

Trust

Rohnke (1984) states that trust is a powerful and essential educational tool; it is the key to personal involvement. The establishment of trust is, in part, responsible for the growth in the personal confidence of each group member (Rohnke, 1984). Trust, within the framework of an adventure curriculum, is gained with patience, thoughtfulness and care over a period of time, and can be lost in a second by carelessness or inconsiderate behavior (Rohnke, 1984). According to Hammersley (1992), trust exercises teach spotting techniques necessary for initiative activities and increase the sense of group by students. Building individual and group trust is achieved through the use of trust exercises.

In their book *Islands of Healing*, Schoel, Prouty, and Radcliffe (1988) describe trust as a firm reliance on the integrity, ability, or character of a person or thing. Engaging in trust-building activities helps to demonstrate to all individuals involved (including the teacher or leader) that they can be trustworthy during risk-taking or challenge activities, and that they can rely on others to be there during times of need. According to Schoel, Prouty, and Radcliffe (1988), the therapeutic value of trust exercises is to increase the quality of group development in building a sense of community and team support. In these settings, high group cohesion stems from emotional and physical trust.

Some Basic Principles of Trust-Building Activities

1. The physical nature of adventure-based activities builds in the necessity of achieving a basic level of trust before moving on to more complex psychological and social interaction trust issues.
2. Faith and trust in self and the other person is such an essential ingredient in relationships that cuts across and interacts with all other components of self-concept.
3. Without trust there is no “glue” to hold relationships together.
(Schoel, Prouty, & Radcliffe, 1988)

Sources for Trust Activities

Rohnke, K. (1984). Silver Bullets. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

Rohnke, K. (1989). Cowstails & Cobras II. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

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Schoel, J., Prouty, D., & Radcliffe, P. (1988). Islands of Healing. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.