

LASMUIGH

Issue 2, November 2022





Professional Practice Journal for
the Outdoor Sector in Ireland

In this issue...

Expedition Research, Forest Schools, Poetry, Rock Pools, Global Education, Guidance for PE Teachers, Kayaking Initiatives in Cancer Survivorship, Inclusive Practice, Aligning Social Theory and Outdoor Education and Explorations of a Post-Centric world...

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 **Look for these icons throughout the journal as we share information or updates that might be of interest to you** 

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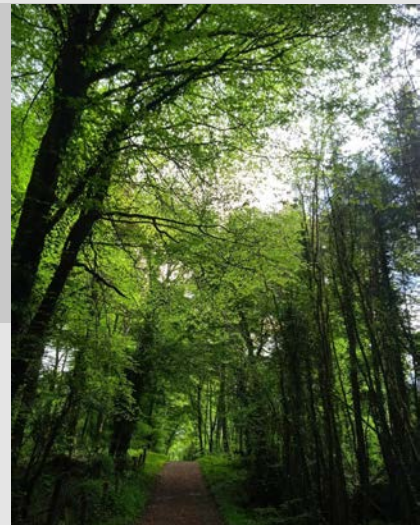
We are always on the lookout for images and photographs of Ireland's beautiful landscape. We invite you to submit photographs/images to be considered for future publications. Images can emailed to lasmuighjournal@gmail.com

Front cover image: Tourmakeady Waterfall,
Tourmakeady, Co. Mayo
Photographer: Mairéad Cluskey



What does the word *Lasmuigh* mean?

The word means on the outside or outdoors or without. We chose the word for the title of this publication because we thought it was inclusive of the broad outdoor sector and also as an acknowledgement that the publication is based on the island of Ireland.



| Editorial



Hello again, and welcome to the second edition of [Lasmuigh](#), the Professional Practice Journal for the outdoor sector on the island of Ireland. If this is the first time you have come across this journal you may wish to have a look at the [first edition](#).

I would like to start by thanking all those who have already subscribed to Lasmuigh and for the messages of support and promises of contributions we have received. We look forward to more of those promises becoming realities over the next few editions!

In this issue we have brought together a range of material that we hope lives up to our aim of reporting on and sharing good practice within the outdoor sector across the island of Ireland. The content ranges from research, to personal reflections, to poetry, to philosophical considerations, to guidelines for teachers, to cancer survivorship and conference reports. We believe that this range of contribution is reflective of the richly diverse outdoor sector on the island and that there is much potential for learning and sharing within the sector.

Whilst there is great diversity in our submissions to [Lasmuigh](#) each contributor shares nature as a common setting for their practice. With this in mind, it is difficult not to consider the impacts on nature and climate with the journal being written against the backdrop of the COP27. Has outdoor education any role to play in moving towards the urgent behavioural changes required by COP27? Can we persist in viewing nature as separate from us; there for us to dominate and utilise for its resources? It has been suggested (Selby, 2017) that experiences in nature have the capacity to build an empathetic and emotional bonding with place that can motivate people to care for and act on behalf of nature. As Selby (2017, p.9) notes “*we only stir ourselves to protect what we have come to love, and thus cultivating a sense of oneness with nature is vital if we are to have any chance of transforming the global environmental condition*”. Food for thought perhaps.

Thinking of humans as separate and dominant over nature is just one of many ideas that comes up for discussion in our first [Lasmuigh Podcast](#) interview with Dr Suzanne Kennedy. Suzanne chats about her research concerning sea kayaking along the Croatian coast and her insights into the expedition experience. The purpose of the [Lasmuigh Podcast](#) is to offer an additional platform to spread awareness of research and good practice. We hope you will enjoy it and we would love to hear from you if you have any examples of outdoor research or good practice that you would like to share.

Finally in this second edition we are particularly delighted to announce that we have now expanded the editorial panel. We would like to thank these volunteers for coming on board and helping to source and edit content for this edition. The editorial panel are introduced overleaf. Other developments for this second edition have been the inclusion of poetry, the inclusion of conference reports and the promotion of student research.

We hope you enjoy engaging with this second edition. Please continue [contacting us](#) and we'd love to hear from you with more ideas for articles, stories and poems, that you would like us to highlight across the outdoor sector on the island of Ireland and beyond.

Editors

15th of November

Stephen Hannon and Mairéad Cluskey

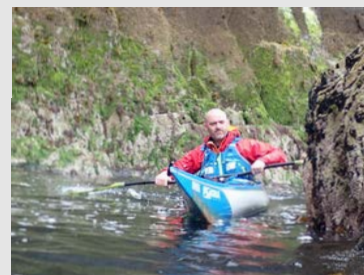
Meet the new editorial panel of Lasmuigh Professional Practice Journal

Stephen Hannon (editor) lectures on the BA in Outdoor Education and the MSc in Outdoor Education, Sustainability and Well Being at the Mayo Campus of the Atlantic Technological University (ATU). Stephen lectures in the areas of experiential learning, expeditionary education and facilitation. He has a particular interest in place-based pedagogy as a way of making outdoor practice responsive to where it is located and as a means of engaging people with their own local environment.



Shirley Gleeson is the Director of Ecowellness Consulting and Nádúr Centre for Integrative Forest Therapy. She has a Masters in both health promotion and social work and has worked for twenty years in health and social care, specialising in adult mental health. She designs, implements and evaluates nature based interventions for positive mental health. She is a member of the Advisory Committee of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas Health and Well-being Specialist Group. Community Ambassador for Nature Based Solutions (NBS) for the Health and Well-being Community in the Connecting Nature Enterprise Platform. Shirley is a speaker and ambassador on the topic of nature and wellbeing presenting to the United Nations expert group on green jobs in the forestry sector. She has presented her work at international conferences throughout Europe.

Dr John Pierce has been a lecturer in the department of Health & Leisure Studies at Munster Technological University for over ten years. He lectures in outdoor learning across three different degree programmes. He has also spent a lot of his career training adventure sports practitioners and instructors.



Ciara Munnely is the outdoor recreation manager in Outdoors unit in Sport Ireland. She is currently leading on national projects with significant impact including the development of a National Digital Database, National Trails Register and Trails Development. She is also involved in the working group developing the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy, working closely with various Government Departments and stakeholders. Ciara is an avid horse rider and has completed up to Grand Prix level in Show jumping. She also played rugby for a number of years and gained a cap playing for Leinster. In recent years, she has gained a broader appreciation of the outdoors and has travelled all over Ireland hillwalking and trying out new outdoor activities.

Robin Greg based in Ulster University is a Lecturer in Outdoor Adventure and Coaching. Robin is Course Director for the BSc (Hons) Outdoor Adventure programme based at Ulster's Coleraine campus and run-in partnership with Tollymore National Outdoor Centre. Robin is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, a British Canoe Union National Trainer and is happiest when surfing.



Emer Carton is an adventure sports enthusiast and has been a participant and instructor in sailing, windsurfing, rock climbing and kayaking at various stages since 2008. She has graduated from Colaiste Dhulaigh with a HND in Adventure Education, and from Chichester University with a BA Honours Degree in Adventure Education and Facilitation. More recently she has completed the Sport Ireland Instructor Developer Training and is completing a diploma in Life and Executive Coaching & Mentoring.

Emer is based in Kerry and a member of Kerry Canoe Club. Her passion is for helping underrepresented groups of people to gain access to adventure sports. Her current professional role is as the Diversity and Inclusion Manager and Women in Sport Lead with Canoeing Ireland, helping to make paddle sports accessible to all.

The new editorial panel of Lasmuigh continued...



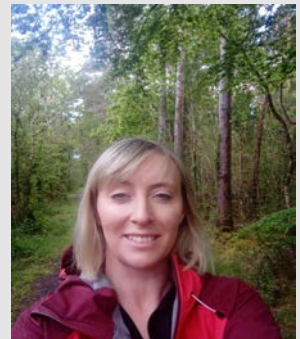
Mike McClure works for Sport Northern Ireland with a remit for developing outdoor sports in the North and is based at Tollymore National Outdoor Centre. His background is in Environmental Science and he worked in the field of outdoor and environmental education for over 20 years. Mike is also currently the chairman of the European Network of Outdoor Sports (ENOS) and has been involved in a range of pan-European Projects. He is passionate about engaging people with nature and communicating about the importance of ecosystem services, nature-based solutions for sustainability and restoration of biodiversity.

Dr Sarah O'Malley is an EU Projects Officer with Limerick City and County Council, Ireland. The projects focus on implementing nature based solutions and developing green infrastructure in urban/city areas. She has lectured and worked in the areas of outdoor learning, (dis)connection with nature, environmental sociology, education, disability and inclusion. She has published on these subjects. In her spare time, she is by, in, or on the sea!



Dr Cormac Doran is the Head of the Graduate Studies Office (Assistant Academic Secretary) at Trinity College Dublin. He has been involved in outdoor learning for over 25 years as a lecturer, youth worker, researcher, instructor and consultant. His previous role was leading a research centre between Ireland and Canada which followed roles as a Head of Department in TU Dublin as well as lecturing in various institutions in Ireland and internationally. Cormac's main research areas are in higher education theory and practice, community, youth and the outdoors and he is consistently looking at ways to create new knowledge for those who venture outside.

Mairéad Cluskey is a lecturer on the BA (Hons) in Outdoor Education and other programmes in the Department of Environmental Humanities and Social Sciences on the Mayo Campus of the Atlantic Technological University. Prior to her role in ATU, Mairéad worked as a professional Community and Youth Worker and lectured in TU Dublin in the areas of Youth Work, Community Development, Management, Research, Child Protection, Child Development and Family Support. Mairéad has a particular interest in the professional formation of students in value-based professions, to support an engagement with people and planet that is concerned with positive social change.



Karol Quinn works as the Learning and Evaluation Programme Manager with a responsibility for the quality of Adventure Journeys with Gaisce, The Irish President's Award. He has worked in Outdoor Education for over twenty years as both a volunteer and a professional youth worker with Scouting Ireland. He has been involved in a number initiatives such as the Dublin Mountains Initiative for the development of the Dublin Mountain as a recreational space. His passion is working with young people to develop hill walking and backwoods skills.

| Lasmuigh - Our Values

What is Lasmuigh?

Lasmuigh is a professional practice journal that aims to both inform and reflect the field of outdoor education on the island of Ireland by reporting on and sharing good practice. The publication serves as a commitment to the ongoing development of practice, to sharing ideas and innovations, and to promoting an awareness of Irish and international research on outdoor practice. Lasmuigh seeks to engage with and be inclusive of all those who share the outdoor setting for experiences be they recreational, developmental, educational, or therapeutic.



“Lasmuigh seeks to engage with and be inclusive of all those who share the outdoor setting for experiences be they recreational, developmental, educational, or therapeutic.”



Values

We thought it was important to outline what we are about in terms of our values and what we are hoping to promote through this publication.

- Our values in Lasmuigh are rooted in exploring encounters in nature that facilitate empathy and connection, which inspire engagement, challenge existing assumptions, and foster activism that is beneficial to nature and society.
- These values are borne out of a respect for and understanding of our interconnectedness and dependence on nature.
- These values encourage a shift away from an emphasis on the economic and unsustainable benefits humans derive from engagement with nature and a move towards a more eco-centric view of the world.
- Lasmuigh values place and outdoor experiences that interrogate our sense of place and sense of connection to place. It seems important for an outdoor journal that is based on the island of Ireland to value the power of place and the deep connections it can bring.
- Lasmuigh values making meaningful outdoor experiences available to all.
- Finally, Lasmuigh values critical reflection to develop understanding and improve practice.

Call for Submissions

What are our aims?

Lasmuigh aims to:

1. Provide a means of communicating good practice for those who share the outdoor setting for their work.
2. Explore how outdoor practice can be place-based in an island of Ireland context by sharing programme examples that celebrate place.
3. Provide a platform for Outdoor Education research on the island of Ireland and beyond that will publicise an evidence base for practice in all areas of outdoor practice.
4. Create opportunities for connection and discussion between those who work in the increasingly rich and diverse outdoor sector on the island of Ireland and beyond.



In keeping with our values at Lasmuigh we aspire to publish content that engages with the broad range of those who work in the outdoor sector and encourage submissions ranging from ideas for practice to submissions that seek to expand the evidence base for outdoor interventions. In keeping with the inclusive values of Lasmuigh artwork, poetry and book reviews related to the outdoor sector are also encouraged. There is more detailed guidance available for potential contributors [here](#) and advice on the types submissions that we are looking for [here](#).

Lasmuigh will be published twice each year, in the Spring and in the Autumn. If you are interested in submitting to Lasmuigh here are an abridged version of our submission guidance:

- We recommend 2/4 images per submission.
- Recommended word count – 1000 - 2000 words.
- Please include personal bio – 50 words.
- Submissions for the third edition should reach the editors by 1st March 2023.
- The next edition will go live in mid-April.

There are many different ways to become involved in this publication

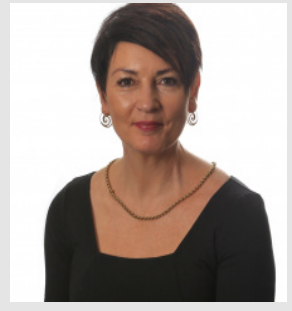
- Submit a book review, poem or artwork.
- Submit an article on some research you have conducted.
- Submit a story of your professional journey.
- Submit an account of a project or an example of good practice that you are responsible for.
- Apply to be a member of the editorial board.
- Send in ideas for the further development of the publication.

"we aspire to publish content that engages with the broad range of those who work in the outdoor sector"



“Sowing the Seed: A Bio-Ecological Exploratory Case Study of the Forest School Approach to Learning and Teaching in the Irish Primary School Curriculum.”

Dr Marie Claire Murphy, Prof. Emer Ring, Dr Lisha O’Sullivan & Dr Kathleen Horgan



Dr Marie Claire Murphy is a primary school teacher in Presentation Junior School, Mullingar. Her PhD research, conducted in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, was concerned with the Forest School approach in the Irish primary school curriculum.

Professor Emer Ring is Dean of Education at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. Emer worked as a senior inspector with the Department of Education and Skills, a primary mainstream class teacher and a learning/support resource teacher, prior to joining MIC as Head of Department of Reflective Pedagogy and Early Childhood Studies in 2011.

Dr Lisha O’Sullivan BA Early Childhood Studies (UCC), Dip. Women’s Studies (UCC) MA Non-Directive Play Therapy (University of York), PhD (University of Cambridge) is Head of Department of Reflective Pedagogy and Early Childhood Studies, Mary Immaculate College. Lisha lectures on the BA Early Childhood Practice, BA Early Childhood Care and Education and Bachelor of Education programmes and supervises undergraduate, Masters and PhD research.

Dr Kathleen Horgan is a member of the Faculty of Education, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. During her early career she worked as a primary teacher with a specialism in early years education. She subsequently held the position of Education Officer with the non-governmental development agency, Trócaire. During this period, she devised curricula and provided professional development for teachers in Ireland and the UK in the areas of social justice education and development education.

Introduction

Emergent research notes an increase in awareness of the importance of time spent in nature for personal well-being during the Covid-19^[1] pandemic (Rousseau and Deschacht 2020; Samuelsson et al. 2020). Preliminary findings from the Play and Learning in the Early Years (PLEY) survey (Mary Immaculate College (MIC) 2020) indicate an increase in time spent playing outdoors for many children during this time. However, these patterns of change may potentially revert once the Covid-19 crises passes (Rousseau and Deschacht 2020).

The authors suggest that these changed patterns in children’s play now present a unique opportunity for education systems to harness the well-documented benefits of learning in outdoor environments. Since education is a determining factor in shaping a child’s perception of nature (Aktepe 2015; Walker 2017), weaving the possibilities inherent in the Forest School (FS) approach through children’s education experiences presents an opportunity to redesign practice with a focus on resilience, well-being, and sustainability (Bhattacharya and Stern 2020).

The Forest School (FS) concept was founded by a team of academics at Bridgwater and Taunton College, Somerset, UK after an exchange visit to Denmark in 1993 (Cree and McCree 2013).

During this trip, the founders were inspired by the “Friluftsliv” open-air culture that permeates early years education there. “Friluftsliv” is a Norwegian tradition for seeking the joy of identification with free nature and challenges patterns of thought, values, and lifestyle imposed by modernity (Faarlund 2007). Although FS adheres to key features and guiding principles, there is no formal curriculum. Instead, FS leaders are taught to combine key principles of FS with environmental and nature education, child development, wild, free, and therapeutic play during FS leadership continuing professional development (CPD) (Forest School Ireland 2021).

A growing number of empirical research studies outline benefits for learning through the FS approach. These include measured risk taking through participation in authentic real-life tasks (Maynard 2007; Elliott 2015; Harris 2017), social and communication skills during cooperative learning (Swarbrick et al. 2004; Ridgers et al. 2012; Waite et al. 2015; Harris 2017), gross and fine motor skill development (O’Brien 2009; Ridgers et al. 2012; Waite et al. 2015; Turtle et al. 2015) and improvement in physical development and stamina (Ridgers et al. 2012; Turtle et al. 2015).

[1] Coronavirus is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

The findings of these studies also argue that FS is well placed to deliver curricular learning objectives (O'Brien 2009; Mackinder 2017; Coates and Pimlott-Wilson 2019). However, criticisms are evident, namely the need for the development of more robust theoretical frameworks (Knight 2018; Leather 2018), replicable research methods (Slade et al. 2013; Leather 2013; 2018) and studies in contexts other than the United Kingdom (UK) (see for example Cumming and Nash 2015; Elliott 2015; Turtle et al. 2015; Waite et al. 2015; Harris 2017; Mackinder 2017; Coates and Pimlott-Wilson 2019). This study therefore sought to address these identified deficiencies through exploring the FS approach in the context of the Irish Primary School Curriculum (PSC) and interrogate if learning through this approach is appropriate to achieve the Irish PSC vision, aims, principles, broad objectives, subject content objectives, concepts and skill development, and assessment?

The Research Question

While the Irish PSC and the FS approach have much in common, child-centred messages that underpin the Irish PSC may become displaced under the weight of the many subject areas and prescribed learning objectives (O'Rourke 2018).

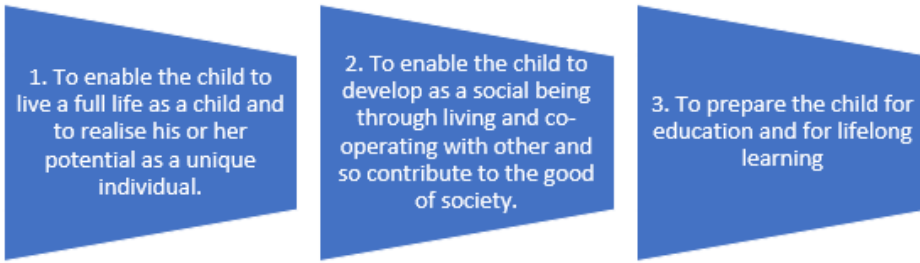


Figure 1. Aims of the Irish Primary School Curriculum (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment 1999)

Meanwhile, the broad guiding principles of the FS approach detailed in Figure 2 below can result in a variety of interpretations.

1.	Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in a woodland or natural environment, rather than a one-time visit. Planning, adaption, observations, and review are integral elements of Forest School.
2.	Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.
3.	Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent, and creative learners.
4.	Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.
5.	Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.
6.	Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning.

Figure 2. Six Guiding Principles of Forest School (Forest School Association 2018)

This study explored whether the guiding principles of the FS approach could contribute to the Irish PSC’s vision, aims, principles, broad objectives, subject content objectives, concepts, skill development, and assessment approaches. Therefore, the research question was, “How do children in senior infants, second class, fourth class and fifth class and their teachers perceive the impact of the introduction of Forest School sessions on learning and teaching in an Irish primary school?” The study was contextualised and guided by Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-ecological Model (1979; Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998; 2006), Dewey’s educational theories (1916; 1933; 1934; 1938a; 1938b; 1958), Beard and Wilson’s Learning Combination Lock (LCL) (2018), Cornell’s (1998) Flow Learning, and Lave and Wegner’s (2016) Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP).

The Methodology

Children and their teachers from senior infants, second, fourth and fifth class took part in the study. There was a total of eighty-four children in the four classes. Consent was obtained for sixty-eight of these children to be involved in the study and fifty-five children then provided assent. Five class teachers participated in the study. Data were collected throughout the 2018 and 2019 academic year. It was envisioned that each class would spend one and a half hours learning in the forest every week for ten weeks. Sixty hours contact time was planned, however due to unavoidable circumstances related to participants, this was reduced to forty-six and a half hours. Non-participant semi-structured observations of each FS session, semi-structured journey interviews with fifty-five children, semi-structured interviews incorporating pedagogical documentation (work completed by the child, to co-construct knowledge) (Dahlberg 2012; Rinaldi 2012), with five class teachers, and researcher memoing were employed to collect data (Crotty 1998; Cohen et al. 2000; 2011; Blaikie 2010; Scotland 2012; Thomas 2013; Simon and Goes 2013; Silverman 2014; Patton 2015; Galvin 2016; O'Toole 2016; Walliman 2018; Yin 2018; Miles and Huberman 2019).

The Findings

The first theme emerging from the study was *“Learning With, In, and Through the Environment during Forest School”*.

The teachers, who had limited CPD in outdoor education, responded positively to FS overall. Most^[2] of the children enjoyed learning through discovery, guided, and active learning methods, the provision of choice, and play in the space of the forest. The broad, child-centred vision, aims, and principles of the Irish PSC were achieved through child-led and adult-facilitated learning and teaching opportunities.

While FS provided opportunities to learn about nature and consider sustainable approaches to living, the achievement of curricular objectives was observed most often in Physical Education (PE) and Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE). A higher incidence of achieving individual subject learning outcomes was evident in the senior infant class.

Assessment occurred through child-led reflection and some teachers created connections with school-based lessons, which was effective in providing integrated learning experiences for children. However, a need for proactive and intentional planning, in balance with reflexive practice during FS was identified in which all professionals are aware of their roles.

Therefore, while learning occurred with, in, and through the environment, there was further potential to integrate curricular learning outcomes throughout all subject areas.

The second theme that emerged was *“Challenges of Learning and Teaching Outdoors in the Context of the Irish Primary School Curriculum”*.

A range of challenges was identified and included funding, insurance, weather and clothing, and class sizes. Costs required to implement FS in the context of this Irish primary school included the price of transportation to and from the forest each week. Suitable insurance policies which covered FS activities proved challenging to secure. Moreover, the local city council required proof of insurance for permission to use the land.

In this study, the FS leader provided this insurance herself. While one class teacher, felt that FS provided children with opportunities to engage in learning outdoors regardless of the weather, seven children listed “rain” as an aspect of FS that they did not enjoy and access to appropriate weather-proof clothing proved challenging in this study. The FS leader noted that it was difficult to maintain FS guiding principles in traditional Irish primary school classes due to class sizes and the ratio of children to adults. Two children agreed that this resulted in having to “wait for everybody”.

The final theme was *“Inclusion for Children with Diverse Learning Needs and Interests during Forest School”*.

The class teachers felt that children who lacked interest in school responded positively as FS provided an opportunity to demonstrate abilities through a variety of modalities. However, some^[3] children demonstrated aversions to the forest, and the inclusion of all children in FS experiences was closely associated with class teachers’ beliefs, school policy, and staffing. A need to communicate with parent(s)/guardian(s) to prepare children for learning in the forest was also apparent. Challenges to cultivating inclusive practice during FS included children’s discomfort to stimuli in the forest, namely: nettle stings and insect bites, getting their hands dirty, getting wet in the stream, falling, and toileting outdoors.

The Recommendations

While the guiding principles of FS are grounded in a playful approach to teaching (Forest School Association (FSA) 2018), a need for proactive and intentional planning, in balance with reflexive practice is required to incorporate a variety of play types in each outdoor session. Therefore, class teachers’ understanding of learning during FS is necessary to prepare and provide supports which enable children to learn outdoors. The inclusion of this approach to learning and teaching through CPD opportunities has the potential to provide class teachers with foundational knowledge in outdoor pedagogy.

Learning during FS provided children with opportunities to learn about nature, while considering sustainable approaches to living. Child-led assessment and reflective methods were the main assessment approaches observed. However, incidences in which members of the school staff created connections with school-based lessons created integrated learning experiences and provided children with skills that facilitated a transfer of learning. Thus, cyclical processes of planning, observation, and reflection can support the attainment of curricular subject learning outcomes.

While most^[4] of the children had visited a forest, few^[5] were familiar with the FS approach to learning and teaching. Thus, in order for learning and teaching outdoors to begin at the child’s lived experience, it is imperative that the child’s voice is incorporated in a curriculum co-constructed with class teachers/forest school leaders and children.

[2] Fifty out of fifty-five children

[3] Fifteen

[4] Twenty-eight

[5] Thirteen

Positive rapport between class teachers/FS leaders and children provide a foundation for the creation of learning habits, such as routines and behavioural expectations, which are responsive to space and place and mindful of sensory stimulation (NCCA 2009; Lave and Wenger 2016; Beard and Wilson 2018; Mitchell 2019). However, confusion regarding the role of class teachers in supporting children's engagement can be challenging in the FS setting. Providing for all children's engagement in FS begins with collegial collaboration, communication, and support in which both class teacher and forest school leader share an understanding of expectations to provide each other with professional moral support (Department of Education and Skills (DESb) 2017; Ahead 2021; Cree and Robb 2021; National Council for Special Education (NCSE) 2021a). Furthermore, consultation with children and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to create class or individual behavioural contracts can provide ownership over strategies to support the child's learning during FS (DESb 2017; Cree and Robb 2021; NCSE 2021b).

Although previous literature outlines benefits of the FS approach for children with specific learning needs (Louv 2009; Roe and Aspinall 2011; Waite et al. 2015; Williams 2017), policy and practice have moved towards a universal design for learning, which considers multiple means of engagement with new learning, multiple means of representation of new information, and multiple means of action and expression to demonstrate new learning (Ahead 2020).

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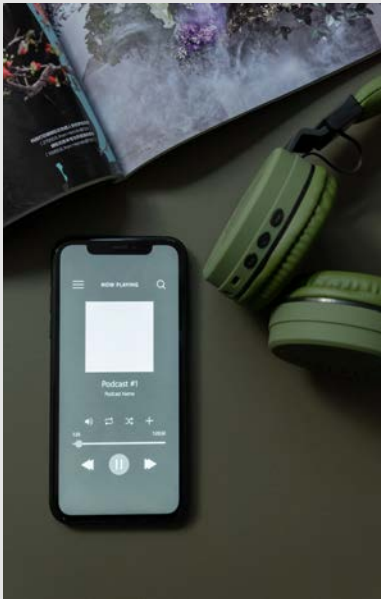
Support for all learners should be formed along a continuum, and resources should be provided once barriers to learning become evident (European Agency on Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EASNIE) 2017).

While the effectiveness of incorporating Scandinavian approaches to learning and teaching was questioned in previous studies (Leather 2013; 2018; Lloyd et al. 2018), an incorporation of Irish cultural and heritage traditions alongside this Scandinavian approach has the potential to situate learning and teaching within the child's lived experience to create curricular connections with the natural environment during FS (Cree and Robb 2021). Moreover, education situated in the local environment is particularly powerful to understand climate change processes (O'Dwyer 2022), thus addressing recent departmental concerns regarding the need for pedagogical guidance in education for sustainable development (ESD) (NCCA 2020; DESb 2022b).

Learning and teaching outdoors requires additional funding. Equipment, such as tarpaulin for shelter, toileting supplies, firewood and tools which include flint and steel, ropes and blades are necessary to provide suitable learning and teaching experiences outdoors. Funding is required for spare clothing and transportation to the forest. Although the forest school leader's fees were subsidised by the Heritage Council through the Heritage in Schools Scheme (2020), currently there is no departmental policy regarding funding for learning and teaching outdoors (Madden 2019; Moore 2019).

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Lasmuigh Podcast

We are delighted to launch our new [Podcast](#) that will sit alongside the journal in highlighting and sharing research and good practice across the Island of Ireland.

This first [Lasmuigh Podcast](#) is with researcher and lecturer Dr. Suzanne Kennedy and is focussed on her insights into the experience of sea kayak expeditioning and her resulting reflections into our relationship with the natural and material world around us.

Suzanne is a lecturer in physical education and sport at ATU Donegal. She completed a PhD with the University of Limerick entitled *Other Voices: Women in the Adventure Expedition Space*. She is an active sea kayaker, sailor and mountain biker. Recent expeditions include a sailing/sea kayaking expedition from Argentina to Antarctica, a circumnavigation by sea kayak of the Lofoten Islands in the Norwegian Arctic, a trans-Atlantic sailing voyage to the West Indies, and a trans-Himalayan mountain bike journey from Tibet to Nepal, via Everest Base Camp. She also co-led the first female kayak circumnavigation of the island of Ireland by sea kayak and has kayaked from Wales to Ireland and from Northern Ireland to Scotland.



The Bare Necessities Model for Inclusive Practice

Cian Mulgrew

Cian is a past graduate of the BA (Hons) in Outdoor Education, ATU Mayo. With multiple instructorships, he has worked in many centres around Europe and is currently duty manager at Absolute Adventures Jersey in the Channel Islands. During his degree he wrote his thesis on the exploration of inclusive practice in adventure sports in Ireland for people with disabilities and hopes to showcase his research and grow his experience in the sector.



Introduction

In this article I will be presenting research I conducted during my fourth-year dissertation in the BA (Hons) in Outdoor Education course at the Atlantic Technological University (ATU), Mayo in 2022. I will present my research through 'The Bare Necessities Model' which is a model I developed from my findings. I wanted to discover how outdoor adventure sports providers can offer positive and effective inclusive practices so that activities and programmes can become spaces for learning, development and growth (Priest and Gass, 2017) for those with disabilities who would otherwise face barriers to accessing adventure recreation.

My research endeavoured to identify opportunities to overcome constraints in facilitating inclusive participation in adventure sports. When referring to inclusive practice and inclusive participation from here out, I am describing and approach and a space that facilitates meaningful participation for people with disabilities. I think this research will be useful for the outdoor education sector, in particular instructors or facilitators working in outdoor centres or sports clubs.

Disability can be considered an uncertain or complex concept, particularly in the fitness and sports sector, so innovation and progression in this area is essential. While disabilities are typically grouped as physical, sensory, and intellectual (Canoeing Ireland, 2021), short term injuries, mental health and sickness can all come under the bracket of disability. The Bare Necessities Model aims to improve practice in this area for participants and in doing so aims to create more effective, inclusive processes for people with disabilities.

Context of common barriers to inclusive practice

There is a substantial lack of research and literature looking at participation in adventure sports for people with disabilities. However, from the limited resources available, the common barriers that seem to arise for individuals with disabilities include being able to identify and access opportunities that are genuinely inclusive, overcoming constraints, managing perceptions and having access for progression and growth in the sport.

Identify and Access Opportunities

There are three key factors to consider when it comes to ensuring there are inclusive opportunities for individuals with disabilities to access outdoor adventure sports. Countering stigmatisation both within the sports sector and in the wider society is an integral step in transitioning towards integrated opportunities (DePauw & Gavron, 1995). We must also ensure the physical benefits and needs are met and encouraged for both able bodied participants and also those with disabilities (Ferez *et al*, 2020). To ensure opportunities are genuinely inclusive, we also have to support psychological and mental development of individuals by encouraging the development of multiple social skills through participation (Di Palma *et al*, 2016).

Genuine Inclusion

When it comes to adventure sports it is essential to establish specific parameters to define inclusivity as without defining parameters, engagement of individuals with disabilities in adventure sports will continue to lack (Lee, 2021). It is not enough to simply make a centre physically accessible or to offer adaptable equipment. To avoid being considered tokenistic, opportunities should also factor in attitudes and methods of instructors and facilitators to ensure that all learners feel welcome and valued. Support should also include offering individuals with disabilities the chance to develop their talents and goals for their chosen sport while also encouraging a growth in self-reliance.

Offering exclusive inclusion has its place in terms of making adventure sports accessible; however, it cannot be ignored that separated participation does contribute to societal segregation problems in terms of inclusive programming and can cause underlying issues (Gilhespy, 2009). For example, having a high ropes course for wheelchair users is a brilliant and positive progression for those with disabilities, yet if it's only one foot off the ground does it take from the true sport? Or not allowing for mixed sessions with those able bodied and people with disabilities can in turn add to negative growth in increasing participation? How can the perceptions and confidence grow when each ability is segregated continuously? Excluding lower performance allows inclusion (Ferez *et al*, 2020).

Constraints

It is also essential to tackle a number of constraints to ensure opportunities are genuinely inclusive for people with disabilities to partake in outdoor adventure sports. Accessibility is a leading constraint (Messent *et al*, 1999) with lack of equipment (Gaskin *et al*, 2020) and the need for educated and passionate staff and training (Kitchen *et al*, 2019) are all contributing factors that prevent or discourage people with disabilities from participating in adventure sports. Offering ways to overcome the financial barriers is also essential when it comes to helping individuals access opportunities as well as countering the perceived negative attitudes that continue to create barriers to participation (NDA, 2021). Psychological barriers like awareness, anxiety and fear of the unknown (Canoe Ireland, 2021) are also constraints that need to be dealt with.

Perceptions

Dealing with negative perceptions from service providers and people with disabilities is also a significant barrier preventing growth in the inclusive sports sector (Erickson 2003). One of the significant negative perceptions that needs to be tackled is the viewpoint that disability sports are a lesser form of sport. It could be argued that the controversy of exclusive inclusion, while providing an access point to participation, potentially contributes to this view of deficiency and promotes separatism in sports that leads to negative perceptions about disability sports forming (Jackson, 2020). A lack of awareness or training can also lead to negative and limiting perceptions when assessing the capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Most able-bodied people do not find barriers considerable unless breaching their own personal basic rights (Goldschmit, 2017). Depending on varying capabilities, adaptations to equipment, styles of leadership and facilitation and to session plans might be necessary to create fully inclusive programmes that are both visually inclusive and fully integrated.

Progression

Access to funding, sufficient and informative promotion and grassroots training for participants and instructors are all essential aspects to the progression of inclusive sports. The Irish adventure sector has made improvements when we look at the promotion and marketing of inclusive sport opportunities (Gaskin *et al*, 2020) and the merging of mainstream sports (Kitchen *et al*, 2019). However, in order to grow participation levels and increase the opportunities for progression in sport, the lack of media coverage for inclusive sports must be addressed so that negative perceptions (Ferez *et al*, 2020) and funding issues that prevent participation and limit grassroot training can be countered. Opportunities for progression are crucial for people with disabilities to access the long-term benefits associated with the continual engagement in outdoor adventure sport.



The Bare Necessities Model

With a wide array of practical and integrational opportunities as well as physical and psychological benefits, engagement in inclusive adventure sports programmes is favourable and advantageous. Although, with a number of structural, financial and societal constraints, participation and engagement of individuals with disabilities is not as available or equally perceived as abled-bodied individuals. Ensuring genuine inclusivity is a cornerstone of The Bare Necessities Model because without it, opportunities for participation can be considered as tokenistic encouragement which is commonly seen in the adventure sector and can actually negatively impact participation of individuals with disabilities in sports.

My dissertation research took a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews with five experienced outdoor adventure sport facilitators. I used thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) to analyse the data from the research which resulted in three key themes emerging. Utilising the three themes that emerged through my data, *perceptions, inclusion and engagement*, I considered a practical application of my findings and developed the Bare Necessities Model.

I developed the **Bare Necessities Model** to illustrate the main requirements (and interlinked nature of them) for positive and effective inclusive practice in adventure sports and programmes. All three of these factors must be included in the planning, design and facilitation of the programme to promote the highest likelihood for an inclusive approach. As can be observed in Figure 1, the aim is to achieve the correct balance of positive perceptions, genuine inclusion and continual engagement in programme development and facilitation.

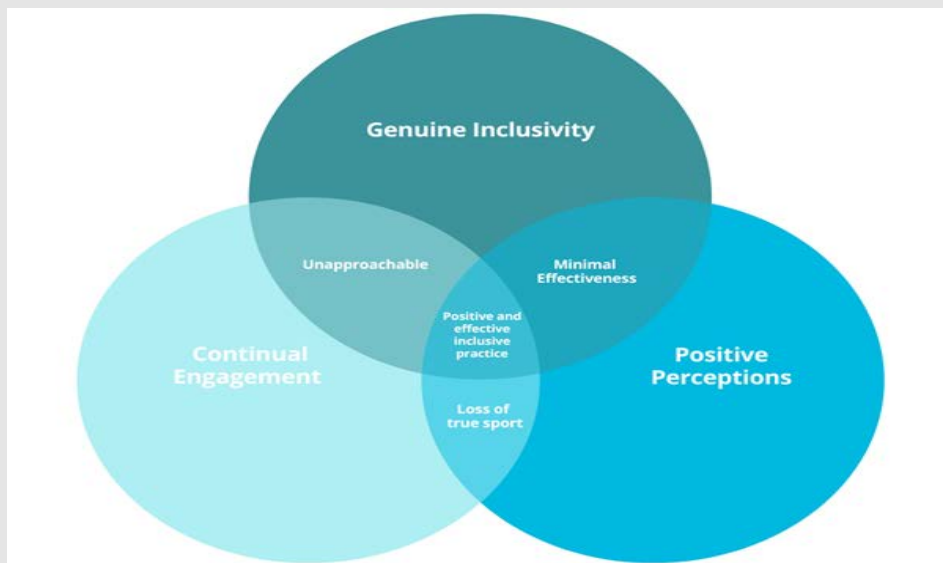


Figure 1: The Bare Necessities Model

Understanding and Applying The Bare Necessities Model

Perceptions

This theme covered the participant and the service providers /general public's attitudes towards the abilities and feelings of inclusive programmes. The need for positive perceptions is vital in the growth of the inclusive adventure sector to initially introduce new participants and make them feel welcome and not an inconvenience. The feeling of independence that is gained from participation and the ongoing discrimination in the current outdoor adventure sector. Also highlighting the difference of perceived capabilities and responsibility of programmers and participants.

Inclusion

This covered the authenticity of inclusive programmes. Awareness and managing the balance and structure of *Exclusive Inclusion* to *Mixed Inclusion* is essential, where each is necessary or more effective. Where exclusive inclusion is having specific disability type programmes yet excluding others and where mixed inclusion is all ability, participants are welcome.

Engagement

This theme highlighted the proactive solutions mindset in inclusive practice, the importance of *Continual Engagement* to ensure long term benefits and growth. Finally, the correct training of staff with client-centred methodologies for progressive participation effectiveness and stability.

Through my research, I discovered that if not all elements in the model are considered and implemented fully, the quality of meaningful participation can be compromised. For example, if only positive perceptions and genuine inclusion are ensured, the opportunities gained from inclusive participation are not maximised as continual engagement is missing. Similarly, once genuine inclusion and continual engagement is included in the practice, the club or centre may not become approachable or welcoming, there are good efforts to improve opportunities and experience benefits but without positive perceptions, the participants will not feel fully accepted and therefore not return. Finally, if only positive perceptions are facilitated and participants return for continual engagement, there may be a lack of genuine development of the true sport, being overly adapted, or participants unfairly treated for example, which cannot allow progress in inclusive programmes or increase participation rates. All three elements in The Bare Necessities Model are required to ensure holistic and effective inclusive practice through informed facilitation and programme development.

Recommendations: Building on the Bare Necessities

This research behind The Bare Necessities Model can be a building block for further research into educating facilitators and the adventure sports sector on inclusive programmes for individuals with disabilities. The pillars of the Bare Necessity Model can also be used to help identify opportunities and ways to address constraints in inclusive engagement and to combat negative perceptions in the outdoor industry. The model can be used to encourage facilitators promoting initial introductory sessions to progress to support continual engagement opportunities through programme development. Future research in the area could also further study of the term 'genuine inclusivity' and what it means to individuals involved in adventure sport participation. The possibility of finding alternative ways to change common perceptions or conquer barriers limiting participation levels and finally, the collaboration with individuals with disabilities would also be a promising recommendation building on The Bare Necessities Model. This would be effective to truly investigate possible perceptions and opinions from the source of this research area and may be interesting and informative. Ultimately, I hope the use of The Bare Necessities Model will lead to positive and effective inclusive programming and facilitation by ensuring the three necessities of inclusive practice defined in the model are met so that we can see a meaningful increase in participation rates of people with disabilities in adventure sports in Ireland and further afield.

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Outdoor Education Symposium: Field Studies Ireland Tollymore October 2022

Dr Rita Melia

Dr Rita Melia had worked in the area of Early Childhood Education and Care in practice, research and policy for over 30 years. Rita is a lecturer at Atlantic Technological University Galway and Mayo campuses. When it comes to young children there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing.



Introduction

A warm welcome awaited the Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) lecturers from Galway and Mayo campuses on their arrival at Tollymore National Outdoor Centre at the foot on the Mourne mountains on Saturday the 8th October 2022. The weekend Outdoor Education Symposium was planned over the summer by the ATU Early Childhood Education and Care team as an opportunity to explore and learn more about outdoor education as well as providing an opportunity for professional development and team building for the “dream team”. We were well prepared for our exciting adventure, Mark O Connor founder and director of Field Studies Ireland and a graduate of the BA in Outdoor Education Galway/ Mayo Institute of Technology, provided up to date information on the location of the Symposium at Tollymore National Outdoor Centre. Mark advised re clothing to suit the expected weather conditions and the importance of leaving minimal impact on the natural environment. The team travelled together like preschool children on a school trip, excited and anticipating a wonderful experience. When we left the west of Ireland there was a yellow weather warning for the weekend promised!



The Journey begins.

Driving through the beautiful countryside the words of the song the Mountains of Mourne came to mind, the beautiful, lush countryside surrounded by the Mountains of Mourne. Tollymore National Outdoor Centre is funded and managed by Sport Northern Ireland and offers residential accommodation. All the rooms are twin or triple rooms with en suites, they have tea and coffee making facilities and place to dry wet clothes. The rooms were warm and comfortable, with magnificent views. The food was delicious and nutritious with tea and coffee freely available outside of mealtimes. We were so blessed on Saturday with the day, no sign of the wind and rain in Newcastle.

This rich environment was perfect to learn more about outdoor learning environments and what a choice of workshops we had to choose from. There were three sets of workshops to choose from on Saturday and two on Sunday, so in total we all had five different learning opportunities. It was difficult to choose as each workshop was different and interesting. On Saturday participants had opportunities to explore outdoor science with children, tree identification, place-based learning, curriculum, wellbeing, nature art, resilience, wellbeing, building playscapes and telling tales to name but a few. All the workshops were experiential and interactive. The participants on the campfire salmon workshop cooked and ate their salmon in the forest. I explored my creativity using nature art, while two of my colleagues took the introduction to navigation in the forest, no google maps there, just finding our way using orienteering maps and learning about terrains. Another colleague explored Tree Identification which provided a solid grounding in how to identify trees looking at features such as bark, tree form and leaves including leaf arrangement. Being out in the forest on such a lovely day, meeting other attendees all with different areas of interest, resulted in high levels of wellbeing and a sense of camaraderie as we broke into groups and paired with other group members. Time was given in all groups to reflect, ask questions and consider how the learning could be implemented into our own practice.

Building Playscapes

After a long and activity filled day we came together for our evening meal, this was such a lovely occasion, the food and the company was fantastic. After dinner we were treated to a lovely guest presentation by Martine Christie, who spoke about learning through play the Forest School Way. While you would expect an early night to be on the cards for those who travelled from south to north and east to west, having spent the day out in the beautiful fresh air, not at all. Mark had a playlist which set the scene for a lovely social evening chatting and getting to know our fellow delegates.

While Sunday morning came along too soon, the smell of the full Irish breakfast and the promise of another exciting day was the perfect wake up call for all. The weather forecast promised rain from noon, so we were anxious to get out and about. The choice of workshops on Sunday was equally good, ranging from, forest skills, native trees, building playscapes, a bird in the hand discussing the benefits of catching and ringing birds to learn more about their journeys around the world, how to use everything when teaching outdoors, Friends and Foe of the Mourne and understanding rivers to name just a few. Another workshop which three colleagues attended was place based learning, delivered by an ATU Outdoor Education colleague, Stephen Hannon. The workshops were allocated two and a half hours on Sunday, for me this was brilliant as I choose the forest skills and the playscapes workshops. During the forest school skills, I learnt the basics of how to whittle wood, make some nice nature art without leaving a trace, light a fire and boil some water for the most delicious hot blackcurrant with marshmallows. We learnt how to put out the fire and leave no trace in the woods. The second session I choose on Sunday was the building playscapes workshop, this session involved learning how to make different kinds of knots, to be used in different scenarios. Having undergone the fantastic instruction by Mark we headed out in the pouring rain to put our learning into action. Working together in teams of four we built our playscapes using the knots to form the structure. While the rain was heavy, we were dressed for the occasion and the rain did not hinder - it only enhanced our learning experience.



Place-based learning workshop

My colleagues who attended the Place Based learning workshop had a wonderful time engaging with different pedagogical approaches. Stories and Haikus provided opportunities to reminisce and be creative. A strategy which Stephen introduced to colleagues was Simon Beames' "Question, Research and Share". On return to the ATU, this was applied very successfully in our work with early years students. ECEC students walked the Woodland trail to identify questions which included "I wonder what the oldest tree in the woodland trail is?" and "I wonder what birds inhabit the trail?" The students then went about finding answers to these questions and shared their learning.

We came together in the dining area at the end of the day, many connections and friendships were made. Reflecting on the weekend, I can say together with my colleagues that it was more and better than we could have imagined. The approach to teaching and learning by all the facilitators was always about developing autonomy, being supportive along with a recognition for the individual's strengths and prior experience. The learning environment itself at Tollymore National Outdoor Centre with access to the forest was perfect.

Field Studies Ireland

This event was organised by Mark O Connor, Director of Field Studies Ireland which provides high quality outdoor education across the island of Ireland. The team specialise in curriculum focused outdoor teaching through place-based education, in a range of outdoor environments such as rivers, coastal, woodland, freshwater, urban and other. Mark and the team offer a range of professional and recreational programmes and courses for all abilities. These courses include, bushcraft, foraging for wild foods, wildlife tracking, outdoor facilitation training, leave no trace, fire lighting and campfire cooking, nature well-being and outdoor play. Field Studies Ireland work with organisations to support them to understand their impact on the environment, and to discover ways to enjoy the outdoors responsibly. They also provide training to preschools, schools, and colleges to consider the potential of their outdoor areas as learning environments for education, health, and recreation.



ECO-WEEK 14TH - 18TH NOVEMBER 2022

A week of free, online events suitable for 5th Class, 6th Class and Secondary Schools. Join us to learn more about the amazing work of Irish Environmental Organisations, climate action, our environment, the Sustainable Development Goals and COP27.

MONDAY 14TH	TUESDAY 15TH	WEDNESDAY 16TH	THURSDAY 17TH	FRIDAY 18TH
<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">9:30-10:15am</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">BIODIVERSITY</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">9:30-10:15am</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">CLIMATE CHANGE</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">9:30-10:15am</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">WASTE</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">9:30-10:15am</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">CLIMATE CAMPAIGNING</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">9:30-10:15am</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">ECO-ART AND DESIGN</p>
<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">2:00-2:45pm</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">ECO-HEALTH & WELLBEING</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">2:00-2:45pm</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">ENERGY</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">2:00-2:45pm</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">MARINE CONSERVATION</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">2:00-2:45pm</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">ECO-INNOVATION</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">2:00-2:45pm</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">LET'S TALK ABOUT COP</p>

Reimagining the Rock Pools for human health, a champions companion -Let's Dance-



Garry Kendellen

This article was written by Garry Kendellen, and edited by Peter Biddulph of Galway Atlantaquaria, Salthill. Garry is Responsible for community events, to invite our community to enjoy all aspects of ocean literacy and informed engagement with the sea. Garry is an Artist & holds a MA Youth Work & Community Development. Peter maintains our closed system aquariums, ensuring that the displays reflect the aquatic habitats of our animals. He also sources and installs a range of Water Pumps, Filtration and Temperature Control Systems to ensure the health and well-being of Galway Atlantaquaria's residents.



Peter Biddulph

I started volunteering in the Aquarium in early 2010, My role as a volunteer was to give visitors to the Aquarium an insight into the life that lives below the waves. I started tide pooling for the last 6 years and learning more about this wonderful environment every day.

As I also volunteer for a national Children's charity, I am focused on young people's mental health, equality, and wellbeing. This voluntary work gives me a 'fire in the belly' passion, to include as many people as I can to the beauty of the sea.

I am grateful to our Director, Mr. Liam Twomey, who supports this public engagement at considerable cost to the Aquarium. I am proud to work in an Aquarium that sees the ocean and ocean literacy being inclusive to all.

The Rockpool Habitat of Grattan Beach

For the last 6 years, I would have been on a journeyman's discovery, of the Rockpool habitat of Grattan Beach, Salthill, Co. Galway. I believe the Rockpool is underutilised and misunderstood, and I fear that talking about it will destroy it. So, while I will state that the Rockpools are an amazing area of discovery, storytelling, and RETREAT from the world we live in. They should be visited under strict supervision, to keep them safe.

Up until lately, I would have said that a Rockpool is an isolated pocket of seawater, found in the ocean's intertidal zone. The intertidal zone is the area where the ocean meets the land between high and low tides. While these small basins at the ocean's edge typically range from mere centimetres to metres deep and a few metres across, they are packed with sturdy sea life such as snails, barnacles, mussels, anemones, urchins, sea stars, crustaceans, seaweed, and small fish, in essence, the established norm or description of the rock pool.

The Rockpool is also formed from geological compression on a global scale, where the earth is essentially breathing in and out (tide in, tide out). When we look at the formation of coastal Rockpools, we do not see the rocks in these pools as hard and unyielding objects, but as flexible and elastic. global habitat-forming processes.

A source of Wellbeing for Human Health

I like to use the community development principle 'think global and act local' to reimagine the life, story, and biodiversity of these magical pools. The Rockpool story changes with every tide, it's never the same.

If we utilise forests as a perfect retreat for human needs, recreation, and rehabilitation of the soul, then the Rock pool is an equal to, or BETTER place to relax, enjoy and unwind. There are already hundreds of easy-to-read articles about tidepools, so I would like to explore the pools as a place where we can find a sense of place, outside of forests. (We would not be anti-forest per se, but if you want places that store carbon and produce oxygen well it's the ocean that needs recognition

Here is why I believe Rockpools are the source of well-being for human health, *let's dance!*



Image 1: A stunning sunset and nice time to explore the shore

My Rockpool Retreat – The steps I take

Do you know that Rockpools are evenly split into zones, and at low tide you can waltz into these unique environments?

This ecosystem can be divided more precisely into five zones: the splash zone, the upper intertidal zone, the middle intertidal zone, the lower intertidal zone, and the subtidal zone. My only critique of Rockpools is that they are not always in areas friendly to wheelchair users, due to the difficulty of navigating its habitat. While wheelchair users may experience some of the rockpool mystery and exploration, it is a challenge to get the full impact.

ZONE 1. The splash zone, this is the place I set up before I journey into the pools. I use this zone for citizen science, where I look for egg cases or mermaids' purses. I will also take plenty of landscape shots, morning or evening is nice.



Image 2. The splash zone, where tough floral species grow from the sand.

When I am in this upper & middle zone I avail of meditation and breathing, I will find a rock and just inhale the coastal air. A heady concoction of seaweed reproducing, plankton dying and chemical reactions between rocks, and the acid 'tangy' bite of the sea. I will also use the healthy chemicals in seaweed as a hand wash. Do you know that seaweed has a 'sunscreen' chemical that helps it stay moist when the tide goes out? This chemical is utilised in sea baths as when it washes over you it transfers some of that chemical onto your skin.

Let me convey the sense of place when sitting here. As you walk into this zone, you walk on bladderwrack, and you pop each air bubble along the way. This 'crack' pop is like bubble wrap, there is something pleasing in how this sound feels. It's quite tiring, so you find a nice rock to sit upon. As you melt into the landscape, you feel a cool breeze, and notice the brown crab, scuttling across the substrate. Your senses are firing, sight, sounds, and touch are all engaged.

HONESTLY, there is nothing like it in the world. If you know anything about tides, this is a brand-new habitat. There is a sense of the unknown here. If you have a guidebook like [Ireland's Seashore Guide](#) you will know there are hundreds of new species to discover. *The next few images tell a story of mindfulness and hope by the rockpool.*



Image 3: My Happy Place



Image 4. I am the crab, sitting in a zen like state with the interplay of tidal process's happening in real time all around me. I am in the eye of the storm, and I am calm.



Image 5. I am the butterfish, safe and sound curled into a shell where I call home.



Image 6. I am the whelk on the rock, a predator hunting for the master photo of life found in the pools. Will I find the rare crystal goby? The elusive glass eel? It is the hunt that excites me, I do like to find a new species. But I have the hunger of discovery, and that is what gives me the motivation to visit every day.



Image 7. I would be here every day if I could, there is an ocean of opportunity to discover something new.

Summary

As, I walk away from the pools, I often feel both exhilarated & tired. This is a good feeling as in the day-to-day stress of life, I appreciate the freedom and joy of the Rockpools. I have never ever walked away from the rockpool sad. This dance of navigating pools, seeing, smelling, and touching really helps us connect with the ocean on a very personal level.

The outdoors are truly amazing resources we can all enjoy, as we really want the public to be more ocean literate, we are unashamedly biased. It helps to have a small place in nature where you can just unwind away from the norm, and I feel this is why these pools are amazing.

When I started writing I felt guilty or selfish in saying it must be left alone.... limited to those who can supervise. I realise that was not fair. Rockpool exploration is for us all. The only thing I want to say is do no harm, no nets or mad flipping of stones. We can enjoy so much of the pools by just using our senses. Go and Explore Your Shore, take photos, draw, walk, sit, and just enjoy the ocean, there is no place like it in the world.

There is a small bit of homework involved before you explore the shore.

We really like and recommend the website <https://exploreyourshore.ie/>

It offers the public loads of information about tide pool exploration. There are some good articles about the aspects of citizen science and how you can help keep these areas safe and protected. [Galway Atlantaquaria](#) runs many Explore Your Shore events all year. We supervise these events, and they are lots of fun.

I would like to see more people explore the shore, my hope for 2023, and in conjunction with Galway Atlantaquaria, would be to invite more people to explore the shore, and find a hobby that will offer a lifelong journey of discovery and well-being.

In 2023, let's go explore the shore.

Watch our Rockpool Videos

Egg case hunts: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4QOa1pIIOA&t=7s>

Scavenger Hunts: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oboFu2BpLnc&t=5s>

Rockpool Adventure: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Znyi_tN9JrU&t=239s

Youth Engagements: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4o99I3tiwU>



European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning

The European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning (EOE) was founded 1996 in Spital (Austria) by people from the academic, social and youth work fields who were all interested in bringing together practitioners, teachers and researchers from different European countries. It is great news that this year Tomás Aylward is the Chair of the Institute. Tomás is a lecturer in Outdoor and Experiential Learning at the Munster Technological University in Tralee. He lectures on degree programmes in [Outdoor Learning](#), Health & Leisure studies, Adapted Physical Activity and Early Childhood Education.



Adventures in Global Education

Kevin O'Callaghan

Kevin O'Callaghan is the coordinator of the New MSc in Outdoor Education, Sustainability and Well-being on the ATU's Mayo Campus. Kevin has over 30 years' experience in the outdoors ranging from education out of doors with young people and geoscientist to adventure sports curriculum design and provision. Kevin's main passion is journeying in landscapes preferably for more than a weekend.



Introduction

In late June 2022 I was fortunate to participate in an ERASMUS programme delivered by Development Perspectives (DP) - an Irish Company based in Dundalk, aiming to develop youth worker competencies and skills in using outdoor learning approaches in global education and critical thinking.

The programme was a 6-day course based in Bru Moytura, Eco Lodge in Co. Sligo. With participants from Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Turkey. The use of the outdoors and experiential education approaches for this programme was in response to a need, to equip youth workers with new and ever more interactive approaches for their work. Initially I was curious as to how some of these seemingly heavy weight topics would be delivered utilising an outdoor approach..

Rationale

The rationale for an outdoor approach was that by providing outdoor education methods and tools for youth and community workers, as an approach to educating about the environment, equality and poverty. This approach emphasizes the importance of understanding both the natural environment and environmental systems as both are a direct, and integral component of participants' active learning experiences. [JP1] DP identified that interacting and knowing how to interact with nature and the outdoors was identified as a declining skillset. DP noted that this declining skillset is important as it not only provides personal and societal health benefits, but also contributes to cognitive development and the development of values and principles for those who participate.

The programme's goals and objectives were to:

- Equip youth workers with the knowledge and skills to address key global issues through the use of experiential outdoor education approaches.

· Examine the meaning and functions of outdoor education as a set of tools for exploring cognitive development for [JP2] critical thinking, systems thinking and problem solving.

· Explore the narrative provided by the SDGs through outdoor education methods.

· Explore outdoor literacy and Edward Wilson's concept "Biophilia" - an innate affinity to the natural world, and their relation to active global citizenship

Initially I was curious as to how some of these seemingly heavy weight topics would be delivered utilising an outdoor approach.

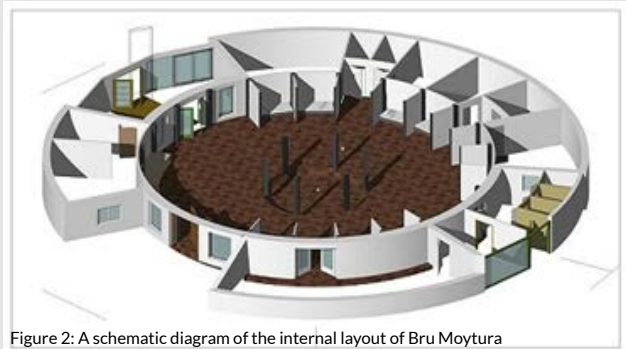


Figure 2: A schematic diagram of the internal layout of Bru Moytura

The Venue - Bru Moytura

The venue for the programme was Bru Moytura, very much facilitated and fostered a communal spirit of engagement with the programme goals and objectives.

Bru Moytura is a cairn like structure of a building with its three entrances aligned with the Summer and Winter Solstices and with Carrowkeel, Queen Maebh's cairn atop Knocknarae and closer by Sí Lú cairn on the plateau of Moytura. The circular shape of this structure and positioning of the individual quarters sectioned off by curtains around the periphery of this circular structure was more akin to being on an old sailing ship.



Figure 1: The AIGE group in Strandhill during a beach clean up

The Approach

Inevitably, we were all involved in the domestic duties for the programme, i.e. clearing, washing, cleaning and cooking. While this practice was very much aligned with how most outdoor programmes in centres are run, there was also a requirement that each morning a group gave a review of the previous days programme and associated learning.

This was followed by an icebreaker session to set the group up for that day's activities. The icebreaker activity often had a cultural dimension where participants drew on ice breakers from their own countries and often provided a context after the exercise. A facilitative, experiential approach to the programme was very much to the fore, though it was worth noting that activity was a function of engagement rather than for the sake of activity.

In an exercise geared towards exploring inequity in the world, for example, the group had to initially divide ourselves into groupings arranged according to the world's population on each continent. This facilitated and highlighted a lot around people's perceptions and knowledge around global issues, similarly to when we used the group to represent the global distribution of GDP on each continent and other development and global issues. Another exercise replicated a refugee's journey and the different obstacles and encounters that had to be negotiated, this was undertaken as a journey across the local landscape. Participants from the Mediterranean countries (Italy, Greece and Turkey) noted the increased engagement they are having with climate refugees, which highlighted even more the importance of raising the profile of global education around the SDGs.

Reflection

Looking back, this was provocative experience and a cause for reflection. Initially I wondered how I would get on as I was not from a youth work background in addition to being one of the older participants, but quickly decided to engage and work outside my comfort zone. What I found quiet refreshing was the absence of a focus on adventure activities which I perceive to have become so central to Irish outdoor and adventure programmes.

The diversity of the participants and the challenges many faced in their work compared to what Irish outdoor practitioners experience was notable, particularly considering the title of the workshop - Adventures in Global Education (AIGE)..

There were two away excursions during the programme, and while one of these involved a surf as part of the cultural and afternoon 'off' event, all participants engaged in what I would have regarded as a reasonably thorough beach clean-up afterwards. Though a simple act, it got me to pause for thought about how often as a practitioner do I get groups, that I work with to engage in such activities and endeavours. Should I make such behaviour 'the norm' rather than an occasional action, as such actions help foster engagement and the development of global citizenry?



The overarching learning for me from the AIGE programme was how easily outdoor and experiential approaches could be adapted to engage students in material relating to global education that is often considered or perceived by people to be very factual, boring, too far removed, or non-relevant. However, as more recent events in the Ukraine have demonstrated, we are all connected in a globalised world, and we are impacted by far off events. It also highlighted for me the absence of such programmes within the Irish outdoor sector and the phenomenal scope to provide learning opportunities and to explore other narratives for youth around the topic of global education.

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Development Perspectives invite you to consider the Sustainable Development Goals Challenge. The #SDGchallenge is a global citizenship education project which aims to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills and motivation to take informed action to contribute towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

[SDG Challenge - click here for more info and to see a short clip](#)



A Guide to Enhancing Adventure Activities in Irish Physical Education

Dr. John Pierce and Kate Feeney

John has been a lecturer in the department of Health & Leisure Studies at Munster Technological University for over ten years. He lectures in outdoor learning across three different degree programmes. He has also spent a lot of his career training adventure sports practitioners and instructors.



Kate Feeney is a qualified physical education teacher and is a lecturer in the Health and Leisure Studies Department at Munster Technological University. She teaches on the Health and Leisure with Physical Education Degree programme working with preservice teachers to prepare them to deliver quality physical education experiences for students. She also has expertise in inclusion supporting children, young people and adults with a disability to have the opportunity to participate in physical activity, community sport and physical education.



Introduction

There have been a number of changes in the secondary school physical education curriculum over the past few years. This article aims to outline the current physical education curricula in relation to adventure activities, across both primary and secondary school settings. We will also offer one contemporary model from outdoor education theory that provides a suitable delivery method to enhance learning in adventure activities in physical education and indeed across the wider outdoor sector.

One point of note for the reader is that we do not aim to provide definitive lesson plans for assisting teachers in their delivery of physical education. Rather, we aim to provide and share an overview of relevant syllabus information that outdoor providers need to be familiar with to be in a strong position to support learning in adventure activities in the school setting. Programme design to support teachers delivering adventure activities in physical education is, of course, at the discretion of individual centres and practitioners. We do believe, however, that the information presented in this article may allow providers to develop bespoke and specifically focused lessons in line with contemporary outdoor education theory that also responds to the requirements of the current curricula.

What's in Adventure Activities in Physical Education?

Adventure activities, a subsection of outdoor education, has long been associated with the physical education curriculum in the Irish education system. Taking the primary curriculum as an example, the physical drill section of the 1922 primary school curriculum urged teachers to bring their students outside for a number of short physical movement classes each week. This connection was developed further in the 1971 *Curaclam na Bunscoile* (Primary School Curriculum), which included a section on "outdoor activities of an adventurous nature, such as camping, orienteering, and hill-climbing, etc." (p. 293).

The current primary curriculum, from 1999, presents a progressive approach to developing student's skills in adventure activities as well as an appreciation for the environment.

The primary school physical education curriculum (1999) aims to contribute to children's overall development by helping them to lead full, active, and healthy lives. Outdoor and adventure activities are identified as one of the six strand areas. At secondary school, the junior cycle physical education [short course](#) aims to develop students as knowledgeable, skilful, and creative participants who are confident and competent to perform in a range of activities safely. The junior cycle short course comprises of four strands, with orienteering and team challenges being a component part of strand 3: individual and team challenges. This strand focuses not solely on adventure activities but offers choice for teachers and students to build competence and confidence in two of three areas, namely orienteering and team challenges, aquatics, or athletics.

Schools that focus on orienteering and team challenges may choose an adventure activity other than orienteering if their location facilitates this choice. This clearly creates the link and connection with the outdoor sector. Indeed, it is worth noting that it is not essential to select the orienteering and team challenges therefore some students may not experience this area. The junior cycle [Key Skills](#) are also worthy of note here, as the junior cycle short course is focused on developing these eight skills in a number of ways. The adventure activities aspect of strand 3 can offer very valuable learning across these key skills (a brief example is provided further down this document).

In comparison to primary and junior cycle at post primary level, the senior cycle physical education (SCPE) framework offers a different purpose and focus as it intends to provide a flexible planning tool for physical education.

It aims to develop students as resourceful, confident, engaged, and active learners through the delivery of curriculum models. Adventure education features as one of the six curriculum models. According to the SCPE framework it focuses on encouraging learners to challenge themselves and co-operate with others as they learn to solve physical activity challenges.

The final aspect to highlight is leaving certificate physical education (LCPE) which was first introduced in 2020. This syllabus identifies six physical activity areas, one of which being adventure activities. As stated in the [LCPE specification](#), physical activity areas were chosen to reflect the current activities more commonly included in school physical education programmes. Schools choose three physical activity areas which form the focus of their assessment for the physical activity project (PAP) and their performance assessment (PA), two integral aspects to the assessment of LCPE. In terms of assessment this year (2022), 0.5% of PAP and 1.5% of PA was focused on adventure activities (State Exams Commission, personal communication, October 20th, 2022). Comparing this to the 62.5% of PAP for games, and the 66.5% of PA for personal exercise and fitness provides a stark example of the potential for more students to participate in adventure activities experiences through physical education.

The above outline shows adventure activities is featured in all four curricula. The implementation in practice is, however, lower than might be expected. The Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study (2018) illustrated an increase in outdoor and adventure activities participation in the primary school setting from 14% to 20% between 2010 and 2018. However, at post-primary level there is a decrease in participation from 26% to 17% over the same time period. This demonstrates an opportunity for the outdoor sector to offer collaboration in order to utilise their expertise and facilities to promote engagement in adventure activities across the physical education curricula.

For example, based on the revised curriculum at junior cycle, the classroom-based assessments (CBA) for strand 3: individual and team challenges have been clearly set and are very much in line with everyday practice in the outdoor sector. By developing a deeper awareness of the CBA, outdoor providers can support the design and delivery of adventure activities provision in physical education at junior cycle level. More information on the CBA, including assessment criteria, can be found [here](#) (from page 14 onwards).

CONTEXT

[Primary Physical Education](#)

[Junior Cycle Short Course](#)

[Senior Cycle Physical Education](#)

STRAND UNIT

Outdoor and Adventure Activities

Strand 3: Individual and Team Challenges

Adventure Education Curriculum Model

SUMMARY

The strand units of the outdoor and adventure curriculum include:

- Walking.
- Orienteering.
- Outdoor challenge activities.
- Understanding and appreciation of the environment through outdoor and adventure activities.

The strand units are differentiated across the class profiles to offer progression of learning through the strand.

Orienteering and team challenges outcomes:

- 3.1** Use orienteering strategies and map-reading skills to complete a variety of orienteering events safely and confidently, showing respect for the environment.
- 3.2** Contribute to team challenges that require co-operation and problem-solving skills to achieve a common goal.
- 3.3** Reflect on their personal contribution and their team's effectiveness in completing a group challenge.

The essential elements of adventure education are as follows:

- Experiential learning
- Shared commitment
- Challenge with choice
- Opportunities to reflect on and process experiences
- Outdoor element
- Skill development
- Personal challenge
- Team challenge
- Element of risk

Leaving Certificate Physical Education

Adventure Activities Physical Activity Area

Learners may choose one of the following activities:

- Orienteering
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Rock-climbing
- Sailing
- Rowing/sculling

Adventurous Learning Model:

In 2016, Beames and Brown presented the adventurous learning model. This model, based on long-standing pedagogical principles, aims to provide meaningful learning experiences in an ever-changing world. The recent curricular changes in secondary physical education echo Beames and Brown's call for contemporary teaching and learning practices. The model is made up of four inter-connected elements that combine to offer adventurous, or challenging, learning. Figure 1, below, provides a simple explanation of adventurous learning.

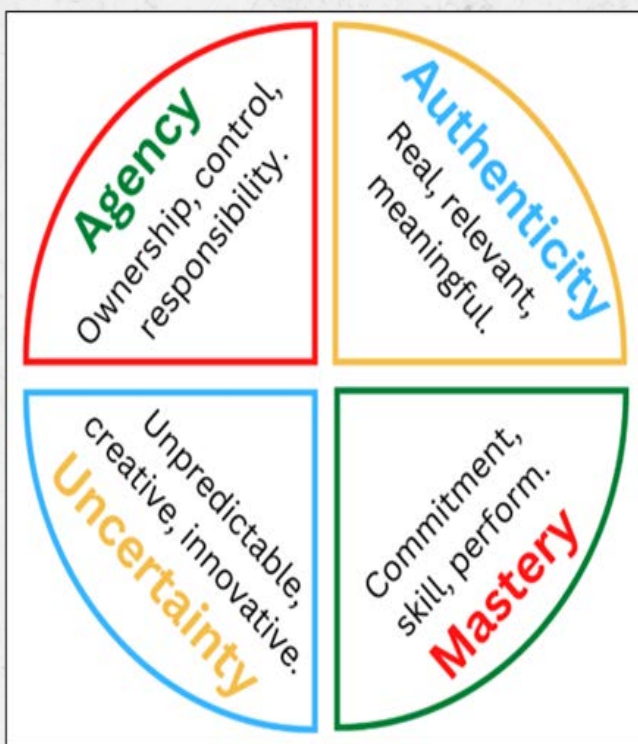


Figure 1: Summary description of the adventurous Learning Model (Beames and Brown, 2016)

There are two main reasons we are promoting this model. First, it can be used as a way of structuring learning experiences and being able to justify why you are doing tasks or activities in a specific way, i.e., mastering a technique or allowing for student responsibility. Second, we feel that this model has strong links to the [Key Skills](#) of the reformed junior cycle curriculum. For example, the dimension of agency aligns well with the key skill of managing myself. This key skill involves students making considered decisions and setting personal goals. Both of these components are easily integrated into any outdoor adventure programme.

Therefore, reviewing the key skills can allow individual providers to match the elements of each key skill to their existing provision, establishing a mutually beneficial opportunity for learning.

Summary

Having read this article, you should have a better understanding of how adventure activities are embedded into the physical education curricula. We have also provided a model to justify your practice and demonstrated how this model can be effective in the design and delivery of engagement with physical education adventure activities. Outdoor providers could be seen as an under-utilised asset in this context, therefore we see great potential for collaboration between the two sectors.

For this potential to be realised, management and instructors need to become more familiar with the adventure activity content of the relevant physical education curricula – for example, there is specific content regarding CBAs and what needs to be covered in the LCPE curriculum. This will equip outdoor practitioners with the terminology needed to effectively communicate with teachers prior to their visits to ensure the most relevant content is covered.

It is clear that there is scope for more students to experience adventure activities as part of their physical education in school. Outdoor providers can further develop opportunities with teachers to engage with and enhance adventure activity experiences for students in line with the relevant curriculum. By developing a deeper knowledge and understanding of adventure activities in physical education, outdoor providers can become a more valuable asset in supporting teachers to provide quality and meaningful learning through adventure activities as well as developing student's appreciation for the outdoors.

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By Dr John Pierce

John has been a lecturer in the department of Health & Leisure Studies at Munster Technological University for over ten years. He lectures in outdoor learning across three different degree programmes. He has also spent a lot of his career training adventure sports practitioners and instructors.

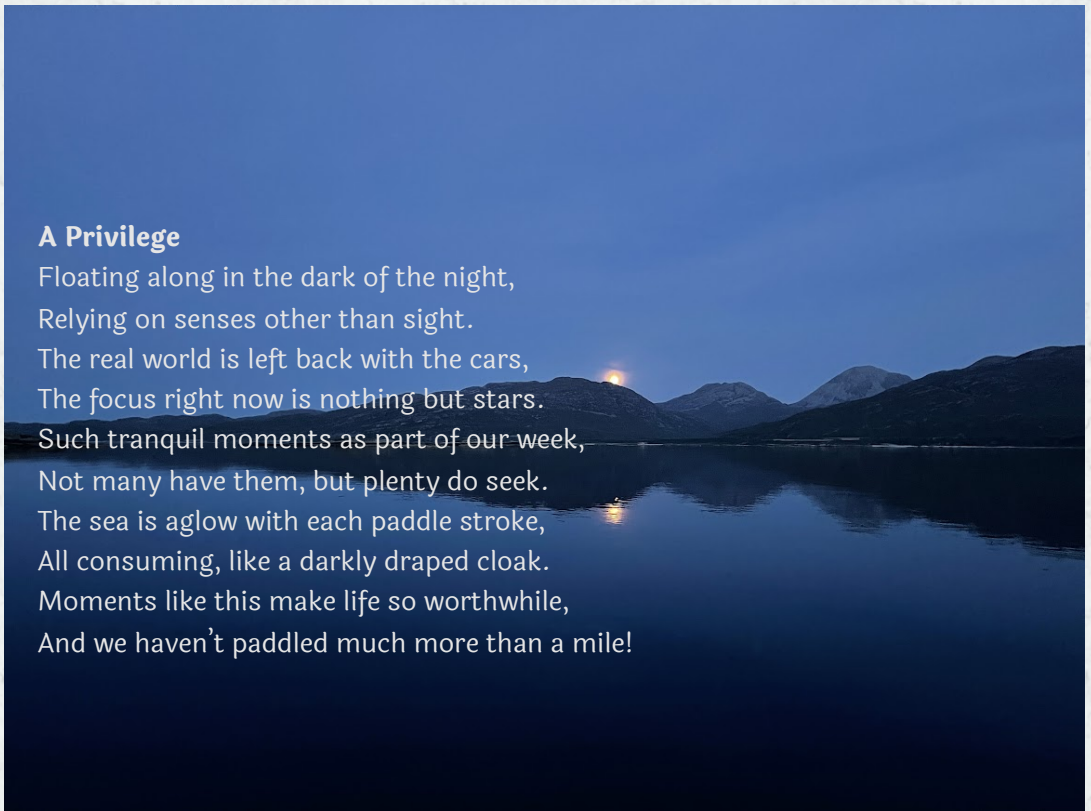


Context

This poem is thinking back to a night-time paddle during covid lockdown and attempting to sum up the experience. It was a beautifully calm night, and the sea was brim-full of bioluminescence.

A Privilege

Floating along in the dark of the night,
 Relying on senses other than sight.
 The real world is left back with the cars,
 The focus right now is nothing but stars.
 Such tranquil moments as part of our week,
 Not many have them, but plenty do seek.
 The sea is aglow with each paddle stroke,
 All consuming, like a darkly draped cloak.
 Moments like this make life so worthwhile,
 And we haven't paddled much more than a mile!





The Kinsale Outdoor Education Centre Young Mariner Programme: A Personal Reflection

Jon Hynes

Jon Hynes is a lifelong outdoor educator / Instructor. His passions are mainly within sea kayaking and training. From a childhood where Scouting was a big influence, he then started his outdoor career at Delphi in 1992 and he has worked in many Centres in a variety of roles since. Jon also ran his own successful outdoor business for 16 years. Since 2017 his work as Director of both Kinsale and Fastnet Marine Outdoor Education Centre's in Co. Cork brings together a wide variety of life and career experiences that have created two very vibrant Centre's which are staffed by expert & innovative instructor teams. Jon is continually developing his knowledge and skillsets to remain focussed in his passion for outdoor education.

Introduction

Readers, supporters and friends of Lasmuigh, hopefully we are all supportive of the commonly held view, that long term participation in Outdoor Education programmes supports the multi- dimensional development of a young person. This is just a short personal reflection on a programme that has been a great success for us as a team in Kinsale Outdoor Education Centre, Co. Cork.

Having enjoyed my own personal development journey through so many aspects of outdoor recreation, education and expeditioning, I had a long-held desire to create a programme that would make use of our local facilities, opportunities and expert team of Instructors. Over the years I have always stayed true to my own pursuit of learning every year.

Perhaps some of you who have been around the Irish outdoor education scene for a while now might relate to this? As you grow older as an outdoor Instructor you become aware that younger, potentially innovative new Instructors are coming into the sector, therefore your own training, knowledge and relevance needs to be constantly updated and managed.

Legacy is also, something I ask myself about. What is it that I am doing to contribute within Outdoor Education in Ireland? It is a sector that has offered me so much opportunity, enjoyment and growth and it is largely down to the people I have met, worked with, and who have supported me along the way. I think by our very nature as outdoor educators, we are always eager to support the next generation, to share knowledge and create opportunities for growth in young people.

The birth of the Young Mariner Programme

One of my strongest career influences was being part of and seeing how the Cappanalea OETC "Explorer Course" shaped and influenced thousands of Irish Teenagers. A tried and tested format of a 5-day programme. Back then, I had all the practical competencies to teach the skills but a very rudimentary understanding of the theoretical opportunities to explore personal development during the week with my students. Years later, having pursued my own academic learning journey, the penny dropped and enlightenment of a kind took place. Realising then, that working together and nature held more powerful keys to supporting a young person's growth and development.

In 2017, having taken up a new role as Director of Kinsale OETC, I had created a mood board for a potential new programme and some of my thoughts centred around my own introduction to the sea. The expeditioning, the journeying, the connections to nature and good people; It was there that the "Young Mariner Programme" was born. At the time I was very fortunate to be working with a fantastic Outdoor Instructor, Sebastien Tretter who collaborated with me to bring the programme to life. That first year we had 12 Teenagers, and typically Transition Year is the best time to participate as the student has the time to dedicate to committed programme.



The First Programme

In that first course we spent 34 days working together spread out across the academic year using Saturdays, full weekends, some mid-term time, Easter and a final multi day expedition. Some of our focus was on skills development in power boating, sea kayaking, sailing etc but only to the extent that would enable them to travel and experience nature safely and to make good decisions.

That first course had its own positive natural energy and that group formed very strong bonds and achieved so much not just in skills but in how they matured and “stepped up” in life. Many parents claimed that their teenager matured and grew up because of their participation in the course.

It is also important to state at this point, that the Young Mariner Programme is NOT a Junior Instructor Course. That said, a percentage of our graduates are intrinsically motivated to go and join the instructor community primarily through Sailing or Paddlesports.



The Core themes of the Programme

We are now on our 6th cohort of Young Mariners and the programme has evolved as we have reviewed each year’s progress or challenges. One thing that we are very clear on, is keeping the numbers low. Such has been the success of the programme, we have often had very large demand for places but if we took larger numbers we would compromise on the quality of the experience for the participants. Of course, smaller numbers do make it easier for logistics, safety and to focus on a really quality outcome.

There are several core themes that are worth noting:

Every year we include the **Gaisce Bronze** award as part of the package. We have built a strong relationship with Gaisce and the long-term commitment and participation required by the student is a powerful part of the experience.

“**Learning to be yourself**”. With all modern life’s external pressures such as social media, Influencers within a very materialistic and capitalist world that we live in, it can be so hard for any young person to accept their identity without trying to benchmark against what they scroll through every day. A strength of the Young Mariner Programme is that participants are encouraged and respected for their individuality. Oftentimes, young people who don’t fit into Football, Basketball teams etc. find their way to the outdoors and find an alternative way of performing in team situations. By spending time around outdoor Instructors with alpha characteristics, a unique individuality and charisma, Young Mariners can learn that it is ok to be yourself and in doing so you can be a very valuable member of a team.

The threats to anyone’s mental health and emotional wellbeing these days are well documented. Do we agree that spending time outdoors with the right people in a challenge-based activity and properly supported allows people to “escape” the threats to one’s wellbeing? Of course, it does not have to be challenge based either, simply being in nature alone is enough to illicit positive feelings and or change.

The link between the participant and Instructor is such a vital and precious component. Words such as bond, continuity, trust are so vital to the participant’s growth and to the success of that working relationship. Ultimately, we as Instructors are attempting to empower these young people to make good decisions based on training, experience and judgement. If we can do that consistently then these decision-making skills are applicable in wider life situations.

“**Stepping Up**” in life is also a theme. Teaching Power boating skills to a very high standard at around the age of 16 is a good way of preparing any young person for learning to drive a car for example. We work with our students and help them develop to take responsibility, maintain the boat, look after their crew, have defined emergency procedures and to be systematic. All these are transferable life-skills for learning to drive on the road.

Our Hidden Curriculum

“What to do in an emergency” is also a constant throughout the programme. We could just tick a box and do a 16-hour outdoor first aid course. We do that anyway, but we constantly inject “what if” scenarios and keep skills refreshed. The proof of this has been spectacular in results in real life settings for some of our graduates. We have had one graduate use a powerboat and first aid skills to rescue someone who had fallen into a city centre river. Another graduate performed a spectacular rescue of a sea swimmer who had been caught out badly by conditions and swept into a cave. And there is more where that came from. All this demonstrates that if we invest in our young people with quality training, develop their confidence and decision-making skills that they will “Step up” when needed. At times outdoor educators have struggled to be accepted in the wider education world however it gives us a great sense of validation when young people perform so well when required to “step-up”. I guess all of this can also be equated to developing “Grit”. It would be all too tempting to be “high fiving” and patting ourselves on the back with praise for the Young Mariner programme however it is the Inclusion dimension that best celebrates the programme’s success. We have had numerous students with a wide variety of life challenges that are accepted for who they are and what they can contribute.

“Putting it all together” comes in the form of our final expedition. Typically, we finish off the year with a multi-day expedition which usually takes place in Roaring Water Bay in West Cork. A phone free experience where we commit for several days with just the basic essentials, food, warmth, shelter, good company and nature. This affords our Young Mariners the opportunity to use all the skillsets both hard and soft to prevail and thrive on the expedition. Moments such as an open crossing, catching your first fish, Campfires etc are all key ingredients. But perhaps one of the more powerful moments is when we ask our participants to create a piece of beach art that best describes their whole experience of the year together. This always creates great surprises at just how they have learned to reflect on their experiences and always in harmony with nature. The final act in the programme is always the graduation evening. This celebrates everyone’s participation and personally speaking I take great pride from witnessing our graduates speak publicly about how much the programme has meant to them and how they look to their futures with such positivity.



External Validation

We also now have some external validation. We will soon be publishing a commissioned report by Kevin O’Callaghan. This report shows great signposts towards further development of the programme and we are of course open to sharing our material with other Centre’s in order for them to develop similar programmes. We look forward to sharing this with you shortly.

We are also very proud of one of our own Instructors, Ciaran O’Carroll who wrote his thesis for his Masters and based it on the Young Mariner Programme. More independent, external validation of our work in Outdoor Education Centre will drive wider mainstream support for Outdoor Education in Ireland.

Other validation comes in the form of looking at how earlier graduates have progressed in life since they finished their second level education. We have had several students who have progressed on to attend the National Maritime College in Cork to pursue a career at sea.

Numerous graduates have come outdoor instructors and one is now following their love of first aid to become a paramedic. More importantly all seem to have a deeper connection with nature and with that a moral responsibility to tune in to care for the outdoors. We look forward to seeing how the growing community of Young Mariners progress in life.

From a staff perspective, it is one of those programmes where one does feel motivated to give your best session. To plan in detail, to collaborate effectively with fellow staff and to learn from each day out. I must also recognize all of our staff members who contribute so strongly to the programme and its success. In particular, many of you will know Sinead Pollock and as course Director in recent years she has been central to the course and its continued growth and success

Final thoughts

Finally, I’d like to thank and acknowledge everyone in Ireland’s outdoor education community for the work that you do on a daily basis. We are a small but strong community and whilst we all face challenges within the sector. I take comfort every so often when we meet with our counterparts abroad who respect greatly the work that we do here. Yes, there many things that need to change but if we can keep the interest going in our esteemed Higher Education courses, support them with undergraduates, mature students, and robust reflection on our practice we will continue to grow and develop. Thank you to the team behind Lasmuigh for giving me the opportunity to write for this edition, hopefully you enjoyed my thoughts or at least paused for thought.





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The programme is intended to develop the knowledge, capacity, and know-how of outdoor professionals so that graduates can function as highly competent, self-aware, senior leaders. This MSc will be work-focused and applied in nature, focusing on interdisciplinary application. Graduates will draw on the latest research and methodology to critically reflect on and develop their impact in their specialist sector and be capable of implementing programmes in well-being, experiential place-based learning and education for sustainability. It is aimed at those who want to develop policy, change practice and further develop their competencies to play a valuable role in shaping their work context.

Contact: Kevin O'Callaghan, **Programme Chair**, [E Kevin.ocallaghan@atu.ie](mailto:Kevin.ocallaghan@atu.ie) [T +353 \(0\)949043281](tel:+353(0)949043281)

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Sheila is a lecturer at the School of Science and Computing in the Atlantic Technological University (ATU), Galway and have several years' experience working in the education sector. Recently Sheila won the first prize in ATU's poetry pillar competition 2021-22 with her poem 'Galanthus'. This is a competition for unpublished poets, who have an interest in sustainability, climate change, biodiversity and all things green.

Dr Sheila Faherty



Context for the poem

The inspiration for this poem comes from nature. The beauty that a flower has strength and that no matter how small you might feel, you matter. Early one morning I was setting out for work, the weather was harsh; the rain was hitting hard. I turned my head sideways to shield myself from the rain and I saw a snowdrop. I thought wow, this little snowdrop (**Galanthus**) must endure this harsh weather and it does so proudly and with such strength against the elements. This flower can endure the weather with the support of its roots and the bulb that enables its strength. As a lecturer in first year, biology laboratory classes I want my students to learn. While I strive to get them to learn, life has its woes sometimes big and sometimes small which can incumber students for a little while. I try to inspire belief in students that they can do it, don't feel small and unseen - we see you. This poem parallels struggle and survival with ability and strength.



Galanthus

I see you appear each year Galanthus so tiny
and brave.

You push your way through cold soils on rainy
days.

Your petals are bell and clapper have come to
ring and awaken spring.

Delicate, strong, transformed each year,
when light is dim,

you glimmer, giving hope from winter gloom.

You inspire belief, that beauty prevails when
we endure.

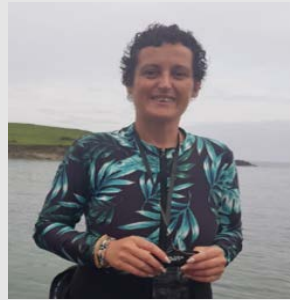
Your power your strength exists in the
depths, like ours.

“Ladies Who Launch”

A Kayaking Initiative in Cancer Survivorship

Amy Walsh and Kelly McGowan

Poem by Cathy O'Sullivan



Kelly moved to Kinsale, Co Cork, from Wales in 2005. After many years working as a Health Care Assistant, Kelly returned to education and, in 2021, achieved a First Class Honours in Social Work. Shortly after graduating, Kelly was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer. During her cancer recovery, Kelly fell in love with outdoor pursuits. She hopes to one day incorporate outdoor pursuits in her social work practice.

Amy Walsh, Founder of 'Ladies who Launch'. Amy is a Chartered Physiotherapist with over 25 years' experience working in Clonakilty, West Cork. Amy's passion is helping women engage and continue with exercise throughout their lifespan. Amy is a 'Canoeing Ireland Bridge the Gap Ambassador', championing women's leadership in paddlesports and a Level 2 Kayak Instructor.

Background

According to the Irish Cancer Society Almost 45,000 people in Ireland get cancer each year. Cancer survival rates have dramatically increased over the last 40 years as a result of improved prevention, detection and treatment. However, many people emerge from treatment facing struggles beyond their illness. Some have minimal pain and disability; some are completely debilitated, and some lie in between. Challenges cancer survivors commonly confront can include physical concerns - fatigue, pain, change in appearance, memory or emotional distress such as fear, depression and of course financial and employment. These impairments may adversely affect patients' participation in exercise, activities of daily living, employment and negatively affect healthy lifestyle choices and behaviours and choices (Macmillian Cancer support, 2015) but many survivors also return to normal functioning and can live relatively symptom free lives (Stein *et al*, 2018), so there is a huge spectrum.

“Ladies who Launch” is a paddle sports programme that was devised for women who are living with or who have had a cancer diagnosis. It was started as part of Canoeing Ireland's #BeActive Paddle Day for European Week of Sport in 2020. The demand and success of the day encouraged the roll out of a longer programme. This has been run in West Cork Kayak Club and Kinsale Outdoor Education Centre with 40 women participating over the last 2 years

The Vision

- To help people living with or who have had a cancer diagnosis have access to meaningful, safe, and lifelong engagement with a sport.
- To help people regain both physical, mental, and emotional strength.
- To help people feel supported as they return to sport.
- To give an opportunity for family and friends to engage together in a fun safe activity.
- To allow an affordable access to participate in and learn a new skill.



Disclaimer: Please ensure you have had clearance from a GP or Oncology team for participation in an exercise programme.

What did it involve and why kayaking?

Kayaking was chosen as the medium for exercise as:

- Bilateral symmetrical activity contracting trunk, gluteal muscles, upper limb and lower limb muscles.
- Involves use of sustained trunk muscles as sitting on an unstable dynamic environment. This provides a constant postural challenge.
- Very easy to adapt kayak to suit the participant. From a sit on top for those who are nervous, to a sea kayak for those who may have one arm stronger as easier to keep straight, or a creek boat to encourage learning of new skills. We have great ability to adapt kayaks or paddles to suit the participant.
- However, it does not provide an aerobic workout at this level.

Kelly's Experience

I had never been a sporty person or into fitness; the only regular outdoor activity I did was gardening. In August 2021, all that changed after I was diagnosed with breast cancer. After five months of chemotherapy followed by surgery, I received the great news that I was cancer free. After I finished treatment, I thought I would feel so happy and ready to get on with my life. The reality was that I was dealing with some quite debilitating side effects from treatment. Chemotherapy had damaged the nerves in my hands and feet; I had excruciating joint pain and crippling fatigue. I struggled with memory loss and poor concentration and felt like I was losing my mind. I was also struggling with the emotional side of going through cancer treatment. I was worried the cancer would return, my confidence was at an all-time low, and I felt lost and unsure about the future.

I had heard about a kayaking course for women who have had or are living with cancer called Ladies Who Launch. I thought the course would be good to get me out of the house, meet new people and have some fun kayaking. The instructors and fellow participants were so welcoming and supportive. We were taught kayaking techniques and got to experience beautiful Kinsale by sea. Being active throughout the course has helped with many of my side effects. My fatigue has reduced dramatically, and my overall fitness has improved. I feel a great sense of achievement from being part of this group. I have taken positive steps towards recovering from my treatment and have become quite a good kayaker. Ladies who Launch has ignited a passion for kayaking, and I know it will always be a big part of my life.

“When you go to a support group, you are expected to sit and talk. Here on the water, everyone understands where you have been so you can just get on with it.”

What I didn't expect from the course was how much it helped me mentally and emotionally. Being out in the fresh air and physically active has lifted my mood. No matter how bad my day has been, I look forward to kayaking so much, it has such a calming effect, and I instantly feel at peace when I'm on the sea. It's great to be with a group of women who have been through cancer treatment. They understand my fears and struggles and how I am feeling. The course is unique because I see it as a kayaking cancer support group, with kayaking as the focus. We talk about our lives and cancer, and if we don't feel like talking, we can paddle away. I find that because cancer isn't the group's focus, we feel more comfortable opening up because the pressure and expectation to talk are not there. You couldn't recreate that sort of peer support in a traditional support group setting. I have made some fantastic friends through the course, and many of us meet up for coffee and go sea swimming once a week; we even recently did the Cork Women's Mini-Marathon and walked in aid of Cork ARC House.

It seems that now I have started, I can't get enough of outdoor activities. I am due to start a course called Go Adventure with the Kinsale Outdoor Education Centre. The course is a personal development course delivered through outdoor and adventure-based activities. I hope this course will build on the progress I have made since I started kayaking, and after, I will be mentally and physically ready to start working again. I have experienced the fantastic benefits of using outdoor activities for rehabilitation and support. In the future, I plan to gain my instructor qualifications in outdoor activities such as kayaking and sailing to complement my social work degree. I feel that combining outdoor activities with therapeutic and support strategies is highly beneficial. I want to promote that and support other people to overcome their adversities like I am doing right now.

Launched

Diagnosis, shock, surgery,
therapies, chemo and radio.
Jump into a kayak,
and together, away we go.

To faraway Moneypoint,
or nearby Charlesfort.
Paddles in the water traversing
choppy waters, calm sea.

A rhythm uniting us all
propelling us forward.
Tomorrow awaits
hopes held high.

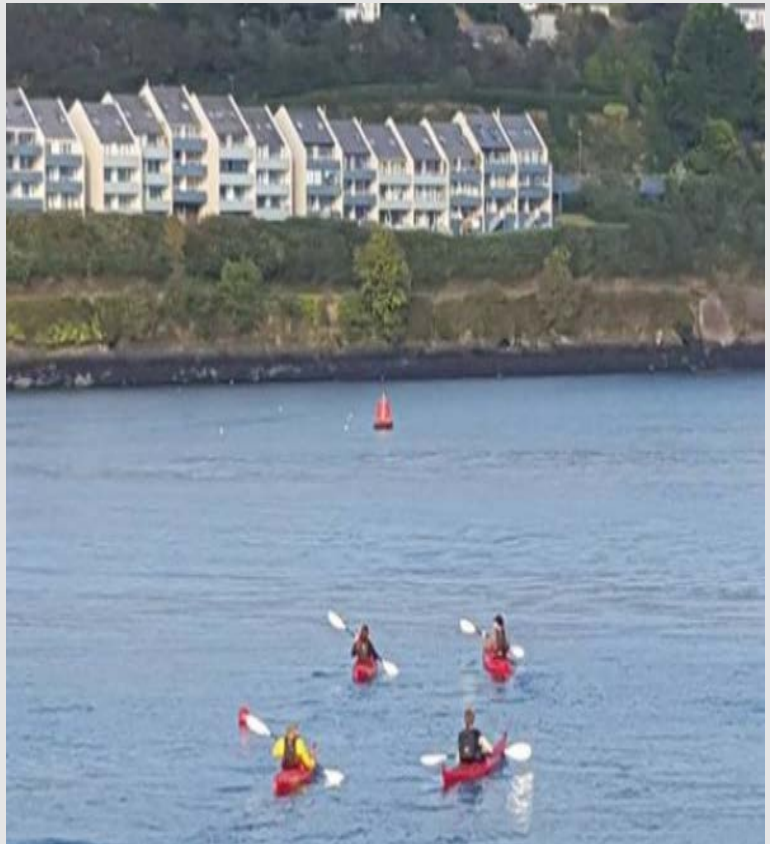
Camaraderie wins.
Forever friends.
On the sea it's you and me
aboard sea kayaks or sit on top.

Blue sky, black sky
clouds and sun.
This is the adventure
that unites us all as one.

Cathy O Sullivan
27 Aug 2022



Cathy O Sullivan recently retired from a long career in Midwifery Education. She wrote a book of poetry during her breast cancer journey in 2021. Her message to all reading the book is the importance of breast self-check examination. She lives in Cork with her husband Kevin and son John. She is so grateful to all who cared for her during her cancer journey. All proceeds of sales of book being donated to Cork ARC Cancer Support House. <https://corkcancersupport.ie/product/through-your-doors-again-by-cathy-osullivan>



There are many physical benefits of targeted exercise for people after treatment

1. Reduce the side effects of treatment- studies show that women who exercise have fewer side effects both during and after completion of treatment. Most notably cancer related fatigue, pain and nausea.
2. Improve muscle mass and strength. Most women experience a decrease in their physical ability following treatments due to a significant loss in strength and muscle mass.
3. Lymphedema risk reduction and management. Exercise helps reduce the risk of developing lymphedema as it stimulates lymphatic flow and improves efficiency of lymphatic system. BMI is a risk factor for lymphedema.
4. Improved bone density. Chemotherapy and hormone therapy influence bone turnover. The decrease in bone mineral density increases risk of osteoporosis.
5. Improve mental health and quality of life. Exercise reduces anxiety and depression, improves sleep and boosts energy.
6. Reduce risk of occurrence. Studies have demonstrated that those who exercise have a lower risk of cancer recurrence and improved survival, when compared to those who are inactive. Greater levels of exercise after a cancer diagnosis are associated with a reduction in cancer related death by nearly 50%. Exercise may reduce the risk of cancer recurrence by up to 35%. Exercise may reduce the risk of cancer recurrence by up to 35%. Exercise may reduce the risk of cancer recurrence by up to 35%. Exercise may reduce the risk of cancer recurrence by up to 35%.

(Friedenreich et al., 2016; Schmitz et al., 2019; Campbell et al., 2019).



“Thank you for the fabulous course, we’ve been wrapped up in cotton wool through our treatments and Covid!! It’s great to rattle the cage and remember to live our lives to the fullest.”

Challenges faced by those living with or after a cancer diagnosis

- Musculoskeletal pain. Post cancer treatment and surgery or medication there can be an increase in shoulder issues, neck pain or back pain.
- Painful and stiff joints. Androgen replacement therapy (Tamoxifen) can give joint and muscle aches.
- Decreased overall body strength, muscle weakness especially core strength. This can be due to deconditioning during and after treatment as well as effects from chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and medications.
- There is a fear of injuring themselves and lots of unknowns regarding returning to exercise.
- Wearing a wet suit is a very public display of surgeries or weight gain post treatment
- Fatigue is very common and can be related to deconditioning, effects of chemotherapy or related to sleep issues.
- Peripheral neuropathy in hands and feet. This causes balance issues and a sensitivity to the cold.

Many people report that the hardest part after a diagnosis is when all the treatments and appointments have finished. This is the time when they start to comprehend the journey they were on and can often suffer from fatigue, fear, loneliness, and uncertainty about the future. Despite research from the consensus document from the American College of Sports Medicine (Patel et al., 2019) recommending 150 mins of aerobic activity a week, the majority of people are not meeting guidelines due to myths, family concerns, financial concerns and a lack of professional guidelines around returning to exercise.

“When I was driving home, I felt a sensation that I hadn’t felt in a long time... I realised it was excitement. I was excited about the future; I am looking forward to the summer”

So, what can you do if you meet someone living with or who has had a diagnosis?

Helpful role: Help people find something that they love doing and enjoy. Patients are living longer after treatment but also longer with the disease. It’s about encouraging people to “live well” irrespective of their disease status. Help them to become active. Plan your session based on the person where they are now, not on pre-treatment fitness levels.

Restorative role: You can help them to restore their previous level of function. Take it slow and encourage a referral onward if you feel it may be of benefit.

Supportive function: You can positively emotionally support their return with encouragement and guidance and set appropriate achievable goals. It may take longer to reach goals than pre-treatment and that can often be frustrating.

Adaptive role: You can help and support them to adapt and come to terms with their changes in fitness and function. Give them time to adapt to the new normal. Use adaptive equipment if necessary. The most important thing is to make it fun. Start slow and build up the amount of physical activity over time. Aim for 150 mins of moderate intensity a week.

There is a lot of emotional trauma post treatment that only being in the outdoors can help. If you get the chance to work with someone who has had a diagnosis, do it! Working with people returning to sport or fitness allows for a lot of teachable moments in health education.

You can encourage lifestyle changes, have a role to play in motivating people and can help empower the person and restore the self-efficacy which cancer and its treatment took away! If you work in the outdoors, let nature do the job for you!

To find out more about the details of the programme plan, session outlines and other considerations you can contact Emer@canoe.ie.

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Post-centrism: The dawn of a new story

Dr Davy Walsh

Davy Walsh is currently a lecturer in Atlantic Technological University and teaches across a range of programmes from Outdoor Education to Applied Social Care. Having worked as an outdoor education instructor for several years Davy returned to education to complete a Masters in Ethical and Cultural Studies (2005) and a PhD in Philosophy (2016). Davy's current research interests are in Social Theory, Environmental Ethics and Epistemology. The article's intended as a conversation starter and Davy welcomes any comments regarding the ideas raised in his paper.

The difficulty lies, not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones.

JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES (1883–1946)

Introduction

For decades people have argued about moving from a human-centred approach that is feeding global development to a more sustainable, eco-centred approach to combat the climate crisis. The human-centred approach, known as anthropocentrism, implies we put humans at the core of our value system. An eco-centric approach, in contrast, simply asks that we put nature at the core of our value system, however, with a steady rise in 'green washing' by so many corporations it is hard to know how to do this. An eco-centred approach recognises that the well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth have value in themselves, outside of any usefulness they may have to humanity (Devall and Sessions, 1985). The idea of nature having intrinsic value has grabbed the attention of many environmental philosophers; some inquire as to how a non-sentient entity like a rock has intrinsic value, since it cannot value itself? These debates, however, often fail to recognise that at the centre of the deep ecological movement is a felt experience, a deep relationship and engagement with nature. One of the main claims of this paper is that deeper ecological kindness[1] is not cultivated by science, knowledge, or philosophical debate, it is cultivated through a direct and intimate relationship with nature. Developing this deeper connection is the first step in overturning centuries of environmental degradation. The question then, is how can we cultivate this transition to deeper ecological kindness, and are our current policies a help or a hindrance?

This paper will address what this transition might entail as we move from anthropo-centrism to eco-centrism, or even further, to a post-centric world.

Reasons infinite regress

One thing that is certain is that the post-anthropocentric world cannot be the world we know today. Einstein once remarked that the thinking that led to the problem, is never going to be the kind of thinking that brings about the solution.[2] Following this logic a lot of green technologies and green policies are merely stalling the inevitable degradation of the planet. I do not believe for a second that a post anthropocentric world will come about by adopting the UN Sustainable Development Goals, nor through climate targets, reducing carbon emissions, electric vehicles, recycling, green technology[3], or through government policy. I believe that the actions taken so far are part of the same thinking that led to the crisis. I am not suggesting we ignore the above actions; they will be necessary as we transition, but they are not the solution and, in some cases, they are accelerating the degradation of the planet.[4] More importantly, the incessant hammering home of these actions and policies is just a form of fundamentalism that is doing nothing to engage a wider global community[5].

[1] I am using ecological kindness instead of the more neutral term ecological awareness. I would hope that it catches on, because it points to an obvious action rather than simple awareness. It seems clear that a lot of people who are doing nothing are quite aware of what is happening, but for some reason they choose to not act kindly toward nature.

[2] Einstein supposedly said this – I cannot find the source, but I believe the premise is entirely correct through my reading of David Hume, and others, who have pointed out the inherently flawed logic of inductive science which is the bedrock of today's knowledge system. Einstein cites Hume's work in numerous papers and texts as having a major influence on his theory of relativity.

[3] Some believe it is possible reverse climate change without any technology whatsoever CF. https://www.ted.com/talks/allan_savory_how_to_fight_desertification_and_reverse_climate_change?language=en

[4] The carbon footprint used to make electric vehicles is so large to that of a petrol car that you must drive the electric vehicle 350,000 miles before you bring it back to the carbon footprint of a petrol car. Car manufacturers, like others, are doing a magnificent job of green washing us more every day. <https://youtu.be/S1E8SQde5rk> I say this knowing that electric vehicles are the future, but we need more public transport and safe zones for cyclists and walkers first.

[5] <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/oct/19/concern-about-climate-change-shrinks-globally-as-threat-grows-survey-shows> Some may find the use of the term fundamentalism out of place to describe to a movement that aligns itself with scientific evidence, however, one of the overriding aspects of fundamentalism is not taking on board any outside perspectives, in addition to 'othering' and 'categorising' anyone on the outside as an enemy to the cause.

One of the major arguments in this paper is that the solution to the environmental crisis is not through environmental actions alone, but through socio-economic action that addresses the loss of connection between people and the planet. However, this can only come about with a new way of thinking, one that challenges conventional wisdom and the steadfast beliefs that are doing serious harm to our planet. As western ideology[6] continues to spread around the globe, we become more detached from nature. For millennia we retained the steadfast belief that we can understand and control nature. We have sought to rationally understand nature in order to control it, from early crop rotation in Mesopotamia to recent GMO developments, we have boosted our yields but, in the process, we have become detached and separated from nature. The understand/control model of development is ubiquitous, and it applies to all nature including the latest green technology. How long will we continue to be fooled by the illusion of control and certainty? Another steadfast belief is that we are all individuals; that I am different from you and what is mine is certainly not yours. A consequence of this kind of solipsism is that we become disconnected and alienated from ourselves and nature. This way of thinking arose with the first land theft[7] and has escalated into an all-out war for resources that still exists today. It led to the monetisation of all things, where everything can be bought. Once something becomes a commodity, be it nature or people, its proper place in the world, and our relationship with it, thereafter, is skewed for generations. We live behind closed doors and walled gardens to protect our stuff and to keep others out. We copyright our ideas; we patent lifesaving technology to ensure we get more for ourselves. The phrase 'we are in this together' could not be further from the truth. There is an ever-increasing imbalance of resources[8] in the world and in the prevailing western ideology togetherness seems to be an afterthought. Of course, understanding, controlling, and individuality can only come about through an overtly rationalised system, like McDonaldization and Neoliberalism, which have become the bedrock of conventional wisdom. This very narrow form of wisdom is becoming a real hindrance to human creativity and ingenuity. The reality is we already have solutions, like seriously reducing consumption,[9] decreasing growth and redistributing the worlds wealth.

However, conventional wisdom tells us that decreased growth will lead to stagnation, and that any kind of wealth tax would force rich corporations and individuals to leave the state.[10] In fact any kind of reduction, be it livestock to turf harvests, are viewed as negative because we are still bound to individual logic that equates reduction with me not having, and not having something for many is seen as unfair when so many before have had a bigger share. Going forward, this individualistic logic must become part of our history, it belongs to an antiquated way of thinking – it is the story of scarcity and mine and yours, not the story of abundance and sharing. We live on the most bountiful planet in our solar system, and we have the audacity to believe in scarcity (try living on mars). Scarcity is a debilitating defeatist mindset that tells us we have no time, no money, no resources, no ideas and above all no hope.



[6] I am consciously aware that there are cultures on the planet that do not partake in western ideology, however, due to globalisation the influence of the western thinking has become invasive to more indigenous ways of life.

[7] Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph *What is Property*, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. 2018. To paraphrase Proudhon, he says that slavery is murder and property is robbery. Original land acquisition was indeed robbery because the first person who claimed ownership must have simply taken it for himself. Now follow the logic: if I buy a stolen car, it is still regarded as stolen vehicle even though I have bought it. Under this logic, everything from a bottle of spring water to salt extracted from the earth, is and will remain a form of theft and every transaction afterward has done nothing to mitigate the theft.

[8] It is estimated that 12.2% of the population own 85% of the worlds wealth (Global Watch Data Book 2021 - <https://www.credit-suisse.com>) We can have no environmental justice if we do not social justice they go hand in hand. The only kind of consciousness that is going to help save the planet is a collective consciousness that recognises that we are all in this together and therefore we are all responsible. To quote Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*: "As soon as you make yourself responsible in all sincerity for everything and for everyone, you will see at once that this really is so, and that you are in fact to blame for everyone and for all things." There is little point in blaming the CEOs of oil companies while we continue to drive to work and send a million emails a day while streaming Netflix every night. Everyone's life comes with demands and conditions, some of which are not their choice, but to see the 'other' as an enemy in an eco-war is one of the surest ways of achieving ecocide. Maybe we should view CEOs of oil or logging companies as our misunderstood friends.

[9] [i] Leonard, Annie. *The Story of Stuff: How Our Obsession with Stuff is Trashing the Planet, Our Communities, and our Health—and a Vision for Change*. Free Press. 2010.

Leonard brings the reader on the entire journey of how stuff is made, used, and dumped. If people really understood the gargantuan processes needed to turn raw material into a consumable item, it might help reduce consumerism. Cf. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GorqroigqM&t=3s>

[10] [i] So many of today's argument are logically flawed; psychologists have identified any number of heuristic biases that skew peoples thinking, not to mention known logical fallacies like the strawman argument, ad hominem argument, false dichotomies, circular arguments and so forth. The problem is that a lot of people cannot see the flaws behind what is being said, because it is shrouded in words like stagnation, inflation, recession, austerity, but the reality is, it is not words that are flawed, it is the logic carrying the words. We seem far too ready to accept binary logic and false dichotomies like you are either with us or against us, it is this way or that, it's left or right, it's shallow ecology or it's deep ecology – all of this is based on a false reality. There are multiple ways of knowing, understanding, and doing. Pitching one against the other is only sustaining an antiquated form of thinking.

To ensure an eco-centric approach is viable we need a deeper connection with nature, but we also need to undo the centuries of conditioning that led us to view nature as being distinct or different from humans. One approach is to embrace diverse ways of knowing. For centuries we have been corralled into accepting reason as the *modus operandi* for any progressive knowledge system, but we seem to have lost the fact that we are sentient beings and to sense something implies we are sensitive to things, we worry about things, we are moved by things. We are interconnected with all life on planet earth and act primarily from our feelings, emotions, and perceptions. Unfortunately, our patriarchal schooling tells us not to get emotional or sentimental, to keep a clear rational head. The problem is that deep down our hearts[11] know what we are doing is wrong, our hearts know there must be a better future,[12] and it is our hearts that will have to imagine a better story. It is our heart that will allow us to cast away the old story of individuality, self-interest and ownership and move toward a collective selfless pluriverse of inter-relational beings. We currently 'know' the problems we face, but this 'knowing' is from our heads, however, the answer is in our hearts.



Lafayette Greens, an urban garden in downtown Detroit, USA

We have been analysing, rationalising, comprehending, and gathering tonnes of scientific data and we are still failing due to our dependency on rational thinking. We are living in Weber's iron cage of reason, we are drowning in teleological efficiency, cold rational calculations and dominating systems of control that leaves the individual alienated to the good that exists in the world. Reason has permeated every aspect of our lives and its reach has caused serious problems for humanity as well as the planet. People reason that owning an electric car is cleaner for the planet, yet the process of making electric cars is highly destructive to the planet, as are wind farms, solar farms, and other renewable technologies. At the rate we are going by the time we have all transitioned to green energy, we will have mined, maimed, and mutilated the planet. The contradictions and absurdities are obvious to everyone, yet it does not stop akratic behaviour like buying new clothes when old clothes are adequate or driving a kilometre to work when one could walk. This is because reason quietens the guilt of buying too much, it is reason that equates recycling with helping the planet and being a good person, even though recycling harms the planet. It is reason that led the EU to categorising a fossil fuel as 'green energy',[13] the same reason that will ensure we will never reach climate targets. It is reason that informs economists we can have infinite growth within a finite system. Basic intuition informs us that there is something grossly wrong with this kind of thinking. It is like we cannot see the wood for the trees; we get so engrossed with the minutia that we fail to see the bigger picture. However, the bigger picture is apparent to anyone who wishes to listen to their heart and soul.

The great escape.

For a century, if not more, social theorists, philosophers and feminists have been trying to bring our attention to the fact that an overtly rational approach[14] is bound to fail. In a rationalised system we end up caring *about* the planet, not caring *for* it, and the difference between the two is considerable.[15] Caring 'about' allows us to comprehend, formulate and try solving real world problems. Caring about is a crucial step in the right direction but it tends to stay at a distance, removed from the actual problem. In contrast, caring 'for' starts with the recognition of needs and is followed by a realisation that for real action to take place, the person caring for must enter a relationship that is driven by emotion, feeling and sentiment. For good things to come about there must be an intimate relationship based on a recognition and response to the needs of nature and humanity.

[11] I realise under our reductive scientific model of understanding the word 'heart' is entirely ambiguous, but intuitively we can understand the context of the word and therefore, while vague, the word heart has a significant meaning.

[12] Eisenstein, Charles. *The Ascent of Humanity: Civilization and the Human Sense of Self*. North Atlantic Books. 2013. I could have cited any one of Eisenstein's books, but I choose this one as it is the genesis of everything else, he has written thus far. In keeping with his ethos of sharing and non-profitteering he has made the book available online: <https://ascentofhumanity.com/>

[13] The EU have decided to label Gas and Nuclear as Green Energy because France and Germany lobbied for it, rationally arguing that a transition to renewable energy without them would be futile. <https://www.rte.ie/news/world/2022/0202/1277386-sustainable-investments/> It matters nothing whether they are classed as blue or green, clean, or mean because this time we know more, and therefore assume we have more control than ever before.

[14] The issue is not reason itself, but the primacy of reason in modern systems. Reason does not have to be at odds with sentiment and feelings, a lot of times they seem to run concurrently, but the rationalisation of today's public and private institutions is not the kind of reasoning that we currently need.

[15] Nodding, Nell. *Education Moral People: A caring alternative to character education*. Cf. Chapter 8, Teacher's College Press 2002. In other works, like *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, Nodding discusses caring for the environment. While accepting Peter Singer's belief that animal suffering is wrong, she does not go on to accept the larger utilitarian principles in Singer's seminal text *Animal Liberation* (1975). Interestingly she is open to caring for nature if they are in relation to us. There does not seem to be an ethical issue if we eat an animal we have no relation with, for example a chicken curry from the local takeaway. However, eating a lamb that our children have named 'Snowy' would be entirely unethical as we are in a relation with the lamb. When we extend our relations with the natural world, our 'caring for' becomes infinitely greater. One caveat to mention is that 'caring for' requires a direct immediate relationship with someone or something thing, in this respect Nodding would argue that we can only 'care about' the environment like we can only 'care about' humanity. Moral Psychologist, Jonathan Haidt, has also written extensively on the role of sentimentality in moral judgement. His book, *A righteous Mind* (2012) denounces Moral Cognitive Development in favour of a more embodied sentimental approach, and his extensive empirical studies show that the body, not the mind, take a leading role in ethical judgment.

Caring *for* implies direct and immediate action while caring *about* does not. If we want the post-anthropocentric world to be different and better, we need more caring *for*; immediate action guided by sentimentality is part of the solution. We need to get away from the 'narrative' of selfish gene, of individual free choice to a 'narrative' of collective interdependent decision-making (Bregman, 2020). The current economic system that skews wealth, health and belonging must be replaced by an economic system where well-being and happiness are at the forefront. In a non-anthropocentric world, we are going to need a huge amount of imagination, creativity, ingenuity, sharing, caring and most importantly of all is we need a new story to believe in.

The story might go like this: In the new world our present-day heroes who will continue to minimise their lives, reduce carbon footprint and be respectful toward nature. In addition, everything will be greener, and life will be biologically richer. Our current monetary system will give way to decreased growth and redistribution of wealth, and there would be no more boom-bust model of economics[16] where austerity is unavoidable. The means of achieving this feat will come about by following the laws of nature, money being no exception. A demurrage-bearing currency, that is, a currency that decays over time, would mean the hoarding of vast amounts of wealth by elites would drastically decrease, leading to a wider and faster redistribution of wealth.[17] There would be a 'cost to the planet' tax on production, ensuring companies pay for the injuries inflicted on the planet. The acceptance of usury, which is money lent with interest, is but a blip in human history (Graeber, 2013) and will be diminished. Loans for non-profit initiatives like charities, social services, acquisition of land for organic farming, biodiversity initiatives, education, and health shall have 0% interest rates.[18] There would be a land value tax (LVT) that ensures vacant land and rental property prices would not increase.[19] There would be a maximum wage (income topping) and bullshit jobs that serve no one except the person in the job would be a thing of the past.[20] We would live in a world where electrical appliances, garden equipment or recreational equipment can be borrowed from an inventory of equipment created in work places, community groups or why not through the existing Library of Things.[21] It will be a place where play once again enters the realm of the sacred and where children run around our streets in laughter and delight.

Reclaiming public spaces, including our streets is already underway in cities throughout the world. To have time to spend playing and embracing nature we will have to share our workload with others, through the introduction of a 20-hour working week.[22] This will be achieved by a basic universal income that will provide real financial security to everyone. Finally, if it was possible for China to feed approximately 450 million people organically in the early 1900s, surely, we can feed five million people in Ireland organically in this new time to come.[23] The impact of these measures, not only to the environment but also the well-being of humanity, is too great to ignore. Our current systems need a radical overhaul, a kind of reimagining before we can begin the process of recovery.

There is nothing original in anything I have said above about a better future. The practices already exist in pockets of the planet and the only reason they are not expanding is because we choose to believe conventional wisdom which tells us they cannot and will not work. Conventional wisdom tells us we are in control and that science and technology will solve everything, but a post anthropocentric world will only come about if we stop what we are doing and allow sentimentality its rightful place. We cannot buy our way out of the crisis, every purchase we make, whether green or not, is destroying the planet. We need to start living within our needs, reduce our consumption of unnecessary junk, share what we have with one another, and listen to our hearts as much as our heads. We must restore the intimacy we once had with ourselves and nature, and the only way to do that is to restore nature to its rightful place in the world. Nature is with us and in us, it is who we are (Naess, 2016). It is time to move beyond the binary confines of anthropocentrism and ecocentrism and instead embrace a post-centric world where we finally take control of our own story.

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[16] According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, there were 34 business cycles (boom-bust cycles) between 1854 and 2020, with each full cycle lasting roughly 56 months on average. <https://www.nber.org/research/data/us-business-cycle-expansions-and-contractions> It is worth noting that these cycles are often referred to as 'natural' cycles implying a rigidity, even though they are entirely artificial and can be overcome with a few basic tenants of Keynesian economics.

[17] Di Muzio, Tim & Robbins, Richard. *An Anthropology of Money: A Critical Introduction*. Routledge. 2017, Demurrage-bearing money was discussed at length by Silvio Gesell, a German economist in the 1900s and is based on old harbour traditions that would impose an increasing fee for every day an empty boat remained in port. The idea was to keep everything moving, especially in a busy port. Demurrage-bearing money or Rust Money helps increase money velocity which should trigger an inflation, but because the money depreciates over time, instead of inflation you get a kind of conveyor belt of activity that does not follow boom and bust of orthodox economic models.

[18] I could have added home loans or any other personal loans where there is a matter of urgency and well-being. Reneging on the loan payment will have consequences and you may have assets or land repossessed, but at least you are only paying back what was loaned and nothing more. An alternative to a 0% loan could be an interest freeze loans, allowing you up to a year before interest kicks in. Again, both options seem better than the existing usuary practices.

[19] Most economists universally welcome Land Value Tax (LVT). Henry George was the first to advocate it in the 19th century and since then it has been widely accepted as one of the fairest taxes in history. It is currently implemented in over 30 countries across the world to keep housing markets more accessible.

[20] The American philosopher Harry Frankfurt was the first to write about and the technical term 'bullshit' in an academic essay in 1986. The term is now cropping up more and more. Cf. Graeber, David. *Bullshit Jobs: The Rise of Pointless Work, and What We Can Do About It*. Penguin 2019. In this work Graeber contends that over half of societal work is pointless and has become psychologically damaging when one considers self-worth is often associated with being employed. One definition of a bullshit job is a job that serves no one directly; so, if the job was terminated it would have little to no impact on people in society. Bregman also notices this phenomenon in his 2018 book *Utopia for Realists*, where he contrasts Ireland 6-month Bank strike in the 1970 which left a lot of Irish people wondering why they needed a bank, to a 6-day garbage strike in New York. After just 4 days New York government had declared a state of emergency – something not done since the 1931 Polio epidemic. The point is that refugee collection has an immediate and direct impact on people's lives and should therefore have a more valuable place within society. In the end New York gave in to the demands of the refugee collectors while the Irish Banks demands were not met – the more meaningful job won out.

[21] See Belfast Tool Library for example of projects already underway. <https://www.belfasttoolibrary.com/>

[22] Bregman, Rutger. *Utopia for Realists*. Bloomsbury. 2018. This book outlines the reasons society should introduce Universal Basic Income, a 15hr work week and a borderless world as well as the empirical evidence showing the socio-economic benefits for such transitions.

[23] F. H. King. *Farmers of Forty Centuries: Permanent Organic Farming in China, Korea, and Japan*. Benediction Classics. 2011. King wrote this seminal text in 1907 when the true population of China was not as accurate as that of Japan and Korea. I did a bit of online research and from 1850 (Qing Dynasty) to 1928 (founding of the Republic of China) the population went from 430 million to 474 million.

Aligning Social Support Theory and Outdoor Education: A Youth and Family Perspective



Nioclás Ó Lonáin (Nick)

Nick has over 15 years of experience designing and delivering a diverse range of therapeutic and outdoor developmental programmes within the social service in Ireland and across Europe. Nick holds a BA (Honours) in Outdoor Education and an MA in Family Support and currently works as a Youth Justice Worker for Foróige in Galway and is the Co-Founder of the Venture Out Wilderness Project.

Introduction

There is a common understanding that the application of Outdoor Education (OE) programmes fosters growth in participants and while a vast number of studies exists in its support, more research on how this change occurs is called for. This is particularly true in addressing the specific outdoor mechanisms that truly effect the process of individual change.

There are philosophical ideas, programming principles and a “folk pedagogy” of practitioner beliefs in the application of OE, but from an Irish perspective few explicit theoretical models and empirical evidence exist. Despite the lack of policy driven practice OE has grown as a means of boosting service delivery, of optimising participation, and of meeting the needs of service users.

This paper is an extract from my Master's Thesis in Family Support Studies. The aim of the research was to explore the perceived benefits of outdoor education in the youth and family sector. The rationale was to connect family support theory with OE practices. OE is often overlooked at an intervention level and to quote one of the practitioners in the research when asked ‘ Does your manager or organisation know why you use OE?’ Their response was,

“I can safely say that they haven't a clue what I am doing. I am just down in the forest with a load of kids!”(practitioner 7).

To bridge this gap and bring greater awareness to this style of work I chose to focus on the theory of social support because it is one of the most researched theories in the sector and has historically underpinned national youth and family practice. I hope that this small extract aids in fostering greater understanding and appreciation for what is present and what can be achieved by incorporating OE in Youth and Family practice.

Introduction

In connecting social support with OE there appears to be a gap in the literature; predominantly the issue lies with social support theory not being explicitly mentioned. However, by critically examining social support theory and OE literature many similarities in research findings exist. Firstly, I want to briefly highlight how OE can be beneficial in the Youth Family Sector and I will then outline the key components of Social Support.

Outdoor Education

Outdoor education is often viewed as a holistic form of education that can assist in educating the person as a whole; academically, physically, emotionally, socially and psychologically (Davidson, 2001; Allen *et al.*, 2012). It provides opportunities to apply knowledge in real life situations and enhances the understanding of the relationship between humans and the natural outdoor environment (Lugg, 1999). Davidson (2001) also found outdoor education to be potentially valuable as a holistic and life-long activity that enhances the capacity to enjoy and engage in life. This is confirmed by Gassner *et al.* (2008, p.136) who found that “*certain aspects of outdoor adventure experience appear to transfer to the personal and professional life of participants*”.

Many Studies have found an increase of self-esteem and self-efficacy, which is interesting as it is stated by Heath *et al.* (2010) that it is the availability of positive, accessible social support that enhances these benefits.

Social Support Theory

Social support is used to gather support from all areas of one's life course and can be defined as the process by which people give aid or encouragement through difficult and stressful situations (Cutrona, 2000). Many adolescents face adversity and social support, when used accordingly, is viewed as a means to help them overcome this adversity. This is a crucial area to examine, as Vaux (1988) identified social support, at an intervention level, as a powerful technique for the enhancement and prevention of psychological problems.



Throughout one's life's span, one often faces difficult times and stressful situations and in order to support people throughout these times we call on different types of supports. Such support include concrete, advice, emotional and esteem support (Cutrona, 2000) and they can be sourced formally, semi-formal or informally (Devaney, 2011). These types of social supports have been shown to be very beneficial, however the quality of support available can be considered a determining indicator of a young person's well-being (Dolan, 2010).

Quality of Social Support

Four areas in gauging the quality of support offered are; closeness, reciprocity, durability and admonishment. Closeness is considered an important dimension of social support (Dolan & Brady, 2012). The closer people feel they are to other people the more likely they will be to seek supports and not perceive themselves as helpless or a burden on people (Devaney, 2011). Reciprocity involves acts whereby help is exchanged between people ensuring that a person does not feel beholden to another (Eckenrode & Hamilton, 2000); a balance of give and take in social relationships. Durability relates to whether the person they wish to receive support from is dependable or not (Dolan & Brady, 2012). Admonishment refers to giving feedback in a way that it is non-criticising and doesn't damage their sense of self (Devaney, 2011).



OE offers promising methods in boosting clients social support capacity by developing personal growth in building relationships and social competence.

Methodology

To address the gap in literature I used a qualitative methodology approach involving semi structured interviews, which were subsequently analysed and categorised into salient themes. I sought a sample group of 12 people that utilise the outdoors in their practice and that had a variety of backgrounds and working roles such as Youth Justice, Education Centres, and Family Support Workers. The clients engaged with these practitioners were predominantly young people between the ages of 10 to 25 from disadvantaged backgrounds and would present with a wide range of needs such as mental health, drug related issues, family trauma, pro-criminal behaviour and anti-social behaviour. Questions asked to the practitioners were based on addressing one of the key research aims, which was to explore the rationale for using OE as a medium in youth and family practice and identifying what benefits were observed.

Findings

The key findings and prominent themes from this research were the lack of clear definition of OE practice. There was a dominant folk pedagogy approach to practice and no managerial awareness or national policy in support of OE. The research also discovered, which will be the focus of this paper, that OE offers promising methods in boosting clients' social support capacity by developing personal growth in building relationships and social competence. This is important in relation to youth and family services. Developing young people's ability to engage with and to gain benefits from social support is reliant on the individual's social competency (Cohen, 2000).

Social Competences

When Practitioners were asked whether social bonds or social networks were formed as a result of OE, they spoke about how when you're in the outdoors you are immersing yourself with other people. The process of sharing a tent, eating and cooking together, hiking up a mountain helps participants to get to know one another. They noted that a social pedagogy of cooperation and teamwork would be an overarching process to these activities. While a majority of practitioners believed that social bonds and networks were formed they did acknowledge that no formal emphasis was put on the process:

"they come together and have stayed friends together after the programme. No emphasis was put on developing strong support networks but it just happened naturally" (practitioner 7)

It was said that these social bonds were due to the natural elements provided by being outdoors and that the outdoors is not a passive process; it lends itself to communicating and working together. The practitioners state that this creates shared experience and can develop common ground to talk about things.

"real mix of young people and mix of abilities and you could really see that the young people had developed better friendships and better social skills with one another" (practitioner 3)

Often practitioners would also speak about how outdoor experiences would make a level playing field for young people to bond and communicate in different ways and when asked if participants develop stronger social networks one participant replied:

"Yes 100%, sharing an experience like that breaks down barriers and walls and normalises human beings, almost a sense of solitude between them and respect - I see this all the time" (practitioner 5)

It was also mentioned that those who suffer from low self-worth or esteem would benefit.

"Even the most nervous young person was able to grow and socialise more when they went back to school, this was their group and they protected each other, giving them a great support system" (practitioner 6)



Relationships

Practitioners were asked if they found OE programmes built relationships. The response was unilateral across all practitioners. They found that building relationships between clients was a huge reason for practitioners to use OE.

"it enables people to have a more authentic and real relationship outside than what they would have indoors" (practitioner 3)

Practitioners with qualifications in delivering outdoor activities spoke about how, when they deliver these activities, it would create a sense of trust and bonding between them and the participants. The participants would learn to trust the practitioner and that they would not put them in harm's way. This level of trust was said to last long after the activities.

"a unique first time experience for the youth leader and the child creates this new space for them to talk about and something to relate to each other" (practitioner 5)

When the relationship grows, practitioners found that young people begin to see them in a different light. The level of respect which builds up can offer new grounds for targeting other pressing issues going on in the young person's life.

"They can begin to see you as a positive influence and the outdoor lends itself brilliantly to that" (practitioner 7)

One practitioner also spoke about while out for a hill walk:

"You could get into a conversation with them that you would never ever get into while in at the training centre. And they could learn something about you which is often more important than you leaning something about them, that you're not actually a two headed monster, authority figure... that you an ordinary person" (practitioner 4)

This process was indicated as crucial in reinforcing and developing relationships that might not have been their prior to the OE experiences. Practitioners also found it difficult to think of other mediums that offer the same level of bonding applications and trust building.

Implications for practice

So how does the above impact future practice? In addressing this question is it important to remember that accessing support systems for adolescents can prove difficult if adolescents have not developed the skills to access such support. They may be lacking in the ability to communicate their needs or do not have the confidence or are maybe too proud to ask for help. This is confirmed by Neil (2001), who stated that young people typically involved in youth services, or those thought to be 'at risk', are believed to have reduced social skills and are limited in their abilities to form close, interpersonal relationships. Again, what is important to remember here is that personality is formed and shaped due to our contact with other people. Mckenzise (2000) believes it can be reshaped through the intimate interaction and contact that is experienced during outdoor activities. The practitioners shared this concept and believed that by building one's confidence through activities that promoted social trust and communication directly enhances their social support capacity.



In building social competency, the practitioners also highlighted that through skilled and careful facilitation, the conflicts and confrontations that arise due to the challenges set in these programmes help individuals to identify how they resolve their conflicts and how this affects the people around them. This process of positive conflict resolution within a group also creates a sense of belonging and can provide a supportive environment (Rea, 2006). This is important in relation to youth and family services because in developing young people's ability to engage and gain benefits from social support, the level of effectiveness relies on the individual's social competency (Cohen, 2000).

Thurber *et al.* (2007) also speaks about how these outcomes can support multidimensional growth. He notes that the study of social science and more specifically social support boosts outcomes and creates bonds and connections with local environments. Interestingly, by delivering these programmes in local communities and building these relationships within communities, a sense of belonging and community connectedness can be enhanced (Thurber *et al.* (2007). He also believes that this can address aspects of cycles (breaking inherited behaviours and patterns) through a life course perspective when working with disadvantaged and marginalised communities. An argument can be made here for the use of OE as it could allow practitioners to apply theory to practice in real time situations.

Conclusion

In concluding this paper I want to finish by addressing two key learnings. Firstly, by highlighting a practical tool in developing a client's social capacity I want to bring you back to the four areas in gauging the quality of support offered, which are closeness, reciprocity, durability and admonishment. Here, the reader might engage in some reflective practice and become more aware of the different ways of offering support in their practice. They can become aware how you, as a practitioner in facilitating OE, can be a valued source of such support. Secondly, I want to share a key piece of learning which has directly improved my practice. This piece of learning was around gaining a greater understanding about people's ability to engage and seek support. The understanding centred on how the level at which they seek this support can come down to their capacity to trust and be confident in managing social situations. I now ensure to create greater opportunities for clients to engage in prosocial activities and provide more community-based OE intervention. OE is not a fix-all approach by any means but this small research piece has highlighted that OE offers meaningful opportunities in meeting the participant's needs and how OE can stand proudly beside other common youth and family interventions.



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Venture Out Wilderness Project is a registered charity and social enterprise, profit-for-purpose, company limited by guarantee. We prescribe and deliver outdoor, nature based therapeutic programmes to people experiencing a range of diverse challenges in their lives. Through tailored personal development focused programmes, experienced Venture Out guides create opportunities for their participants to learn, grow, explore and enjoy the outdoors for their physical, social, emotional and mental well-being.



Jon Hynes is a lifelong outdoor educator / Instructor. His passions are mainly within sea kayaking and training. From a childhood where Scouting was a big influence, he then started his outdoor career at Delphi in 1992 and he has worked in many Centres in a variety of roles since. Jon also ran his own successful outdoor business for 16 years. Since 2017 his work as Director of both Kinsale and Fastnet Marine Outdoor Education Centre's in Co. Cork brings together a wide variety of life and career experiences that have created two very vibrant Centre's which are staffed by expert & innovative instructor teams. Jon is continually developing his knowledge and skillsets to remain focussed in his passion for outdoor education.



Context for the poem

"I have never seen myself as a poet. In my evolving self reflections on my work outdoors, I wanted to explore a new space of capturing some very powerful recent outdoor work. This flooded me with memories of previous work in other residential outdoor centres and settings. We hopefully all appreciate the value of review and reflection. There are so many ways in which we can explore and review. In this format I have attempted to capture a range of emotions, feelings and self-reflection that aim to celebrate our combined work as a sector. Thank you for reading and for the work that you do to make outdoor education stronger".

Jon Hynes

Reflections of an Outdoor Instructor

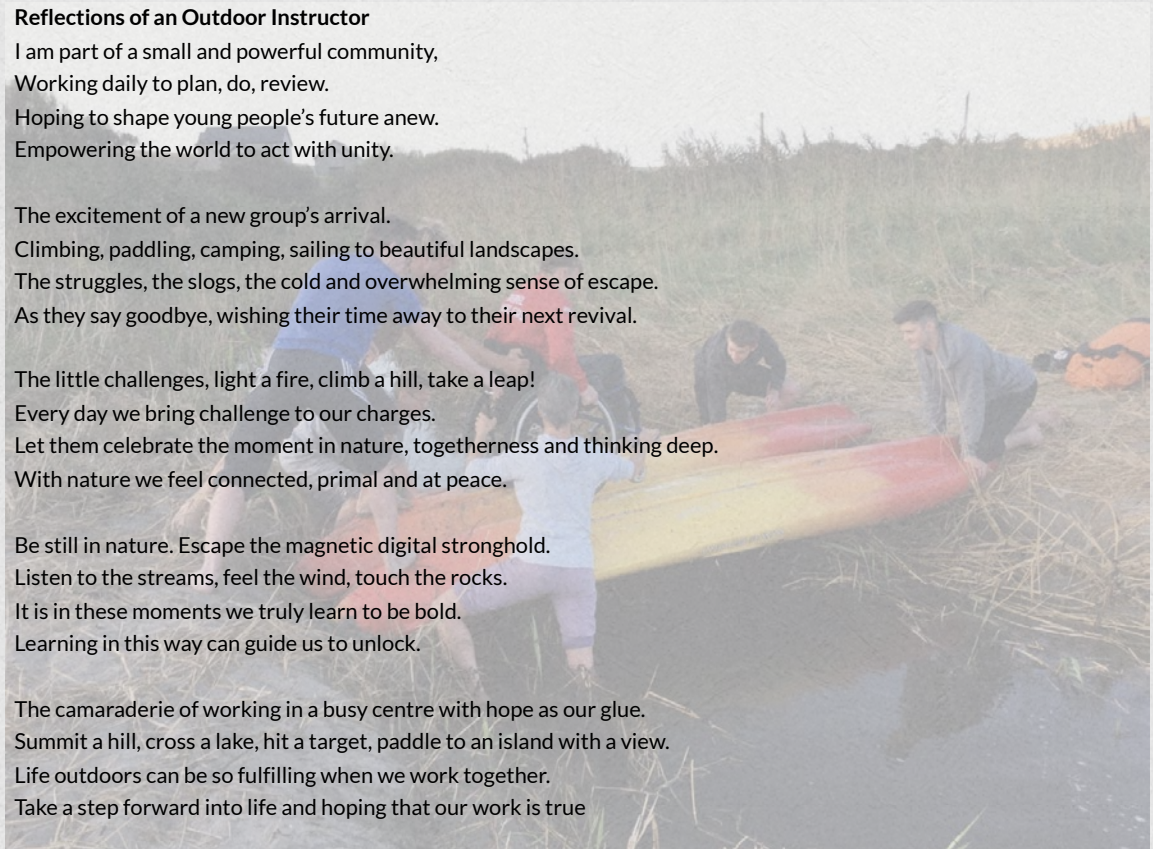
I am part of a small and powerful community,
Working daily to plan, do, review.
Hoping to shape young people's future anew.
Empowering the world to act with unity.

The excitement of a new group's arrival.
Climbing, paddling, camping, sailing to beautiful landscapes.
The struggles, the slogs, the cold and overwhelming sense of escape.
As they say goodbye, wishing their time away to their next revival.

The little challenges, light a fire, climb a hill, take a leap!
Every day we bring challenge to our charges.
Let them celebrate the moment in nature, togetherness and thinking deep.
With nature we feel connected, primal and at peace.

Be still in nature. Escape the magnetic digital stronghold.
Listen to the streams, feel the wind, touch the rocks.
It is in these moments we truly learn to be bold.
Learning in this way can guide us to unlock.

The camaraderie of working in a busy centre with hope as our glue.
Summit a hill, cross a lake, hit a target, paddle to an island with a view.
Life outdoors can be so fulfilling when we work together.
Take a step forward into life and hoping that our work is true



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