and physical. Putting safety up as a principle at the start of the program says that we care about what happens to you and we ask for a commitment to take responsibility for your own safety and to that of other members of the group. There also needs to be a perception of safety by the group so we invite challenges to the leader for more information if there are any concerns.

#### LEGAL

Legal – A commitment to work within the framework of the law.

### DEFINITIONS OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Experiential learning occurs when a person engages in some activity, looks back at the activity critically, abstracts some useful insight from the analysis and puts the results to work.

Experiential learning is a process of training/learning that places high priority on the process of integration between old and new information.

### PRINCIPLES OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

- The learner is a participant rather than a spectator in learning.
- Experiential learning occurs when carefully chosen experiences are supported by reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis.
- Learning must have present as well as future relevance for learners and the society in which they will participate.
- Throughout the experiential learning process, learners are actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, and constructing meaning.
- Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, and/or physically. This involvement helps produce a perception that the learning task is authentic.
- Individuals may experience success, failure, adventure, risk-taking, and uncertainty, since the outcomes of experience cannot be totally predictable.
- Educators' primary roles include; structuring appropriate experiences, posing problems, setting boundaries, supporting learners, insuring physical and emotional safety, and facilitating the learning process.
- Educators must recognise and encourage spontaneous opportunities for learning.

- The design of the learning experience includes the possibility to learn from natural consequences, mistakes, and/or successes.
- Learners develop an in depth understanding of what theory from reading or lectures might mean in actual practice.
- The result of the learning is personal and forms the basis for future experiences and learning.
- Relationships are developed and nurtured; learner to self, learner to others, and learner to the world at large.
- Educators strive to be aware of their biases, judgements, and pre-conceptions and how they influence the learner.
- Individuals increase their awareness of how personal values and meanings influence their perceptions and choices of action.
- Educators use a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of real-life problems.
- Individuals have the opportunity to recognise how institutional, social and cultural factors may cause people to act in ways that contradict persona and professional intentions.

Source-A course in program development & facilitation, The Outlook, Boonah , Qld. Dept. of Families, Youth & Community Care

