

# AHISA Pastoral Care Conference

Thursday 27 March, Scotch Oakburn Launceston, Tasmania

## The Journey to Inspire

Darren Black, CEO Outward Bound Australia

### Introduction

I am honored to be with you today at this important conference of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools, on *Life, Love and Leadership*.

The title of my presentation is "The Journey to Inspire". I should say at the outset that as the CEO of Outward Bound it is not my intent to "sell" Outward Bound to you today as the solution for all your pastoral care challenges, for it is not. It is my intent to share with you some simple wisdom about developing young people that have been passed down through many years of collective experience – the views expressed are my own, however, they are very much shaped by my experience, especially at Outward Bound.

My approach today will be to speak for about 30 minutes, and then to show you a brief 10 minutes video of an ELOB project in the US, and to allow about 20 minutes for questions and/or discussion at the end.

Having set the scene, let me begin by sharing two fundamental beliefs that form the foundations of this presentation. The first belief is also one of the Core Values of Outward Bound: the *belief in human potential* - that is, within each of us is a gift, a unique and special talent to share with the world.

With this underlying belief in human potential comes both a tragic reality and a responsibility:

- The tragedy lies in that for many that gift/talent is never discovered. It lies latent or unrealized and without the discovery and development of the gift, ones life is

never fulfilled, that unique potential is never realized. In the worst case people pass through their whole lives without realizing their gift. This is the tragedy.

- Now then the responsibility. For us as parents, teachers and educators, this is the exciting part, and the challenging part. For us this is the quest. For it is our responsibility to help our children, our students, our youth of today (who will be tomorrow's adults and community leaders), to find their gift - to help them to discover that thing that is their unique potential, and then to help them develop and achieve that potential.

The second underpinning belief is that all education is about human development, about empowering the creativity in every one of us, and that "secondary education should be preparation for life itself, not just for qualifications"<sup>1</sup>. In stating this, I also make the assertion that at present the system of secondary education in this country is not focused on the holistic development of all students but is instead focused on academic achievement through a competitive system of examinations.

This paper will put forward the basic prognosis that the inspiration we are seeking to create, "The Light In the Eyes"<sup>2</sup> of our students, comes at the juncture of two great educational goals – the ignition of passion and the discovery of potential. That is, from the ignition of passion - that which excites and energizes, in combination with potential - those areas where we have competence, talent, and skill, comes our inspiration. The paper will suggest that our collective goal as parents, teachers and those charged with the pastoral care of our youth, is to help our children connect with their passion and their potential, for it is only when the two are combined do we find inspiration and achieve our own personal greatness.

**Aim** - The aim of this paper is therefore to explore how to achieve this great educational aim, that is, the ignition of passion (excitement, energy) combined with the

---

<sup>1</sup> Wright, Alan, *A Chaplain Remembers*, Preface p xxiv, Westgate Publishing, Victoria, 2006

<sup>2</sup> Wright, Alan. *The Light in Their Eyes* – A Study of the impact of Outward Bound on Adolescent Youth, 1968. The term "The Light in Their Eyes" is what Alan Wright referred to in his report on the Investigation of Outward Bound and its significance for the Education of Youth

discovery of potential (skill and competence), with the aim of inspiring our youth to achieve their potential.

It is no co-incidence then that the mission of Outward Bound Australia resonates with this desire to help youth to discover and develop their potential. The Mission of Outward Bound Australia is "to provide challenging experiences that help people discover, develop and achieve their potential".

### **Assumptions**

1. The audience for this paper will be parents, teachers, educators and those involved in the pastoral care and development of the youth of this nation.
2. That you will be united in the common desire to forge new understandings of how we can help children develop to their full potential.
3. That you will have your own experience of dealing with youth, particularly those experiencing difficulties in the Secondary Education system, and will have learned valuable lessons from that experience.
4. That you will have experienced success and failure, euphoria and frustration in your attempts to develop young people, and
5. Like me, you don't have all the answers and are seeking ways to help you become more effective in their roles.

### **Authors Bias**

In the authors view it is important for the audience to appreciate from where the writer's perspectives come. In providing this context I state categorically that the opinions presented herein are my own, and that these perspectives are very much shaped by my own experience. The key experiences that have shaped this perspective are: my own memories of adolescence; my military experience; my experience as a parent; and Outward Bound.

Let me refer briefly to my experience of Outward Bound. I have been with Outward Bound for the past 5 years. Outward Bound of course was created in the UK during WWII and exported to Australia and many other countries subsequently. OB began in Australia in 1956 and around 300,000 people have participated in an Outward Bound Australia course over the past 50 years. Our courses today impact approximately 5000 students each year, predominately in the 13 – 17 year age range. In my time at OB around 25,000 students have participated in one of our programs. I am not a teacher and rarely get involved in the actual facilitation of our programs. As CEO my responsibilities are many, including fundraising for scholarships and ensuring the financial viability of the organization, but from a program delivery perspective my job is to ensure that we continue to remain true to the core of Outward Bound's educational philosophy, and that we continue to deliver high quality and safe learning journeys. I see many students and get to know our instructors well. I get to see the "Light in Their Eyes". So when I speak about Outward Bound, whilst the views expressed are my own, they are literally the consolidated wisdom of not just the last 5 years, but of the last 50 years.

My experiences in the Army, as a parent and as an adolescent may be of less interest to this audience, but have all been powerful forces in shaping my perspectives on the development of youth. Having been a graduate of the Royal Military College (RMC) Duntroon, and later serving there as an instructor, one's perspectives on leadership, ethics, service and the acceptance of responsibility are firmly shaped. As a United Nations Military Observer in the Middle-East, my views on service, compassion and community were further developed.

As a parent of three daughters, the oldest of whom has just turned 10, the youngest 3, my wife and I have not yet experienced those "difficult teenage years", that those older and wiser than we, keep warning us of. We are at a stage of enjoying the innocence, honesty and beauty of their childhood. Our oldest daughter, Lauren, is at the edge of childhood and adolescence – still childlike in many ways, but also starting to get closer to her friends, starting to seek their affirmation, to want to belong (she co-incidentally is off on her first "School Camp" right now). Yet we still remember, as

many of you will with your own children, when they took their first steps, those first steps to gaining independence. It is worth reflecting on those early childhood moments, remember how encouraging we were, how unconditional we were with our praise and love and remember the light in the eyes of those little children as they launched across that first gap and took those first wobbly steps - a wonderful achievement and one of the first steps to the gaining of independence.

We do well to reflect on those simple inspirational moments of early childhood, for the ingredients that led to those moments came from simple things: care & compassion; positive reinforcement; and unconditional love. We know of the importance of these simple truths, and also how difficult it is to provide these essential ingredients of healthy development consistently through life. Yet, we also know in our hearts, if not in all of our actions, that these are the same simple ingredients needed for the care and development of our children through all the stages of their life.

As a teenager what I remember is uncertainty – about self, about the opposite sex, about future work/career paths. What I remember most positively and vividly did not happen in the classroom. My most vivid and lasting memories of school, aside from our victories and defeats on the Rugby field, were the camps and expeditions planned by teachers as extra-curricular activities. These were voluntary activities and the teachers involved did so willingly and often in their own time. I remember each of our camps fondly. They were significant formative events for us a group of teenage boys trying to find out who we were and what we were made of.

### **The Modern Tragedy of Secondary Education**

One of my primary references for this presentation is a book called *A Chaplain Remembers*, written by Alan Wright, former Chaplain at Carey Baptist Grammar in Kew, Victoria. Alan's book is about the educational and spiritual values that shaped his views and the subsequent building of the Carey Chapel. In the introduction to Alan's book, Dr Ron Fitzgerald, former Commissioner for Education in the Federal Government Commission of Enquiry into Poverty, states that "It would not require

much effort to marshal evidence supporting the statement that our educational system is highly competitive – both for students and their schools”<sup>3</sup>. He goes on to say that “life chances are greatly multiplied by gaining higher scores in the competitive Year 12 examinations”.

One of the central hypotheses of this reference is that “the sheer pressures upon them (secondary students) for high-level competitive academic performance, has for too many students, taken the joy out of learning, while for others it has been a meaningless nightmare from which their self-esteem is still struggling to recover”<sup>4</sup>. I wonder how these conclusions resonate with you as an audience of teachers, teachers and pastoral carers in the Secondary System today?

Through a succession of competitive examinations this system creates winners (successes) and losers (failures). Those labeled “failures” by the system, because of their inability, or lack of interest, in achieving high academic results in the exams do so at the expense of their own self-esteem. I will return to this point on self-esteem later in the paper, for it is critical to creating the potential for competence and passionate pursuit of excellence.

Wright’s book goes on to variously describe the “straightjacket of secondary education”<sup>5</sup> in Australia, with such powerful descriptors as “social sorting agencies to identify and select adolescents for tertiary training”<sup>6</sup>. I’m sure you would all have your own views about these statements and your perspectives on whether we have made progress in improving the learning environment in our secondary schools.

Out of all this I do not want to appear gloomy or pessimistic for there are growing beacons of light. I am aware that there have been curriculum developments in Australia, as a counter to what has previously been described as “the straightjacket of

---

<sup>3</sup> Wright, Alan, *A Chaplain Remembers* – Introduction by Dr Ron Fitzgerald, Westgate Victoria, 2006

<sup>4</sup> Wright, Alan, *A Chaplain Remembers*, Preface p xxiii, Westgate Victoria, 2006

<sup>5</sup> Wright, Alan, *A Chaplain Remembers* – Extracts from speech by Gerard Cramer, Headmaster Carey, 1967, p 31

<sup>6</sup> Wright, Alan, *A Chaplain Remembers* – Foreword by Leslie O’Brien, p xiii

secondary education"<sup>7</sup>, with greater emphasis on "practical hands-on projects which place more emphasis on student experience and reflection", than purely academic and theoretical approaches. I need to acknowledge some of the great programs that are occurring in Secondary Schools and within the VET system today. Just a few of which I will mention, for example the Wesley College Year 9 program at Clunes, The Scots College Glengarry Campus, Geelong Grammar's Timbertop, and the progressive Cranbrook in the Field program at the Cranbrook School in Sydney. But I also want to continue to carry forward the argument for better structures to assist the education of youth in transition to adulthood, and for the development of the whole person rather than focusing too heavily on the cognitive. For the introduction of extracurricular activities that make secondary schooling a positive and rewarding experience for the greatest possible range of students and the opportunity for success, other than in the purely academic – not just for those fortunate enough to attend some of the those select schools, but for all our kids.

### **Inspiration - How do we help them get there?**

*We do not believe in ourselves until someone reveals that deep inside us something is valuable, worth listening to, worthy of our trust, sacred to our touch.*

*Once we believe in ourselves we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight or any experience that reveals the human spirit".*

E E Cummings

The purpose of this paper is not to further explore the systemic constraints of the secondary education system in Australia. That is certainly a relevant topic for debate however, beyond the scope of this paper. Having acknowledged that the modern competitive system is designed mainly for the attainment of academic achievement, we can move onto some fundamental principles of how to inspire the youth of today, to empower them to develop to their full potential.

### **Fundamentals of Outward Bound**

---

<sup>7</sup> Sayers, Stuart. Quoting Gerard Cramer, then Principal Carey in 1967. *By Courage and Faith: The First 50 Years at Carey Baptist Grammar School.* Melbourne: The Hawthorn Press, 1973

*"There is more in us than we know, if only we can be brought to realize this  
We may never again settle for anything less"<sup>8</sup>.*

Kurt Hahn

At the heart of Outward Bound, and I would argue, at the heart of the holistic development of our youth, are a few basic principles. Let me refer to these as the *Fundamentals of Outward Bound*. In the creation of Outward Bound, the founders "tried to analyse the roots of victory in the lives of men who had won through in life and had shown a unusual power to overcome"<sup>9</sup>. These principles are not new, as Prince Max Von Baden of the Salem School said many years ago, "In education, as in medicine, you must harness the wisdom of a thousand years". So these fundamentals are the collective wisdom harnessed by Outward Bound over the ages and applied through at least the past 50 years.

They can be summarized as:

- Adventure and Challenge
- Experience of Nature and a "Place Apart"
- Meaningful Service Projects
- Solitude and reflection

### **Adventure and Challenge – The Value of the Expedition**

When speaking with parents, teachers and potential partners these days about the value of the Outward Bound experience, we seem often to be dealing with the perception that the program is too adverse. I often ask people: When was it in your life that you learned the most about yourself and what you're capable of? Was it a time of comfort and ease, or was it during a time of difficulty? The answer is always the same, we learn the most about ourselves when we are pushed out of our comfort zones. When we are forced to explore our own values and the limits of our own

---

<sup>8</sup> Hahn, Hurt, A quote from one of the Sermons of Kurt Hahn, see KurtHahn.org

<sup>9</sup> Hahn, Hurt, Address to the Annual Meeting of the UK Outward Bound Trust, 20 July 1960 (see KurtHahn.org)

resources. Therein lies one of the fundamentals of Outward Bound and of personal development.

Outward Bound Australia uses the expedition as a fundamental learning construct and there is always an element of adversity in what we do. Joseph Conrad in one of his most beautiful passages in "Lord Jim" tells us that it is necessary for youth to experience events which "reveal the inner worth of the man; the edge of his temper; the fibre of his stuff; the quality of his resistance; the secret truth of his pretences, not only to himself but to others"<sup>10</sup>. Experience has taught me personally that expeditions can contribute greatly towards building strength of character.

Expeditions as we know are by no means universally popular, however, we should remember the wisdom of Hahn again, when he said "I am certain that it is neglect not to give the young the strength and the opportunity to overcome adversity". How many of your students do you know who willingly volunteer for programs that they know are going to provide "adversity and challenge"? Yet how many of you have "climbed mountains" with your students, amidst their complaints and discomfort, only to have them say later that whilst they didn't think so at the time it was one of the best things they've ever done?

Aside from encouraging student participation in adventurous activities, we have also today to overcome the anxiety of the parents. On many of our schools courses today the first challenge seems to be to overcome parental fears about releasing their children for an activity where they are exposed to the elements, where there is the unknown. When it is known that they may get hot, cold, dirty, not have access to showers, toilets or running water, and be without their mobile phones. I am certain you have all read articles about "the Bubble Wrap Generation", or "The Cotton Wool Brigade". These are real issues about our perceptions today of risk and responsibility. There is no easy answer but as Hahn said in 1960, "while we believe it is a sin of the soul to force any youngster into opinions, we consider it neglect not to impel everybody into health-giving experiences". I put it to you that the challenge therefore remains with us to be

---

<sup>10</sup> Conrad, Joseph, *Lord Jim*, p 53, Blackwood, UK, 1900

determined to overcome these various environmental challenges to ensure we continue to provide challenging adventures for our youth to learn about themselves and the world around them.

### Experience of Nature - a "*Place Apart*"

Outward Bound deliberately creates a place apart from the everyday distractions of life. A place where a person can pause, think and be. A place where a person can connect with the natural world around them. Today our children are exposed to a vast amount of information and stimulus, much more than any generation before them. Through the internet, email, mobile phones, SMS they are the most connected generation in history. On Outward Bound we try to create a place apart, free from the stimulus and distraction of everyday life. When they arrive on Outward Bound one of our first tasks is to separate the students from their gadgets (mobile phones, MP3's etc). This separation from day-to-day connectivity can be traumatic for some adolescents but we believe it is also crucial to the creation of the learning environment, and in the long-term to health and wellbeing.

I recently came across a book published in the US in 2006, called "Last Child in the Woods"<sup>11</sup>. In the book the author describes the various disorders now afflicting our children and uses the term "nature deficit disorder" to draw the link. His hypothesis proposes a direct link in the lack of nature in the lives of children today's children to attention disorders, depression, obesity and a host of other emotional problems. I wonder how you would respond to such a hypothesis? Perhaps there is still further scientific evidence needed to support this theory, however, exposure to nature has for a long time been a fundamental component of Outward Bound and this prognosis would come as no surprise to us.

We believe that it is important to get children out into nature – for their own benefit, but also for the benefit of the planet. Giving children access to wilderness is a gift to them. Teaching children to appreciate our natural environment at a young age creates

---

<sup>11</sup> Louv, Richard, *Last Child in the Woods* – Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder, 2006

lifelong benefit and we suggest also develops the next generation of environmental advocates. Surely at this critical time in mankind's history, with our climate changing and our natural resources diminishing, there can be no more urgent need than to educate our children on the vital importance of living in harmony with nature.

### **Solitude and reflection**

Closely aligned with the fundamental need to expose children to nature is the principle of solitude and reflection. Consistent with the knowledge that the youth of today are dealing with more information than any generation before comes the importance of creating time and space for reflection.

Core to Outward Bound is the reflective process. We believe this is fundamental to experiential learning. I am sure many of you have experienced moments at the end of a day in the field, possibly sitting around a campfire, when through de-briefing and reflection, the "lights have come on". This is often where the real learning takes place.

Continuing from the collective, or group reflection, comes individual reflection. The "solo" experience has long been a fundamental of Outward Bound. This is where we create a solo time and space for students to sit and be, with themselves and nature. During the time (anywhere from 1-2 hours on shorter OB courses to 2-3 days on the long courses) students are given questions to contemplate. These are typically used to guide the internal thought processes to help the student to reflect on their values, what they have learning on the journey, and what goals or changes they intend to make for the future.

### **Meaningful Service Projects**

Hahn said, 'There are three ways of trying to win the young. There is persuasion, there is compulsion and there is attraction. You can preach at them, that is a hook without a worm; you can say "You must volunteer," that is of the devil; and you can tell them

“You are needed”: that hardly ever fails<sup>12</sup>. Back in those early days Hahn spoke often of the need for youth involvement in the “Rescue Services”, our modern day equivalents of the Coast Guard, SES and the Surf Life Saving Association.

During the Poverty Commission inquiry into Secondary Education in Victoria in the 80s, an overwhelming need expressed by the subjects was the “desire to be someone of worth, to make a difference for good”<sup>13</sup>. This is a desire not unique to young people in Australia or of a certain generation, but one I believe to be universal and timeless, irrespective of culture.

Both Hahn and Wright focus on the need to provide activities that “fuel youthful idealism as they make a difference for good”. They suggest that by involving students in meaningful projects where they interact with their communities one can “develop their muscles of responsibility and compassion”<sup>14</sup>. Today Outward Bound maintains an element of service in all our programs to ensure that these muscles get exercised. Often the project is environmental in nature and links back to an appreciation for the environment. Aside from the Outward Bound experience there are many enterprising variations of community service being offered as part of adventure learning journeys in developing nations that we would commend. Providers of these experiences include Raleigh International, Antipodeans and World Challenge – all are growing in popularity amongst secondary schools that can afford to offer such experiences.

### **Expeditionary Learning Principles in the Classroom**

But what if you cannot create an Outward Bound like wilderness expedition? The principles of “Expeditionary Learning” can be applied anywhere and certainly are being applied in the classroom. It should be remembered that “Outward Bound was originally a short course version of what its founder, Kurt Hahn, was trying to do every day, and over a period of years, with his students at Gordonstoun and Salem, the

---

<sup>12</sup> Hahn, Kurt, Address to the Annual Meeting of the UK Outward Bound Trust, 20 July 1960 (see KurtHahn.org)

<sup>13</sup> Wright, Alan, *A Chaplain Remembers* – Introduction by Dr Ron Fitzgerald, p xi

<sup>14</sup> Wright, Alan, *A Chaplain Remembers* – Introduction by Dr Ron Fitzgerald, p x

boarding schools he headed in Scotland and Germany"<sup>15</sup>. Today using the principals of "Expeditionary Learning", the philosophy of Outward Bound can be applied back to what might be called the "long course" - everyday primary to secondary schooling.

*"There is a sense of moral purpose to the design (referring to ELOB Schools) that is beyond academic success. There is a sense of citizenship, something closer to a world view, a shared sense of our place in the world and the responsibilities that come with that. That is really powerful and is something that is largely absent today".*

Tom Vander Ark, Executive Director Education  
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

For many years educators have been taking Outward Bound courses in the wilderness and finding there a quality of teaching they could use in their own schools to improve teaching and learning. Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) draws from 60 years of crafted wisdom in the extensive professional development it provides to whole faculties in schools that decide to adopt the ELOB design. Today in the US, over 140 schools have adopted the "expeditionary learning" approach.

ELOB schools apply what we might call a project-based learning approach throughout their curriculum. Real life, hands on projects that have meaning, are used as the vehicle for learning.

As a visitor to the **ELOB** system in the US a couple of years ago, I was witness to this powerful application of the expeditionary approach to classroom teaching. Example of River Works Project – King Middle School, Portland Maine, US (see Video presentation). This was a wonderful illustration of a learning expedition that had real life application and worked across the curriculum to include, geography, history, science and maths, and gave the students invaluable experience in planning, co-ordination, research and presentation of their project's results.

---

<sup>15</sup> Farrell, Greg, *Roots - From Outward Bound to Expeditionary Learning*, 2000

For those of you unfamiliar with the ELOB approach, we would recommend a further study of its application to your environment. The ELOB approach is attached as an Annex to this paper and [www.elschools.org](http://www.elschools.org) is a principal reference.

### Other Imperatives for Teachers/Carers

#### The Gaining of Competence

As teachers and Heads of Pastoral Care I am sure you all spend a disproportionate amount of your time with children who have trouble with the system. Those less academically-able students who may well have gifts of the creative, the artistic or the hands on gifts of the craftsmen, yet because of their academic failings, feel diminished.

I put it to you that 'where there is a failure to achieve in any area that behavioural problems of a significant magnitude occur; if a child comes to believe themselves as "no hopers", the task of rehabilitation becomes formidable indeed'<sup>16</sup>. The converse is true. Our great educational goal therefore, should be to help all our kids find competence at something. "Competence is a mixture of intellectual understanding and practical skills to make a difference in any situation. When people can see and feel this capacity in themselves they feel something like, "I'm not such a clot [insert loser, no hoper etc] after all"<sup>17</sup>.

We must therefore, urge the pursuit of extra-curricular activities which offer opportunities for success, other than the purely academic, and here we must include but not limit ourselves to outdoor education.

I will not attempt in the brevity of this paper to attempt to describe the ways of helping your students to gain a sense of competence, for there are many, and this falls to the imagination of the teacher in that students particular case. However, I will stress that this is key to unlocking the inner potential, the gift of the child, for without

---

<sup>16</sup> Cramer, Gerard – *Headmasters Report* – Carey Grammar, 1967

<sup>17</sup> Wright et al, *Outcomes of Schooling*, p 105

the confidence and belief in self that comes with having felt competent at something there is little willingness or motivation to aspire to the achievement of ones higher potential.

## **Rites of Passage**

Much has been written over the years about the importance of positive Rites of Passage. I suggest to you that the thing that has become known as “Schoolies Week”, that phenomenon of unrestrained partying after finishing Year 12, is a substitute rite of passage from youth to adulthood. Schoolies Week is a result of “too many of our youth, at the most formative stages of their lives, being robbed of the intrinsic joy of learning for understanding by the institutional pressures upon them to absorb large bodies of knowledge for qualification purposes”<sup>18</sup>.

Outward Bound has for many years been recognized as a healthy rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood. In many of our long-term schools, some of whom have been incorporating OB into their school curriculum for 20 – 30 years, this rite of passage is a key part of the culture of that school. I do not claim that Outward Bound is the only way to achieve a healthy rite of passage for your students, for there are many such practices these days, however, I employ you to continue to seek to find healthy ways to help your kids mark that transition from adolescent to young adult.

## **Care, Compassion and Connectedness – *Its up to you***

Inspiring the youth of today to the achievement of their potential is a journey, not the result of any individual event or action. It comes from consistent care and compassion, from ongoing commitment to engaging with the child, beyond the classroom. From my secondary school days, I do not remember my Maths teacher, my English teacher, or even the Principal of the school. The one I remember above all was our Science teacher. Not because he was our Science teacher but because of what he gave to us outside of the classroom. It was his time and effort as our Rugby coach.

---

<sup>18</sup> Wright et al, *Student Empowerment for the few or all?* P 248

It was his time and effort in organizing and leading the end of school camps. It was the quiet words when we needed encouragement, the laughing and sharing in the successes, and the words I only much later recognized as wisdom, when we were going through our various trials and ordeals. He influenced us because he was connected to us, beyond the academic, beyond the cognitive. Influential (inspirational) teachers are those who commit to the journey and this is the simplest and most difficult thing to do.

### Conclusion – *The Journey to Inspire*

The role of parents, teachers and those charged with the care and development of our children is vital to the future health of our community. As committed professionals in this realm, yours is a daily act of leadership, compassion and faith. At Outward Bound we often provide the spark, the catalyst for growth, but it is job of the parent, the teacher and the school community to carry that spark forward so it can ignite the potential that we are seeking to develop.

The journey to inspire the youth of today is full of frustrations and challenges but also of great beauty and opportunity. This paper has outlined some of the fundamentals of Outward Bound: *Adventure and Challenge; experience of Nature and a "Place Apart"; meaningful service projects; and solitude and reflection*, and suggested most strongly that these *fundamentals* still apply. We have gone on to outline how the principles of expeditionary learning can and are being applied successfully in the classroom, and the paper has provided a model for that success using the principles of ELOB.

The paper has offered several other 'imperatives for teachers' around the *gaining of competence, rites of passage, and care, compassion and connectedness* with your students. As practitioners in the field of education you will know that there are no shortcuts. If one is committed to the development of the whole child, and to the growth of all our children, then only a full commitment contract requiring all of intellect, passion and faith will do.

Our aim in this paper has not been to offer you a new set of tricks, techniques or models that will fix our kids. Perhaps we have provided you with no new tools to assist in your work with children. However, we hope that in sharing what we believe is some of the educational wisdom of the ages, that you will be encouraged to persist and to focus on those principles we know to work.

One of the central reasons Outward Bound has been successful in inspiring youth development for so long is because of the “Light in the Eyes” of our instructors. We employ our staff less for their hard skills in the field and more for their passion and their eagerness to help others to learn and grow. They connect with their students in a way that is empowering because they are there for them, but allow the students to learn their own lessons about self, others and the environment, free of the constraints of exam-based curriculum. So too we as parents, teachers and educators have our own internal flame, the light which comes through us when passion is connected with meaningful work that we are good at. There can be no more important or meaningful work than the care and development of our children. Good luck on your journey to inspire our children to their potential.

#### Principle References:

Expeditionary Learning Schools Outward Bound - [www.elschools.org](http://www.elschools.org)

Hahn, Kurt. Various Principles and Sermons of Kurt Hahn – [www.kurthahn.org](http://www.kurthahn.org)

Conrad, Joseph. *Lord Jim*, Blackwood, Britain, 1900

Louv, Richard. *Last Child in the Woods – Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*, Algonquin Books, 2006

Wright, Alan. *A Chaplain Remembers – Lifelong Reflections on the educational and Spiritual values shaping the William Carey Chapel*. Westgate Publishing, Victoria 2006

Wright Alan. "The Light in their Eyes – About Youth" – A Report of the Investigation of Outward Bound and its significance for the Education of Youth Today, unpublished article, 1968