Wilderness Therapy Symposium

SEPTMBER 22ST - 23RD, 2012

www.wildernesstherapy_symposium.org
Dear Participant,

At OBHIC’s 2012 Wilderness Therapy Symposium we invite you to discover a wealth of new information in an exciting collaborative atmosphere. This event is purposefully called a symposium instead of a conference to emphasize that this is a gathering of people with similar interests and concerns who want to learn from each other. The Symposium cultivates cooperation, inquiry and sharing. People come with a willingness to share knowledge and ideas. Presenters are encouraged to make their workshops experiential, hands-on, and interactive. Please expect nothing less than the very best at your Symposium.

Sincerely,
Timothy Earle, Promotional Director  WTS
Jim Lavin, Event Director  WTS

Symposium Schedule

Please see the ‘Schedule’ page on our website for additional details

Friday 9/21/12
9 a.m – 3 p.m.  Offsite Preconference Workshops
4 p.m. – 6 p.m. Registration/Check-in and Networking Reception
7 p.m. – 9 p.m. Keynote Lecture: Gary Ferguson

Saturday 9/22/12
9 a.m – 12 p.m. Onsite 3hr workshops
12 p.m. – 2 p.m. Sponsored lunch & Lunch keynote lecture with Michael Gass
2 p.m. – 5 p.m. Onsite 3hr or 1.5hr workshops
5 p.m. – 6 p.m. Reception sponsored by AIM House
6 p.m. – 7 p.m. Sponsored Dinner

Sunday 9/23/12
9 a.m – 3 p.m. Offsite 6hr workshops OR
9 a.m – 12 p.m. Onsite 3hr or 1.5hr workshops
1 p.m. – 3 p.m. Onsite 3hr or 1.5hr workshops
4 p.m. – 5 p.m. Closing ceremony
Keynote Lectures

FRIDAY NIGHT KEYNOTE

Gary Ferguson

*Reweaving the Story: The Power of Wilderness in Modern America*

Despite the many challenges wilderness therapy has faced over the past several decades, today brings what may be the thorniest problem of all: How to anchor and grow the potential of outdoor health care in a society increasingly cut off from nature; how to reawaken the idea of nature as a healing milieu in a society prone to mistaking comfort, for kindness. For this profession to flourish in the decades ahead will require a certain “recasting” of the symbols and story lines of the natural world into ones more fully suited to modern times. This presentation – a mix of science, personal story, and cultural history - is an exploration of that challenge, a look at the fresh perspectives by which America may again re-ignite their innate affinity for the lessons of natural world.

Gary Ferguson has written for a variety of national publications, including Vanity Fair and the Los Angeles Times, and is the author of eighteen books on nature and science, including the bestselling Shouting at the Sky: Troubled Teens and the Promise of the Wild. Ferguson was the 2002 Seigle Scholar at Washington University, St. Louis, and in recent years served visiting writer for both the University of Montana and the University of Idaho. He is currently on the faculty of the Rainier Writing Workshop at Pacific Lutheran University, and is a member of the National Geographic Speakers Bureau. Growing up in the corn and rust of northern Indiana, at age nine Gary announced to his parents that he was moving West, to the Rockies, which is where he’s been for the past 35 years, mostly in southern Montana, at the edge of the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem.

SATURDAY LUNCH KEYNOTE

Michael Gass, Ph.D., LMFT

*Just rewards as just desserts*

The work that we’re doing in wilderness therapy can provide tremendous benefits for clients. This post lunch presentation will outline what “desserts” as a field we have earned and the potential richness we have yet to achieve.

Michael Gass, Ph.D., LMFT, is a Professor and the Coordinator of the outdoor education program at the University of New Hampshire. He also directs the OBHRC and NATSAP Research initiatives, serves as the editor for the Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs, and is Chair of AEE’s REAP initiative.
Preconference Workshops (3)

Norman Elizondo

*Awareness is Non-Thought: Learning How to Cut Through Ruminative and Repetitive Thinking.*

“On one hand there’s reality and then on the other hand, there’s everything you think.” Clients and even trained mental health care providers frequently mistake their thoughts and cognitions for reality. Through didactic presentation and direct experiential education participants will explore awareness of body, heart and mind and learn how to use this awareness to stop thinking and improve emotional regulation through mindfulness techniques.

Norman Elizondo has worked in various capacities in wilderness therapy for over 13 years. As a teacher and meditation instructor he incorporates mindfulness training into all aspects of direct client care.

Melisa Pearce, MSW

*Human Healing Through Horse Energy*

This event is highly experiential, demonstrating the emotional healing that can be achieved through guided interaction with horses. These sentient beings offer insight as to how the energy of our emotions is transmitted and interpreted. Through interacting with the horses, participants are given an authentic example of how the energy they project effects their personal concept and relationship dynamics.

Melisa Pearce, MSW, psychotherapist, horsewoman, and creator of the Equine Gestalt Coaching Method® works with people’s emotions and energies in their body using an integrative approach of the equine’s interaction combined with positive coaching, somatic awareness guidance and Gestalt methodology. She assists the client in examining their life and choices made with a focus on designing a positive future.

John Davis, Ph.D.

Ruth Wharton, M. A., LPC

*The Bare Bones of Wilderness Rites of Passage*

Rites of passage, both formal and informal, are important for development, healing, and initiation. So, it’s no surprise that most wilderness therapy programs integrate aspects of wilderness rites of passage into their programs. Identifying the core elements of wilderness rites of passage – the “bare bones,” so to speak – enables programs and practitioners to be more effective and creative in how this is done. Program staff also benefit from understanding and engaging with their own initiations first-hand. This workshop includes an experiential exercise modeled on wilderness rite of passage. This workshop is facilitated by staff from the School of Lost Borders, an organization offering modern versions of wilderness rites of passage and training guides in North America and worldwide for over 35 years.

John Davis, PhD, has led wilderness rites of passage since 1984. He founded Naropa University’s Ecopsychology MA program and teaches ecopsychology and wilderness therapy there. He trains wilderness guides through the School of Lost Borders.

Ruth Wharton, MA, LPC, has guided wilderness rites of passage for over 12 years at the School of Lost Borders and several wilderness therapy programs. She has a private psychotherapy practice in Boulder, CO.
1.5 Hour Workshops (Saturday & Sunday)

Guilherme Zavaschi, M.S.

Traditional Amazon Medicine in the Rehabilitation of Addictions

This presentation will describe the treatment model of Takiwasi addiction rehabilitation center. Located in the Peruvian Amazon jungle, Takiwasi is a unique therapeutic community that uses traditional Amazonian Medicine combined with modern psychotherapy. The coherent and efficacious articulation between shamanic, nature based interventions and modern psychotherapy developed by the center are the main themes of this presentation. Research and dialog about the results of the treatment will also be presented.

Brazilian, Guilherme Zavaschi, has a BA in psychology in Brazil and a MS in Counseling from the University of Wyoming. He works as a Family Therapist at Mental Health Partners in Boulder. Prior to moving to the USA he worked as a Psychotherapist at Takiwasi Center for two and a half years.

John Davis, Ph.D.

Psychological Benefits of Nature: Importance of Research Findings for Wilderness Therapists

Empirical research on ecotherapy and the benefits of nature experiences for mental health and psychological development is growing at an tremendous rate, and this research is important for wilderness therapists in several ways. This presentation reviews highlights of these findings including relaxation, cognitive restoration, prosocial values and behaviors, vitality, peak experiences, and maturity, as well as some possible neuropsychological mechanisms. This research encourages direct contact with nature as a foundation for wilderness therapy programs. We will explore the important implications of these findings for program design.

John Davis, PhD, staff member at the School of Lost Borders, trains wilderness rites of passage guides. He founded Naropa University’s Ecopsychology graduate program and teaches wilderness therapy and ecopsychology.

Joshua Mendenhall & Dr. Justine O'Donnell

The Scout, the Chief, The Healer, The Sacred Clown: Utilizing Archetypal Group Roles in a Wilderness Therapy Setting

This presentation will focus on exploring, understanding, and utilizing archetypal roles within a wilderness therapy setting. These roles may also manifest within a group, family unit, and the larger society. A variety of group roles from various cultures around the world will be presented. We will discuss the use of these roles as a lens from which to view behaviors, honor the individual nature of each student, and create therapeutic goals. Participants will have the opportunity to role-play specific roles within a group and witness their impact on others.

Joshua Mendenhall speaks from a background of practical experience with nearly three decades working in wilderness and residential programs, along with years as a professional storyteller, artist and world wanderer.

Dr. Justine O’Donnell has worked in wilderness therapy settings since 1997. She has additionally worked in college counseling centers and a variety of other contexts. She currently works at the True North Wilderness Program in the beautiful woods of Vermont.
Matthew Cook, MSW & Lindsay Wallach, MSW  
Challenged Without Choice: wilderness therapy programming with seriously ill teens  
The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp was founded by Paul Newman in 1988 to provide children with chronic and life-threatening illnesses and opportunity to experience the joy and growth of summer camp. The last 5 years have seen the development of our “Hero’s Journey Program”. This unique program blends the work of Giants in the fields of Wilderness Therapy and Adventure-based Counseling with the powerful work of Joseph Campbell, mythologist and scholar. Our presentation discusses our program design, and it’s unique theoretical underpinnings.  
Matthew Cook, MSW has been Director at Paul Newman’s hole in the wall gang Camp for the past 10 years. He has worked with traumatized young people in diverse settings for over 20 years.  
Lindsay Wallach, MSW has worked at Paul Newman’s hole in the wall gang Camp for 5 years, and for the last 2 years has helped to further develop the Hero’s Journey Program.  

Matt Hoag, Ph.D., Katie Massey, MSW, MSPH, Sean Roberts, MS  
Solidifying Outcomes: Mounting Evidence for the Transformational Wilderness Experience  
This presentation discusses preliminary findings of an ongoing outcome study among adolescents and young adults at four Second Nature Wilderness Therapy programs. The study assesses change in participants over the course of treatment and six month post discharge using the Outcome Questionnaires. Through other standardized and validated measures, we explore what factors may relate to or predict outcome. We examine differences among sub-groups including age, gender, attendance in aftercare, adoption status, etc. We will also facilitate discussion in regards to the challenges and advantages of conducting evaluative research.  
Matt has worked at three different wilderness programs over the last fifteen years. He works with a group of adolescent boys and thrives on the ever-changing dynamics of the wilderness process. He is the Clinical Director at Second Nature Entrada.  
Katie has worked in research for over four years and is the Research Coordinator for Second Nature. She completed an MSW from the University of Alabama and an MSPH from the University of North Carolina.  
Sean is currently a wilderness therapist at Second Nature Entrada emphasizing experiential practices. Sean earned a B.A. from Prescott College in Psychology with an emphasis in Family Systems, and an M.S. in Mental Health Counseling.
1.5 Hour Workshops (continued)

Sarah Wagner, M.Ed. & Craig Pearson, M.Ed.
**Organizing Backpacks, Planning Routes and Regulating Emotions: Developing Executive Functioning Skills in the Wilderness**

More and more young people today experience weaknesses in executive functioning that lead to social, emotional and academic challenges. This interactive presentation will cover: what is executive functioning, how executive functioning challenges impact youth, what strategies can be used in the wilderness to develop executive functioning skills, and how those strategies can assist youth as they transition to aftercare. The presentation will include interactive discussions regarding how participants experience youth with executive functioning weaknesses in their programs/practices and will provide participants with hands-on experience with a number of specific strategies.

With an M.Ed. in Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, Craig has been a teacher, teacher trainer, administrator, and counselor and led numerous wilderness trips with youth. He is a Counselor at Shortridge Academy.

Sarah has a B.A. in Education from Brown University, an M.Ed. from Union Institute and is currently pursuing Professional Licensure as a School Psychologist. She is Director of Academic Support at Shortridge Academy.

Sean Roberts, MS, APC & Charles Carlin, MA, LPC
**Creating and Maintaining Successful Transitions out of Wilderness**

This presentation explores the complex and delicate process of preparing clients to transition from wilderness to an aftercare setting as means of improving long-term outcomes. Translating one’s experience into front-country skills begins in the wilderness. Therapists help clients illuminate the meaning in metaphors and hard skills while also helping clients develop the language to communicate with the world beyond the wilderness group. Utilizing client interviews and case studies as well as their clinical experience, the presenters explore how interventions, process points, and collaborative communication all contribute to a successful transition.

Charles holds an M.A. from Prescott College, and has worked in both wilderness and residential settings, including Second Nature and Dragonfly Transitions. He currently works for NOLS.

Sean is a wilderness therapist at Second Nature Entrada emphasizing experiential practices. He previously worked as a teacher and as a field instructor for Outward Bound and Second Nature.

Stephen Javorski, M.A.
**10 year Risk Management Trends in Wilderness Therapy: What does it mean to me?**

This workshop will present incident, illness, and physical restraint rate trends in OBHIC member programs since 2001, outline relationships between events and time of day, activity, weather, and clients days in program, and compare overall incident and restraint rates in Wilderness Therapy programs to those of similar in-patient and recreational activities. This knowledge will be then be used to inform small group experientials that explore how the outcomes of this analysis can meaningfully inform your practice as a front line staff, program manager, or private practitioner of wilderness therapy.

Steve is a PhD student at the UNH studying wilderness and adventure therapy. He holds an MA in Wilderness Therapy from Naropa, and has worked as an outdoor educator, guide, facilitator, and wilderness therapist.
1.5 Hour Workshops (continued)

Steve Sawyer LCSW CSAC, John Tucker & Shayne Gallagher

Improving Relational Integrity In Wilderness Therapy, by Losing the Level System

This workshop explores the concept of increasing treatment integrity through a more genuine approach to relationship. The presenters will cover the implications of placing level systems in the treatment process and the significant shifts that occur when using relational based treatment models. This presentation will include an in depth examination of individuation in the treatment journey, power struggles and the over use of ‘consequencing’ in treatment, and will examine true relational integrity with line staff and clients. This seminar demonstrates the power that relationship has in the healing process.

Steve is the Executive Director of New Visions Wilderness. John is the Director of Admissions and Academics at Wisdom Ranch School. Shayne is the Executive Director at WinGate Wilderness Therapy. All three are co-founders of their respective programs. All three were Field Instructors in the past. All three operate programs (Two Wilderness Therapy Programs and one Ranch Style Residential Program) that do not have level systems.

PANEL PRESENTATION

The Future of Wilderness Therapy: Thoughts and Speculation

Will White, DA. LCSW
Andrea Burgess, B.S.
David R. Heckenlively, MS, MFT
Deb Piranian Ph. D
Gil Hallows, MA

This is a panel discussion with five senior practitioners of wilderness therapy. The panel participants have a combined 100 years experience from academia to direct practice. The panel will dialogue about changes in the field during their tenure, emerging trends, and will prognosticate on the future of the field.

Deb Piranian Ph.D. began working in wilderness therapy in 1985. She is a professor and director of the Wilderness Therapy concentration in the Transpersonal Counseling Psychology MA program at Naropa University, which embodies contemplative education.

David Heckenlively, MS, MFT is a licensed therapist who has worked in the field of helping at-risk families for 18 years. David now runs Integrated Teen Services and Consulting in Walnut Creek, CA.

Gil Hallows, MA, was a founding member of the Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare Industry Council. Gil was executive director of Aspen Achievement Academy and is currently founder and executive director of Legacy Outdoors.

Andrea Burgess, B.S. has been with Redcliff Ascent since 1996. Her roles have included Staff Supervisor, Program Director, Liaison Communication Specialist, Assistant Executive Director and is currently the Executive Director of Redcliff.

Will White DA, LCSW, is co-founder and clinical supervisor of Summit Achievement. His doctoral dissertation traced the history wilderness therapy. Will’s research was recently published in the text, Adventure Therapy: Theory, Practice, and Research.
1.5 Hour Workshops (continued)

David Talamo, MFT & Samantha Terriss, MFT, SEP
The Hidden River: Identifying and Treating Trauma in Wilderness Therapy

Traumatic wounding and dysregulation is commonplace but often overlooked or misdiagnosed by many therapeutic approaches. Nonetheless, this underlying issue can erode a person’s sense of stability to the point that traditional developmentally-focused or psychodynamic therapies will be ineffective. As trauma patterns are identified and treated, other treatment approaches also become more effective. Nature is an ideal setting for trauma treatment. This presentation will offer basic trauma theory and tools for assessment and treatment patterns of anger, anxiety, chronic tension/pain and post-traumatic stress in outdoor settings. Experiential exercises will help participants understand the theories and learn the assessment and treatment skills.

David Talamo, MFT, is a Certified Hakomi Therapist in private practice near San Francisco. A wilderness guide for over 30 years, he is founder of Wilderness Reflections, offering wilderness rites of passage for youth and adults and offering ecopsychology training through its TerraSoma Ecopsychology Training Institute. He supervises MFT interns and teaches body-oriented ecotherapy.

Samantha Terriss, MFT, SEP works as a somatic counselor, trauma specialist and cranial-sacral therapist. She has taught psychotherapists, body workers, medical students and other health practitioners worldwide. Samantha is an avid hiker and life-long lover of Nature.

Mark Gillen, Ph.D.
Clinical Supervision Practices in Adventure Therapy

For AT clinical supervisors, or those interested in AT supervision. Based upon counseling supervision theory, adventure therapy and previous AEE presentations this workshop will examine current research into supervision practices, and encourage the participants to scrutinize the field of adventure therapy’s supervision opportunities and practices. Participants will engage in small group brainstorming of good supervision practices, special concerns, and considerations for supervision practices in the outdoors. Related mental health guidelines for supervision will be reviewed, discussion of research of international adventure therapy programs supervision practices will be disseminated.

Dr. Gillen has worked as a wilderness leader, educator, and adventure therapist. He is an associate professor and department chair for the counseling department at the University of Wisconsin, River Falls, where he researches adventure therapy.
3 Hour Workshops (Saturday & Sunday)

Brooks Witter, MA, LPC & Ben Pearson, LCSW

*Heading in the Right Direction: Tools from Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to help clients navigate life obstacles and stay oriented to chosen values.*

Are you moving towards the life you would choose to live, or away from what you would rather not have? Using this simple discriminating question, we will experientially engage participants in Kevin Polks’ Matrix – an elegant and highly adaptable clinical tool – and explore how the simple discriminating task of “are you moving towards or away” can be applied metaphorically to a wilderness journey to support student self-awareness, values clarity, responsibility and empowerment. We will, in the process, teach the six core processes of the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy model.

A practicing clinician since 2004, Brooks provides individual and group psychotherapy, clinical supervision, and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) training. Brooks emphasizes here and now processes to enhance emotional regulation, self-awareness and mindfulness skills.

Ben has years of wilderness instructor experience in two different programs. Having served as individual, group, and family therapist since 2003 at Second Nature Wilderness Program, Ben is currently Assistant Clinical Director at SN Uintas.

Dan Rafferty & Ben Loveless

*Making Music with Wilderness “Objects”*

An interactive presentation that presupposes a wide range of musical talent and a sense of playfulness. The goal will be to learn rhythms and connection through playing “instruments” that are readily found in most wilderness therapy program settings. Learning will focus on working through self-limiting beliefs and the didactic power of imitation.

Dan Rafferty is a field therapist at the True North Wilderness Program in Vermont and has been in the field of wilderness therapy since 2003. He is only moderately talented rhythmically but tries hard.

Ben Loveless is program director at the True North Wilderness Program in Vermont. He has been involved with outdoor education for over a decade. He is also an avid percussionist.

Danny Recio, M.A.

*The N.A.T.U.R.E method: combining mindfulness practices with sensory contact with nature to help mood difficulties, insight and creativity*

This experiential workshop allows participants to experience and learn the N.A.T.U.R.E method, a method that combines mindfulness principles with sensory contact with nature. Research on the implications of this method for mood difficulties will be discussed, as well as its implication and justification from the standpoint of ecopsychology, developmental psychology, traditional psychotherapy, and brain science. Participants will leave this workshop with a concrete hands-on tool to add to their therapeutic toolbox, as well as further understanding of how nature actually impacts the human psyche.

Danny has been involved in the creation and implementation of the wilderness therapy curriculum at New Summit Academy Costa Rica for more than seven years; out of these experiences stem his doctoral research in Integrated Ecology.
Deb Piranian, Ph.D., LPC

*Mindfulness in Wilderness Therapy: A path for relationship with self, other, and nature*

This experiential workshop will increase your understanding of how mindfulness supports your own development, facilitates client growth, and enhances the human-nature relationship. We will explore both the “why” and the “how to” of mindfulness activities. Participants will get hands-on experience with a number of mindfulness activities, some of which can be used in a variety of settings, some of which engage the rest of the natural world. In addition, we will strategize together ways for participants to incorporate more mindfulness into their outdoor programming.

Deb Piranian began working in wilderness therapy in 1985. She is a professor and director of the Wilderness Therapy concentration in the Transpersonal Counseling Psychology MA program at Naropa University, which embodies contemplative education.

Ellen Shinkle, David Boyle & Tim Murphy

*“The Meditation of Fire”*

This three hour presentation will incorporate a meditation practice with the use of a bow drill fire kit. Participants will be instructed through a meditation, breath work, and sensory awareness exercise while a facilitator goes through the bow drill process. A discussion processing the experience and participants personal connection to the process will be facilitated. The participants will be provided an opportunity to work with their own meditative fire making process. The presentation will end with a ceremony.

Ellen is the Field director at Open Sky Wilderness Therapy. She has been with OS since 2006. Her wilderness therapy experience began in 2000 with Aspen Achievement Academy.

David is the Assistant Field Director at Open Sky Wilderness Therapy. He has been with OS since 2008. His wilderness therapy experience began in 2000 with S.U.W.S.

Tim is an Assistant Field Director at Open Sky Wilderness Therapy. His wilderness therapy experience began in 2004 with Three Rivers Montana.

Hilary Moses and Travis Slagle

*Horticultural Healing: Digging a New Path for Wilderness Therapy*

Horticulture provides an opportunity to re-examine what healing means, not just as observers walking through a forest or hiking in a desert, but in a way that allows us to actively care for and engage in the development of a living thing, creating a reciprocal relationship with nature and ultimately confirming, through the care we practice in the garden, our own capacity and skills to care for life. Attendees are invited into a collaborative personal growth experience that translates to all clinical settings through which we serve our clients.

Hilary is the Therapeutic Program Director at Pacific Quest and has been working with children and families to achieve meaningful growth in wilderness therapy since 2001.

Travis, Land Supervisor at Pacific Quest, is a member of the Hawaiian Organic Farmers Association and American Horticultural Therapy Association with over 10 years experience working with youth in various settings.
Sanford Shapiro, M.Ed

Creating Impact Through Insight: Integration of Learning Disabilities, Wilderness Treatment, and Mental Health

Because 60% of adolescents in treatment centers have learning disabilities (Hazelton/NICHD), deeper understanding of why that is, and how clinicians, and wilderness field workers can better respond, is the substance of this presentation. There are three primary areas of focus: Deepen the understanding of how LD processing differences impact the emotional distress of adolescents and young adults; Linking information processing styles to intervention approaches to increase effectiveness and speed up results, and: Use best practices from the field of Learning Disabilities to develop new therapeutic tools in the wilderness setting.

Sanford Shapiro, M.Ed is a learning specialist who has worked within the learning disabilities and therapeutic communities for over 25 years and works as an educational consultant and and Owner of Bend Learning Center and LD.Resources.org

Scott Schill

Literal and Allegorical Enlightenment

Participants will craft from stone a small oil lamp and fashion a wick of fibers. Once the projects are complete, we will interpret the process by looking at it physically and metaphorically.

Scott began his career with youth in the wilderness in 1989 and since that time has been involved in integrating primitive skills with outdoor youth programming.

Sandy Newes, Ph.D. & Scott Bandoroff, Ph.D.

The Heroes Journey and nature-based ritual: If nature could talk, what would she tell you?

The framework of the Heroes Journey provides an excellent metaphorical structure for wilderness therapy, and a powerful lens through which clients can view their own change process. Drawing from previous WTS workshops, the Heroes Journey will be utilized as a guide for participants to engage in series of reflective nature-based activities that link to core elements of the journey. Links between the process and current evidence-based clinical models will be highlighted, along with ways to connect these types of activities to ongoing treatment planning.

Sandy Newes, Ph.D. is an independent Psychologist and founder of Clear View Psychological Services. Sandy specializes in wilderness and experiential psychotherapy; providing staff training, consultation, testing, and evaluation services to programs internationally.

Scott Bandoroff, Ph.D. developed the Clinical First Responder training for direct care staff in wilderness therapy. He is known in the adventure field through his publications and presentations in the U.S. and abroad.
Shayne Gallagher
*Becoming Chosen As A Mentor : Using Primitive Skills And Activities In Wilderness Therapy*

Making and using primitive items with students helps a Wilderness Field Instructor capture natural interest, invite a therapeutic relationship, and become chosen as a mentor, thus adding to the overall therapeutic efficacy of a wilderness program. Among other skills, each participant will walk away with his or her own completed primitive sling.

Shayne has worked in wilderness therapy for over 22 years, 7 of which as a Field Instructor. He has helped develop four Wilderness Programs. Shayne is currently the Executive Director of WinGate Wilderness Therapy.

Rob Meltzer MA, CAP & Bryan Lepinske
*Shame and Resilience: A Wilderness Based Model for Shame Reduction*

Shame is an often misunderstood emotion that can underlie other mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and addiction. In this workshop, we will review neurobiological research on how shame develops in the brain. Next, we will learn a down-to-earth and simple to apply model for shame reduction. We will create exercises, through group process, that demonstrate the application of this model in wilderness settings.

Rob Meltzer is an Educational Consultant, Facilitator of equine-based family workshops, and certified gestalt therapist. He has served as a school principal and wilderness program director. He is the Creator of the Wilderness Therapy Symposium.

Bryan Lepinske is a therapist at Elements Wilderness program in Huntington, Utah. He began working with adolescents and their families as a field instructor at Second Nature 11 years ago, and his passion for wilderness therapy has continued to evolve ever since.

Paul Case, Psy.D., Mark Braunstein, D.O, ABPN, and Barbara Ormond, RN.
*Rethinking the “Rule-Outs”: How An Integrative Multi-Disciplinary Approach is Broadening the Scope of Wilderness Therapy.*

Wilderness therapy has emerged as an effective treatment for adolescents and young adults struggling with a variety of behavioral and emotional difficulties. However, certain psychiatric symptoms and medical issues have prevented a large number of individuals from participating in a wilderness therapy program. Through case studies, we present a treatment team model that brings together the disciplines of psychology, psychiatry, and medical in a way that broadens the existing scope of wilderness practice, making wilderness a viable option for those with more complicated presentations.

Paul Case, Psy.D. is a psychologist and Assistant Clinical Director at Open Sky Wilderness Therapy. A veteran in the field, he is author of What Now? How Teen Therapeutic Programs Could Save Your Troubled Child.

Mark Braunstein, D.O., ABPN is board certified in general psychiatry. He completed his residency at The University of New Mexico and a fellowship in child and adolescent psychiatry at Maine Medical Center in Portland, Maine.

Barbara Ormond, RN is a licensed Registered Nurse with a passion for the wilderness. She has many years of experience as an RN, yoga teacher, massage therapist, and wilderness guide.
6 Hour Offsite Workshops (Sunday)

Gary Ferguson
The Wilderness Within: Nature and Our Passages Through Grief
This six-hour workshop is dedicated to exploring the use of nature as a healing agent for grief. We’ll begin with a lively discussion about modern perspectives on grief in American culture. From there we’ll examine two important perspectives of grief work: the first provided by current therapeutic practices, and the second, by selected ancient mythical motifs. Having thus gained a stronger sense of the characteristics of grief – specifically, how grief “moves” in a person – we’ll use a wide variety of story, discussion and exercises to uncover how nature can be used to prompt, or encourage forward movement through this essential human passage.

Award-winning author Gary Ferguson is the author of Shouting at the Sky: Troubled Teens and the Promise of the Wild. He writes and speaks regularly about the influence of nature on human thought and perspective.

Josie Lee Fenton, MA, MS, PCC
Inner Democracy: Integration of Parts Mandala
One moment, we appear the avid adventurer, the next, a frightened child. Different aspects of self – our parts – combine to shape each of us as unique individuals. Inner voices express divergent needs. At times, one part may act as a dictator, silencing all others. Perhaps our Realist becomes repressive when it fears our Dreamer is challenging the status quo. Participants identify parts, explore natural symbolism, and create Mandalas on the land. A dialogue of integration invites each part to have a voice, moving towards a greater sense of inner democracy.

Josie Fenton (MA, MS, PCC) established an innovative wilderness-based approach to individual therapy and coaching. Since 2004, her clientele has ranged from business executives to torture survivors. Her company, Lodestone (www.lodestoneway.com), provides coaching, therapy, and facilitation.

Michael Jospé, MA, PCC
Nature is a Mirror
Blending gestalt psychology, neuroscience, and nature awareness, this hands-on workshop will boost your facilitation skills and help you develop a new understanding of how nature mirrors. Through mindfulness, attunement, tracking, and discussion, we will explore how to unlock our inherent, therapeutic relationship with nature, in ourselves and in others.

Michael founded the Earth-Based Institute which offers therapeutic coaching for parents, families, and organizations, as well as, accredited professional trainings including a certificate program in Transformational Wilderness Guiding.
Antonio G Alvarez, LMSW & Kim Sacksteder, LMSW

*Intentional Practice: Understanding what drives our actions in the field*

Therapy involves addressing client content through a process that demands intentionality. In this work, our actions, with and for our clients, are driven by our understanding of who shows up on our doorsteps, what they seek from us, and what resources we have available to us.

Come join us, as we experience an intentional process used to guide participants towards expected outcomes. Our time together will be spent learning about the therapeutic stages of engagement, assessment, determination of the intervention, implementation of the plan and helping clients/participants move towards contracted outcomes.

Antonio Alvarez, LMSW, Adventure-based practitioner for 20 years, currently teaches at the University of Michigan School of Social Work graduate program; co-owns Adventures In Training Inc., a Training and Consulting company where he continues to practice experiential and adventure work.

Kim Sacksteder, LMSW, directs the adventure/wilderness therapeutic programs at Camp Mary Orton, in Columbus Ohio.