

Self-Care and Mindfulness through the Work of Adventure Therapy

Presented by
Ebonie Baker and Michelle Carr

The background features several decorative elements: a large green abstract shape with white dots in the top-left corner; a green leafy branch in the top-right corner; a green abstract shape with white dots in the bottom-right corner; a green leafy branch in the bottom-left corner; and several small green dots and a circular pattern scattered across the white background.

**Let's Get
Started!**

Adventure Therapy and Adventure Based Therapy

Adventure therapy (AT)

- "prescriptive use of adventure experiences
- provided by mental health professionals,
- often conducted in natural settings
- that kinesthetically engage clients on cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels"

Key Elements

- Intentional use of nature-based experiences
- Kinesthetic movement, physical exercise, solution orientation
- Involvement of meaningful and challenging adventure experiences for clients that facilitate experiential learning and natural consequences
- Use of eustress or the positive use of stress
- Healthy diet (especially on overnight or extended expeditions)
- Screenless experiences
- Active and direct use of client participation and responsibility in their own therapeutic process
- Multidimensional and eclectic therapy
- Use of rituals and metaphor.
- Practicing and developing mindfulness and reflection skills
- Harnessing the therapeutic power of group therapy and process



(Glass, Gillis, Russell, 2020)

The Trailhead to the Adventure the origin and history

1861 Gunnery School ~ outdoor skills and extension to school

1881 Camp Chocorua ~ change young people's behavior

1911 Camp White ~ first Boy Scout Camp still a working camp

1918 Camp Archbald ~ first Girl Scout Camp still a thriving camp

1922 Camp Ramapo ~ beginning to therapeutic work with children

1946 Dallas Salesmanship Club Camp ~ year long residential for boys

1962 Outward Bound ~ 26 day course in Rocky Mt.

1971 Project Adventure ~ experiential activities using rope course

(Gass et al., 2020)



The Best Trail to travel to achieve Adventure Therapy the present day work

Therapeutic Adventure Professional Group (TAPG)

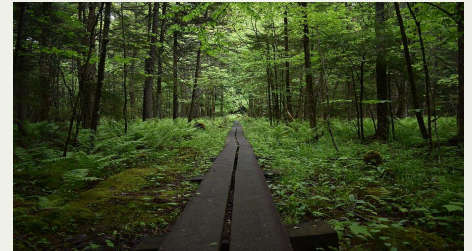
<https://www.aee.org/therapeutic-adventure-professional-group-tapg>

Association of Experiential Education (AEE)

<https://www.aee.org/>

Project Adventure

<https://www.pa.org/who-we-are>



The groundwork for the base of Adventure Therapy

- Use of Environment and Healing Power of Nature
- Involvement of risk or stress
- Natural and Logical Consequences (positive and negative)
- Shared experience of group leader/ counselor
- Invitation to interact in action with authentic participation
- Use concrete, real-life, kinesthetic experiences to create goals and lesson plans
- Group Leader provide immediate feedback in the moment to integrate learning

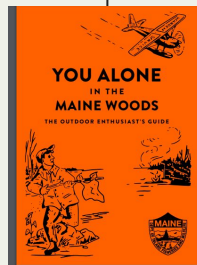
(Hirsch & Priest, 2004)

What is helpful to guide you on your adventure and prep needed



Taking an outdoor skill course (L.L. Bean, Conservation, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, REI workshops)

Take a Wilderness First Aid Course



Take a Project Adventure Course

Register and complete Maine Trip Guide

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Educational Programs

<https://www.maine.gov/ifw/docs/20-MDIFW-18-You-Alone.pdf>

Adventure Therapy in School-Based Practice



Where did it start?

The idea to bring Adventure Therapy to our schools happened through conversations between Michelle and I during our coursework at Husson University. Dr. Rebecca Edelman was influential in encouraging us to pursue this passion to reach our students through nature, teamwork and adventure therapy.

How did it start?

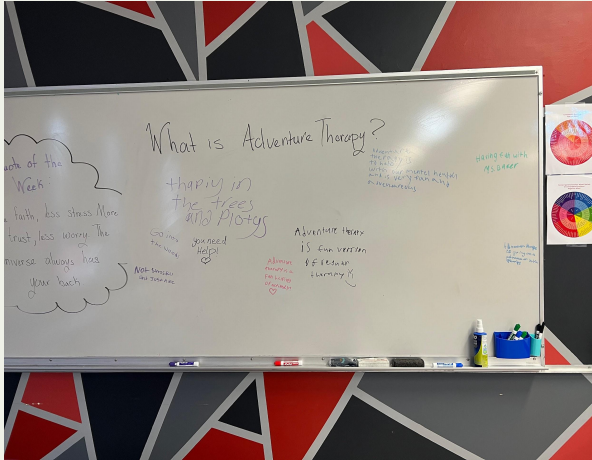
The idea to use Adventure Therapy at Holbrook School came about when the principal of the school came to me with a request to have an enrichment course for students.
(6th-8th)



Considerations for Adventure Therapy in School

Pros

- Students enjoyed the activities.
- Students enjoyed the open discussions.
- Student enjoyed the psychoeducational pieces from the activities used.

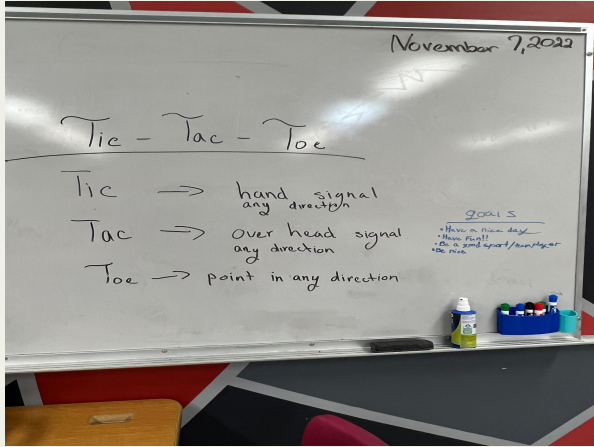


Cons

- The group was open.
- 45 minutes per session
- It was held at the end of the day.
 - Hardly time to prep
 - Could be called in for an emergency



Considerations for Adventure Therapy in School



What did not work well?

- Having the group open
- Having AT during limited time
- Having the group with different grade levels

What worked well?

- Getting students involved and opting-in
- Rapport building
- Testing boundaries
- Taking risks outside of one's comfort zone





Cultural Considerations for AT

Working at Indian Island School, I was able to incorporate a lot of AT into my art expression class through culture.

- Sacred fire
- Talking Circle
- Flower/Life Pressing
- Nature Walks



Future Actions of Adventure Therapy in School



Ethics and Safety Considerations

- Actively design and frame adventure experiences around student needs
- Develop specific treatment outcomes
- Allow your students to take control
 - You are no longer the central vehicle for change
 - Experience is the means of change
- Make clear and appropriate boundaries in interactions



Access and Equity

- AT "centers on fundamental principles of human rights and equity" (Glass, Gillis, Russell, 2020)
- What does this mean for your potential work bringing AT into your school/practice



Risk Management

- Goal: Appropriate Use of Risk
- Perceived Risk vs Actual Risk
- Power to Pause and Manage
- Invite Opportunities often to Manage risk and autonomy to manage personal risk.
- Appropriate Emotional Risk
- Too Much Risk; Not Enough Risk
- Risk needs to be group and client specific
- 100/50 Rule ~ knowing your ability and theirs



Ethics

- Waivers
 - Assent and Consent
 - Liability
- Consent and Opting-in
- Ethical adventure therapists:
 - Know and understand your non-negotiable values.
 - Recognize your own value systems as well as those of your clients.
 - Know the ethical standards of your profession and use them.
 - Practice ethical decision-making by reviewing ethical cases related to your practice.
 - Continually advance your professional practice through continuing education and receiving supervision and feedback while working with clients.

(Glass, 2020)





Let's Get Up and Try It Out

We have three activities for you to experience Adventure Activities that can be accomplished in a close group practice/setting This is to help you with your Self-Care and Mindfulness.

**Thank you for meeting with us! Questions?
Comments? For further contact:**

**Ebonie Baker,
School Counselor at
Indian Island School,
Old Town, Maine**

ebonie.m.baker@gmail.com

**Michelle Carr,
School Counselor at
George J. Mitchell School,
Waterville, Maine**

mcarr@aos92.org

References and Resources



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