

Character Challenge

Skills Training Manual

Character Challenge CORE Training Notes



FROM C4 OPERATIONS MANUAL:

While some of the information contained herein may be relevant to other challenge course designs, it is intended to be used solely by staff trained

by standards used in the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) or Professional Ropes Course (PRCA).

The information in this manual may not be applicable to facilities that were not constructed by TAG (The Adventure Guild) or built/inspected to the same standards. No facilitator should depend solely on the information contained in this manual or any video supplement for their personal safety or the safety of others. Participant and staff safety depends on good judgment based on competent instruction, hands on experience and an objective assessment of each facilitator's/trainer's skill by a competent professional. Character Challenge Course CO. (C4) assumes no liability or responsibility for the use or misuse of this information. This document may contain errors due to misprints or omissions.

WARNING! ADVENTURE EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT IS DANGEROUS!

It is critical to recognize that if a challenge course staff member misinterprets a concept communicated in this manual, that staff person or another person may be seriously injured or killed as a result of that misunderstanding. Therefore the information provided in this manual and any video supplements should be used only to supplement competent personal instruction. Even after trained staff are proficient in the activities and the concepts necessary to properly operate the adventure elements at their facility, re-training / skill assessments are a safe and recommended way to maintain and raise staff skill levels, increase the standard of program delivery, and learn advanced techniques.

Ultimately, managing risk is the responsibility of the agency and each individual facilitator. Participants and program staff are responsible for their own personal safety and must follow all procedures as they were trained and in accordance with this manual. At no time should the agency or an individual facilitator change an existing policy without guidance and clearance from C4.

At no time should a staff person "wing it" with a procedure that they are unsure of. If there is ever a question, then there's not a question. The facilitator is to **STOP!!** and get clarification before proceeding. Honestly and forthrightness about what a facilitator knows or does not know lies with that facilitator.

Be Fun and BE SAFE!

Training is a continual process. The field of experiential/adventure learning is constantly growing and evolving. We change the way we play games lead initiatives. Most importantly we continually change in the realm of safety and best practices. The most effective facilitators in the field are continually learning and training in order to be best they can be at helping others learn and grow through adventure programming. They don't do this because it's required, but because it is important for maximizing our effectiveness as facilitators.

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This manual is designed to be a reference to assist you in your journey as a facilitator, not an end in itself. We at C4 encourage you to seek other sources of information that can help you improve as a facilitator. Use what works for you and your staff in your situations. Never stop learning. Stay humble and value what you can learn from other facilitators. Sometimes the very best ideas you'll encounter will come from others that you work with. Trust yourself and your instincts, and in the process don't forget to **have fun!**

Disclaimer:

This manual is intended to supplement The Adventure Guild's (TAG) training courses and should not be considered a substitute for professional facilitator training. Keep in mind that there is no substitute for common sense. Emotional and physical risks are key components of adventure learning and challenge course activities, but these risks are manageable. Managing and properly using those risks is the responsibility of the facilitator. When it's all said and done, there is no substitute for experience and ongoing learning/training.

C4 assumes no liability or responsibility for use of any information contained in this manual.

Safety is the greatest concern in our industry. We want people to have fun, meaningful experiences. But without a critical focus on all aspects of safety, that is not possible. The following information is to be used as a supplemental tool in conjunction with training performed at the Character Challenge Adventure Park. Tasks must be mastered and competency demonstrated in order to facilitate events.

We often talk about perceived risk v. actual risk – that the fear people have in adventure activities comes from perceived risk, rather than actual risk.

However, we must never, ever forget that all the activities we engage in involve very real risk. And the difference between a great, productive program and a very, very bad day for all of us is our ability to competently control the real risk.

We must all remember that people are literally putting lives in our hands when they tie in to the end of our ropes.

Once the critical issue of safety is addressed, we can then focus on leading clients into meaningful experiences whereby they can grow in some way – physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

That being said, let's dive into the CORE values.

C – Competent

- Has solid grasp of critical skills and systems appropriate to position
 - a. There are different skill sets for different roles. Competency means niche-specific competency.
- Forthright and proactive regarding personal knowledge / experience base
 - a. Know what you know, be real about what you don't
 - b. There is no shame in asking for a refresher, or saying "I'm comfortable taking this on"
- Open and enthusiastic about learning new skills, regardless of source
 - a. All of us have experiences from which everyone can benefit. And if you're humble, open and willing, you can learn something new every day that can make you a better facilitator

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- b. When you work with other staff – pay attention, listen, ask questions and be teachable.

O – Observant

- Self
 - a. Hazard Assessment
 - b. Awareness Meter
- Of Other Staff
 - a. You are the safety net for each other. Just as climbing partners watch each other and check behind one another “hey, is your harness doubled back”, you need to be diligent to watch out for each other.
 - b. When you are setting up and tearing down – watch out for each other. It’s sometimes necessary for people to set elements up alone, but if there isn’t a time press, do it as a team, with one person watching the one climbing.
- Of the Environment
- Of Participants
 - a. Be a student of people. Participants won’t often tell you when they’re really scared or in need in some way. You need to pay attention to what’s going on with them. Anticipate their emotions and engage them.
 - b. One of the age-old mantras of adventure programming is “do no harm”, and that includes emotional harm.
- Of Bystanders
 - a. People not participating in a program, or chaperones just “watching” can put themselves and participants at risk. Just know that you have to be observant of who is around you and where they are so that you can direct them out of harms way if they happen to wander into an unsafe position.
- Of The Environment
 - a. External Hazards
- Of Equipment
 - a. Condition - Inspection
- Of the Organization
 - a. Watching for the spirit of the organization

R²- Respectful and Responsible

For Self

- Come to programs with your self prepared. This includes taking care of you both during and prior to programs. I would encourage away from over-indulgence in alcohol at all times, but I’ll go beyond that to ask you to avoid seeing how many shots of Jack you can handle the night before a program.
- During a program, particularly a summer program, pay attention to yourself and what’s going on with you. Make sure you drink enough and are not getting overheated.

For Other Staff

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- This is really about being a great team member and servant-leader. It's important to realize that you are not only important to the participant, but you are also important to the team as a whole. Everyone is counting on you to not only do your particular task, and do it well, but also to bring energy, enthusiasm, and fun to the work environment.
- Take responsibility for being a blessing – a positive influence – on those around you

For Participants

- Take seriously your responsibility to not only keep your participants safe, but to do all you can to make their experience fun and meaningful.
- At the end of the day, the difference between an okay experience and a fantastic experience for people is you – plain and simple. Realize, *"hey, I'm really important to this person's experience"*

For The Environment

- Leave No Trace

For Equipment

- It's our connection to larger safety structure
- It's expensive

For the Organization

It's critical for you to know how important you are to your company

- You the ones who make the programs happen
- You the faces into which the participants look when they're scared
- You are the ones clients remember
- But never forget that your actions, or lack thereof, could create a disaster that would affect us all and require the Guild to close its doors.

E²- Enthusiastic and Engaged

- Be where you are
- Be the kind of person you'd want on the other end of your rope
- Be fun and have fun
- Names and initiative to start the training
- Move through introduction to Experiential Learning
- Staff Manual- quick but thorough (45-60 minutes)
- Short Break
- Go through COR2E2 quickly but thoroughly
- Introduce equipment.
- Cover Equipment
- Harnesses – fitting and group inspection
- Helmets
- Carabiners
- Several quick games to warm things up – Trainee volunteers
- Knots – demonstration and practice

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- a. Bowline on a bight; tie the perfect knot every time. "A not neat knot need not be tied."
- b. Clove hitch – your multi-use friend
- Knot Practice
- Review Equipment
 - a. Harnesses – fitting and group inspection
 - b. Helmets
 - c. Carabiners
- Flow Check
- Team Ladder
- Course Carrying Capacity – When a program exceeds the C3 , close calls and accident potential increases

Factors that determine the C3 :

- a. # of students vs. # of facilitators
- b. Staff experience
- c. Course design
- d. Skill, expertise, and maturity of participants
- e. Goals and preferred outcomes for program
- f. Weather

Factors that influence us to exceed the C3 :

- a. Budget / Money
- b. Inability to say no
- c. Expectations of client / participants
- d. Time
- e. Lack of Experience / knowledge
- f. Lack of Boundaries
- g. Surprises
- h. Ego
- Course Inspection: S.E.E. – Of primary importance is identifying belay cables and being able to identify if something is wrong. Learn to look at the:
 - a. Structure
 - b. Equipment
 - c. Environment

High Element Set-up and Debriefing Options

There are literally unlimited ways to debrief the high elements and each group will have teachable moments for you to capture. We always like to say "There is NO RIGHT WAY to facilitate. But there are a lot of WRONG WAYS." The biggest thing to stress at C4 is to prep the element and its safety, and then debrief it. We want to be the course that truly helps individuals to change their own lives. We are the vessel and they are the change. You get to facilitate that change within their lives. Please refer to the goals that each group has established, or if it is a recreation group, you can debrief as you see fit.

Commands: Use these CONSISTENTLY on ALL elements

1. "Can I trust you?"... "Yes you can!"
2. "Spotters ready?" "Ready."
3. "Belay team ready?" "Ready."

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4. "Climbing, falling, etc...Climb on, fall on, etc."

*Use these at each element and we are all guilty of rushing, but this helps with accountability, a personal contract, communication, trust, and ownership .

CHALLENGE COURSE FLOW CHECK PROCEDURE

- Pass out all equipment to participants. Use onesie harnesses, yellow tether and confirm each tether is equipped with SSB and zip pulley. If appropriate for timing, assist participants properly attach their tethers by creating a girth hitch.
- Assist with training participants going through the practice course. Explain the process AND explain briefly all elements, tips and tricks. Reminders: Don't grab cable, no more than 3 participants on a platform, no jumping or horseplay.
- When participant is next in line, take their SSB and adjust the length clip accordingly. For all adults and ESPECIALLY heavier guests, confirm that the tether length is as short as possible. LOCK SSB onto right BEFORE beginning the flow check. Perform a flow check. Finish by checking the SSB on the right "**1-2-3 locked, loaded and ready to climb**".

Must Do:

1. Facilitate practice course
2. Fit all participants properly
3. Coach & support participants with their device while on course

Process:

1. *After participants are over to the start of the course, have them quasi-form a line.*
2. *Instruct them on the 4 types of elements.*
 - a. Burma Bridge
 - b. Postman's Walk
 - c. Jungle Line Traverse
 - d. Indiana Jones Bridge
3. *Instruct participants on proper way to climb.*
 - a. As they climb they should keep their hands on staples and use their legs to climb.
 - b. Explain that once they get to the top, they will see the white tether with green o ring. They need to connect that first. "Go to Green". For kids, we use the term "eat the donut".
4. *Go through 4H's*
 - a. Helmet- Direct participants to shake their heads up and down and side to side. Have them open their mouths (to check tightness of chin strap). Adjust as needed. Helmet should fit an inch over their eyebrows and be straight. After you have confirmed that it fits, indicate "Your helmet fits properly".
 - b. Heart- Ask the participant how he/she is feeling. Connect and relate. Relationships!
 - c. Harness- Ask participants if you can take a look at their harness. Be aware of any dangling objects.
 - i. MAKE SURE THEIR SWEATSHIRT/JACKET IS NOT TUCKED INTO THEIR HARNESS.

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- ii. Ask them to perform the 2 finger test. They should stick their pointer and index finger into the side of their harness and give it a twist. (Fingers should overlap if harness is properly fitted)
- iii. Harness should be above their hips.
- iv. If participant is larger and you are not comfortable with their regular harness, they may need a shoulder harness.
- v. Double check all of the straps and leg loops for tightness.
- vi. After checking the harness, tell participant "Your harness fits properly"
- d. Hardware- Double check that their tether and SSB go through their belay loop to create a "girth hitch".
 - i. Zip pulley and carabiner should be attached to red equipment loop.
 - ii. Take the SSB and attach/lock it on to the green key ring. **MAKE SURE THE SSB IS LOCKED.** Do this by checking it and say "1-2-3 locked and loaded".
 - iii. Make sure the slack is taken out of the tether so that in case they slip, it will not be as far.
 - iv. Tell them that they are ready to climb. Instruct that when this is said, they should ask "May I climb", then say "Climb on".
 - v. Pull ALF system rope to keep their knot and SSB above them at all times.

**Make sure to over explain the process for the first transition. This will make everything go smoother and will keep you from needing to climb to do an intervention.*

ZIP SEND PROCEDURE

- When the participant arrives at the zip launch have them move from the ring key on the backside of the tree to the ring key on the zip launch side of the tree. **They will stay attached to this ring until they are ready to be sent off the zip – remove it last!**
- **AS STAFF, ALWAYS BE SURE YOU ARE ATTACHED!**
- Loosen the tether if needed on belay connector lanyard.
- Attach the belay connector (SSB) to the cable and lock with exit key. Leave the ring connected and locked until ready to launch.
- Attach the participant's pulley/carabiner to the cable between yourself and the belay connector. This will alleviate runaway pulleys.
- Loosen the tether on the zip pulley lanyard.
- Connect the pulley/carabiner to the zip pulley lanyard. If needed, use of the step will allow the participants to step up higher so that the zip tether can be properly tensioned.
- Lift the belay connector (SSB) that is attached to the cable up into the notch on the pulley.
- Loosen the lanyard on the belay connector side to allow the pulley to track straight on the cable. If the pulley sits at an angle the lanyard is too short and should be loosened.
- Demonstrate steering using the carabiner in the pulley.
- **WE WANT PARTICIPANTS COMING IN STRAIGHT!** This will lessen the likelihood of injury on the other side and increase the enjoyment for the participant.
- Instruct the participants where to place their hands. Their right hand **MUST** be holding the caribiner and the left **MUST** be holding their tether. No exceptions! Their hands should not touch the zip cable.
- Tell participant to zip in sitting position and that when they approach the landing deck ramp they will need to put their feet down and walk or run themselves up the ramp to meet the waiting guide.

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- An example of instructions could be, **“Your carabiner is like a steering wheel. If you turn it to the right (demonstrate), your body will come back to the left. If you move it to the left, your body will come back to the right. After you step off the platform, keep your knees up in a tuck position like a cannon ball. Sit back in your harness. Don’t grab the cable above you and don’t flip upside down. When you get to the other side, listen to guide for instructions. Keep your feet up and run when you get to the platform.”**
- Radio for “clear” on zipline saying “ziplane clear?”. Wait for receipt of “clear” response from staff.
- At that point, release the ring from the belay connector and instruct the participant that they are free to zip. Count down with enthusiasm **“3-2-1 zipline!”**
- **For Facilitators: DO NOT RIDE zip line down if you are wearing a Zorber. This device makes the tether too long. The Zorber should be used for zip exit as well as assisting on the course.**

ZIP EXIT PROCEDURE

- **Ensure that you are always attached to zip line with caribiner. Then, attach extender rope. This will allow the staff to come down the platform ramp but prevent you from slipping towards the zip line participant.** When participant approaches platform, instruct them to keep their feet up. If they are coming in backwards, this becomes even more important. Say **“Keep Your Feet Up! Keep your feet up!”**
- Stand in a position which can be effective depending on the participant zipping. For example, for a young person who is light, staff will need to stand closer to the edge of the platform if they do not make it. You can also pull down on the wire to help participant come in closer to you.
- For heavier participants, use the braking technique. This is done by standing half way down the platform. Stand to the side. When participant comes in, their zip pulley and brake block and will connect with the staff carabiner slowing them down.
- **After participant arrives, verbally connect with them regarding their experience.**
- Slide the participant SSB off from zip pulley. (keep it locked on zip line)
- Take off SSB. Place it on the green key ring that is attached to the ALF system rope and lock it. Show them how the SSB works so that they can take it off at the bottom of the ladder and tell them there is a key attached to the ladder that they will place in the open side of the SSB.
- Take the slack out of their tether.
- Next, remove their zip pulley and caribiner and attach it to their red equipment loop.
- Instruct participants how to climb down.
- **“You can step onto these staples and climb down the same way you climbed up using the ALF system. (or for larger or smaller participants, have them sit down) When you get to the bottom, use the key to place in the open side of the SSB to unlock yourself. You can disconnect when you get to the 2nd rung from the bottom. As you walk, please take care to not drag your SSB in the dirt. When you get back to the office, please remove your tether in the same way you put it on, but in reverse. Please don’t take the knots apart. If you have questions, please find a staff member. If you are participating in other elements, please leave your harness on but remove your SSB system. Thank you for joining us!”**

GIANT SWING

Set-up:

1. Verify that the swing landing area is providing enough clearance for the swing participant.

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2. Set up all twist lock carabiners onto the pull rope.
3. Attach triple locking steel carabiners to cable tether.
4. Once participants arrive, provide instructions. The more clear these instructions are, the quicker the process will go throughout their rotation.

"I will have one of you step out and we will perform our flow check. Once complete, we will have you step onto the 4th or 5th rung of the ladder. I would whoever is on deck and in the hole to be out here as well as they will assist with the ladder. Once the participant is on the ladder, I will be attaching these two carabiners to the back of their harness. As they step down the ladder, your body will want to swing forward so keep your hands on the ladder to slowly lower yourself. This will not be the most comfortable position of the day. Once you step off ladder, I will hand you this pull cord. Keep it loose in your hand until you get to the top. At that point, you will tighten it and we will all count down saying '3-2-1 Power!' You will then pull that cord forward releasing you from the rope. Before we go, the participant will ask their team an important question saying "Belay team can I trust you". After they have stepped off ladder, have your assistants move the ladder all the way to the pole and have them stand out of the swing lane,

After the person has released and they are in their swing, belay team begin walking back right away."

Remember: **KEEP SWING LANE CLEAR AT ALL TIMES. DO NOT** let anyone walk in front of the swing, no matter how high the participant is. **DO NOT** attempt to slow down the participant too quickly. **DO NOT** grab hands or arms of participant. Grab shoes, or give hi fives as they swing back and forth. You can use other participants but confirm they understand to keep distance. Supervise closely.

1. Participant puts on waist and chest harness. Staff complete a flow check.
2. Detail the roles of the participant, the team and the call out. Discuss additional roles such as ladder spotter, harnessing assistant, and cheer team.
3. Minimum of 6 people on the belay team. Belay team can either wear the swing harness or the black seat harness. Belay team clips into their blue belay loop with the twist lock or screw gate carabiner. The belay team tightens up the slack and waits for the facilitator's instructions.
4. One participant stands next to the ladder to remove it after the participant is hoisted into the air.
5. Participant walks to the ladder and faces the facilitator that completes a flow check. One triple lock carabiner is placed on the back of the chest harness belay loop and two triple lock carabiners are placed on the waist belay loop. Be sure to check them "1, 2, 3...locked and loaded."
6. Participant receives a demonstration on how to hold the pull rope loosely in their right hand.
7. Participant faces the belay team and states, "Can I trust you?" Belay team responds "Yes you can!" Facilitator states "Dig Deep" and the participant states "Rise up." (Ladder is removed from the swing lane at this point).
8. Belay team walks backward as the participant is being lifted.
9. Facilitator should keep the black tether rope away from participant's legs.
10. Once facilitator calls "swing lane clear" to look around to verify that there are no people (or animals!) inside the fenced boundary.
11. Once participant is at the stop point of the pulley, belays stops and participant is instructed to tighten pull rope in their right hand. Participant and belay team state "3...2...1...Power" and pulls the rope to release them from the belay team.
12. Once the participant swings, allow them to swing 5-6 times, and then instruct them to cross their feet, and let them know that you will be slowing them down.

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13. On their back swing, gently catch them behind their knees to slow them some. DO NOT grab their legs/feet all at once or cause them to spin wildly. Once they have slowed some, grab legs/feet (NOT ARMS/HANDS) to bring them to a stop.
14. Once they have been stopped, pull up the step block or ladder, have them step up onto it, disconnect their carabiner, and assist them back to the ground.

***With a younger group, giving each participant a "Title" is a great way to get everyone involved and to make sure they are a PART of the experience. Here are some ideas:

"Flight Consultant":	This person helps to harness
"Landing Gear Technician":	Helps with Ladder
"Flight Crew":	For small swing only, helps with slow down
"Communication Specialist"	Says "swing lane clear", could lead the "3-2-1 Power" chant
"Special Forces"	This is the belay team

LEAP OF FAITH

Set-up: Use pull cord to set up standard belay and connect belay device to eye bolt on belay anchor tree with a locking steel carabiner

Objective: Participant climbs the pole, stands on top and jumps, either to grasp or touch the trapeze.

Safety Concerns:

1. Due to the stress placed on the shoulders when catching the trapeze, it's important to warn participants of the possibility of injury in this manner during the activity briefing. Most people who do not have a history of shoulder weakness, surgery, or injury do fine with catching the trapeze, and actually getting to grab the trapeze adds something significant to the experience of the element. However, participants who have a history of shoulder issues, or who would prefer, can simply jump out and touch the trapeze.
2. Unlike some other challenge course elements, the leap of faith can produce some hair raising falls when participants lose their balance while stepping up onto the pole. A diligent, snug (not tight) belay is critical for this element.
3. Due to the pendulum action of the element, participants swing backward in the direction of the leap pole. Participants should be reminded of the proximity of the pole when they are being held on the belay rope and lowered so that they can put a hand/foot out should they come close to the pole. The vast majority of participants don't come near enough to the pole to contact it.
4. Flow check each participant. Make sure carabiner travels through both chest and sit harness. Attach belay side carabiner through anchor in base of tree.
5. Before participants climb, say **"You are going to climb to the top of this pole. Once you get to the top, I am going to ask you to tell me a goal that you have for your life. (could be for the season if it is a team) The goal cannot be to reach the bar and it can't be to not die!. Also, as you step toward the top, do not grab the rope. This is a safety risk."**
6. Once a participant reaches the top, ask for their goal. Be willing to talk them through each step. After having stated their goal, say **"Paying off debt is a great goal. Reaching that goal is going to take hard work and commitment. Its also going to take faith. The bar represents**

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your goal. I'm going to count down and when I get to 1, commit to reaching your goal. Get yourself ready. Are you ready? Ok, 3-2-1 commit!"

7. When debriefing, focus on the experiences from the participant's perspective. Also, discuss the importance of **not** grabbing the rope. Part of it is safety, the other part is seeing that participants can accomplish the goal on their own, even when it feels like they can't.

TEAM LADDER

Equipment: Two dynamic belay setups, extra locking steel carabiners **Set-up:**

1. Hang the lower section of the ladder to upper section with the provided 1/2" rapid links
2. Use pull cords to set up two dynamic belay ropes
3. If using a facilitator belay, use standard dynamic belay setups
4. If using the group "plowhorse" belay, tie a bowline on a bight on the

belay side of the rope, opposite the participant bowline, and then tie two more clove hitches to locking steel carabiners roughly 2' apart behind the bowline. An alpine knot or butterfly can also be used.

1. Attach at least the first 3 members of the belay team to the belay side of the rope with locking steel carabiners through the bowline and clove hitches, connecting the carabiners to the belay loop of each harness. Adjust the clove hitches so that the belay team can stand comfortably behind one another without an inordinate amount of slack between them.
2. The rest of the belay team holds the waist belt of the person in front of them with one hand and the rope with the other. The last person in the belay line butterfly coils the rope and keep it off the ground.

Objective: Partners work together to ascend a giant ladder with rungs that are spaced progressively further apart.

Safety Concerns:

1. Due to the stretch in dynamic climbing rope, a tight belay is important for the start of this activity. A spotter may also be used to protect participants as they ascend the first rung
2. When lowering, participants must be warned to watch the rungs of the ladder as they are lowered. The bottom of the ladder can also be pulled away from the participants while they lower
3. Participants should not be allowed to use the support cables to ascend or move around the end of the support cables to reach the other side of the element

COMMITMENT BRIDGE

Equipment: Two dynamic belay setups

Set-up: Use pull cords to set up two standard traversing element belays

Objective: This is a high course version of the Wild Woozy where two participants lean on each other in an effort to go as far as they can across diverging foot cables.

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Safety Concerns: Generally a snug (not tight) belay is wise for this element since the participants are leaning toward each other. Good communication between the belayer and participant regarding an anticipated fall is also good practice on this element where the participant is leaning out past the overhead anchor point.

Dynamic Duo

Equipment: True Blue Auto Belay, Harness, helmet

Objective: Participant must climb the pole using staples. Standing on the top and telling the group a goal.

Safety Concerns: Ensuring the participant(s) steps off the side they climbed and that when they swing back towards the pole we remind them “watch out for the swing back” to ensure they do not bump the pole. Lastly, if using a team belay, ensuring that the rope is tight enough and that the team is locked on and focused on the climber. When doing the flow check, always confirm that the rope is not twisted on either side and that it goes cleanly through the anchor. Untwist the auto belay as needed (typically every 2-3 participants)

1. Provide instructions: The goal of this challenge is to climb to the top of this pole. You can climb at the same time as your partner but only one of you can be on the top of the pole at a time. If you are climbing on this side, make sure not to touch the carabiner as it could slip out of your hand and retract into the device.

If you are on the team belay side, you will ask your belay team “Team, can I trust you?” At that point they will say “Yes you can” and begin tightening the rope.

2. When you get to the top, use a variety of strategies to get yourself standing on the platform. At this point, tell the group a goal you have (for your life, school year, team, etc.) Next, say “3-2-1 commit!” And step off the pole (on the same side you climbed up on) You will notice you will swing away from the pole and then back towards the pole. When you are swinging back towards the pole, simply put your hand or foot out to make contact and not hit your head.

Milk Crates

Equipment: True Blue Auto Belay, Harness, milk crates

Objective: Participant must climb the tree using hand holds as high as possible in a given time period. Use 3-4 others in a group for team affect.

Safety Concerns: Be sure that the area is clear around the tree climb so that when the participant descends, all people are safe. This is critical as the crates get taller.

1. Instruct participant to put on seat harness with black or blue belay loop and a helmet.
2. Facilitator performs flow check as listed above.
3. Attach the carabiner from the True Blue Auto Belay to the belay loop of the participant and check it...1..2..3..locked and loaded.
4. Facilitator explains that participant uses their hands and feet to grab the holds on each crate. They can go up or down as fast or as slow as they want. When they are prepared to descend,

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instruct them to sit back in their seat harness and keep their feet on the tree. They can hold the tether attached to them that is part of the True Blue Auto Belay. Remind participants to lean away and push the stacked crates.

5. Participant & team may climb/stacking.

INTERVENTION AND RESCUE

Equipment: Rescue Backpack containing rescue rope, 1 steel screw gate carabiner, 1 steel triple lock carabiner.

INTERVENTION/LOWER-OFF PROCEDURE

From a platform

It may be that the participant is tired or scared and does not want to continue on the course or may be afraid to ride the zip line. In any case, they are able to move on their own accord, follow directions, can keep their weight off their belay lanyard, and are standing on a platform. In any non-critical situation, it's always helpful to get the participant to a platform if at all possible. Sometimes it isn't, and that's fine. But if you can, do so.

1. Have participant get in comfortable position on the platform that gives you space to work, and transfer them to one of the green ring keys. If not, use a screw gate carabiner and attach to overhead wire when participant is on the element. Be cautious as the carabiner and weight of the participant may slide or pull to the middle of the element.
2. Take rescue rope out of backpack and use walkie talkie to ask for second staff. If staff on the ground is unavailable, radio the zip exit staff to finish last participant and come to assist. If this is an emergency, let course director and all staff know immediately.
3. Attach triple lock carabiner with rope to participant going through their belay device and be sure the rope is running cleanly through the anchor point. (either screw gate carabiner or a rapid link)
4. Lower rope to the ground for staff to belay.
5. Staff on the ground and on the top should flow check for safety.
6. Once on belay, detach participant from SSB system on the wire and place on their red equipment loop.
7. In case of an emergency, use knife to cut tether. ALWAYS attempt to detach SSB without cutting.
8. When on belay, staff should communicate with one another and talk participant through safety steps as they are lowered to the ground.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS RELATED TO GOAL

1. **Level of involvement and commitment** - some individuals being uninvolved, passive, and not contributing to group decision making - either because they are left out or they hold back

- a. Are vital or "hero" roles being dominated by a few?

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- b. Are decisions being made by a few?
- c. What is the individual's and the group's responsibility for changing this.

2. Group climate

- a. Is communication open and participatory or closed and guarded?
- b. Is support and encouragement provided for all?
- c. Is the expression of feelings recognized and accepted?

3. Conflicts

- a. How are conflicts expressed?
- b. Are disagreements being passed over?
- c. Were you afraid at any time? How did you deal with your fear?

4. Reinforcement of gender stereotypes (particularly around physical strength)

- a. Men deciding to or being asked to: go first or last or do all the lifting (gender issues also in leadership)
- b. What did you learn about someone else that you didn't know before?

5. Organization and planning

- a. How did you discuss, plan, and carry out your solution?
- b. Who planned the event
- c. Who's job was it to coordinate efforts
- d. What contributed to this...?
- e. What things did you consider in reaching your solution?
- f. Share your perspectives for your approach to the solution.
- g. How many ideas were required to solve the problem?
- h. How were your ideas for the solution shared?
- i. How did you account for all group members in achieving your goal?
- j. Did you utilize all of the available resources?
- k. Who contributed to the success of the group? Did you recognize the contributors?
- l. Did you use your time effectively?
- m. How would you do it different next time?

6. Leadership

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- a. Who was the leader/s?
- b. Where they the intended leader?
- c. How did they become the leader?
- d. How are they leading? (Due to physical strength or agility, loud voice, confident speaker, best ideas,)
- e. How many are involved?

- f. How did the leadership change during the challenge? Why?

- g. How does the group feel about its leader's leadership style?
- h. Is the approach democratic, is it involving of others?

7. Communication

- a. How well did you communicate?
- b. In what ways did you communicate well?
- c. Did everyone clearly understand the solution?
- d. How could you tell?
- e. How effective is the communication in your group

8. Expressing Feelings

- a. So what did you learn today?
- b. How do you feel about the way the group is working together?
- c. How effective do you feel your group is?
- d. How invested are you in your group
- e. What feelings did you experience during the activity?
- f. How many different feelings did you have during the activity?
- g. What is a feeling?
- h. What caused those feelings?
- i. Which of these feelings are good? Bad? (Neither -they are simply your feelings)
- j. Where in your body do you feel?
- k. How do those feelings cause you to act?
- l. How can you tell what other people are feeling?
- m. How can you deal with your feelings most positively? (Identify; Accept; Express)
- n. How can you best express your feelings to others?
- o. Is the feeling that you experienced here today one that you commonly feel in life?

9. **Reflect** – —What does that mean to youll or —How will you be different from that?ll

ACTIVITIES INCORPORATING ACTIVE PROCESSING/DEBRIEFING

What...So What...Now What

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There is often resistance and a hesitancy to speak up in a debrief. It may be easiest to get people talking first about:

What:

- What happened?
- Who did what?
- Who was last, who was first, who suggested ideas, who were the leaders, whose idea was used?
- When the group seemed stuck, what happened that got the group moving again?
- Were there times when there was a general group feeling of frustration, euphoria, etc.?
- As a group, what were you especially good at, where could you improve?

So what:

- How do you feel about your own or the group's performance?
- What significant issues did you notice? (Or you can ask about specific issues- see below)

Now what:

- In the next initiative what do you want to do differently based on what you've learned?
- In your troop or school (or where ever), how can you apply these lessons?

Dyads Processing (Think, Pair, Share)

At the end of the activity, ask each person to find a partner with whom they did not work during the activity. Ask them to share two or three specific observations about the activity with one another. You can do this as you move from one activity location to another. Upon arriving at your destination, ask them to share the similarities and differences about their discussions with the larger group.

Thumbs-Up

Upon the completion of an activity, ask the group a specific question such as:

- Do you feel that the group worked together as a team?
- Do you feel that the group communicated well during this activity?
- Did you feel like you were a part of the planning process?
- Or ask questions that specifically relate to the group.
- After you ask this question, the participants should answer with a thumbs-up, thumbs-to-the-side, or thumbs-down in relation to how true they feel the answer is to them individually. A discussion may take place regarding the different thumb positions—simply ask why they answered that way.

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Funneling This is a more targeted or direct way to apply the "what, so what, now what" to specific issues that seem important at the time.

Filter 1: Get examples of whatever issue you want to look at.

- Can someone remember a particular instance of effective _____? (Communication, for example).
- Can you recall a time when....?

Filter 2: Look at the effect of the behavior or occurrence.

- What impact did this have (or how did this affect) on the group (or on an individual)?
- How did this make people feel?

Filter 3: Generalize/ Summarize

- What can you generalize (summarize) about effective _____ (communication) from this situation?
- Can you sum up what you have learned here about _____?

Filter 4: Application

- Do you see a connection between this learning and your "real" life?
- Can you apply this learning in any way?

Filter 5: Commitment

- What will you do differently at home, work, or play?
- Can you commit to making a specific change?

Full Value Contract Activities

1. Be here - Be present mentally, physically, and emotionally
2. Be safe - Create a level of safety so that people are able to relax and feel comfortable.
3. Speak the truth - Share your thoughts and opinions openly and honestly

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4. Pay attention - Listen to what others say and focus on understanding their ideas.
Minimize distractions
5. Be open to outcomes - Try not to prejudge what is happening. Recognize your preconceived notions about what you will learn or experience
Other places may add to it:
6. Set goals – focus on your achievement, and carry tasks through to completion
7. Let go of negatives – Release yourself from negativities (in CPT E's terms, use some leadership over your mouth
8. Care for self and others – help one another in all situations

The Play-Fair Full Value Contract

Play-Fair asks everyone to:

1. Play Hard (be involved, give it your best)
2. Play Fair (be respectful and considerate of others)
3. Play Safe (lookout for your own and other's safety)

Commitments

Another option is to ask the group to develop the guidelines themselves, such as ask participants for five commitments. "What types of guidelines for expected behavior would be helpful today?" Help the group brainstorm and choose from the ideas generated. This approach has been particularly effective with youth groups.

The Be-Attitudes

The Be-Attitudes can be used similar to any active Full Value Contract briefing. It consists of participants listing, on one side of a paper or board what they would like to "be" at the end of the program. The other side, the attitude side, is where the participants will list the attitudes that they will reflect during the entirety of the program. Due to this model's similarity to Christian values, this will only be used for specific religious groups. (Adventure Experience, Technical Skills Training Manual, modified with commentary)

C4 Team Member Facilitation Reference Guide

Initiatives are where the real group development and team building occurs. The group of participants is faced with a problem that they must overcome together. Initiatives cannot be completed from a single person's extraordinary effort (that doesn't stop people from trying). We've listed a bunch of initiatives that we like but by no means do you have to do them in the way we

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suggest here. If you have a creative idea for a new way to approach an initiative GREAT! However, any new ideas you try must be safe and in accordance with your local operating procedures.

A RECIPE for Great Initiatives

(i.e., what's happening in a successful initiative.)

1. Is it a FUN task? Intriguing, challenging and with an element of adventure?
2. Does its design require EVERYONE in the group to CONTRIBUTE and be involved in order to achieve success? (ALL PARTICIPATE)
3. Does it require PLANNING and coordination of some ACTION sequence involving physical movement? (EXPERIENTIAL)
4. Does the challenge call upon MENTAL, PHYSICAL, and EMOTIONAL talents and resources from the group? (HOLISTIC)
5. Can you ADJUST THE LEVEL of challenge mid-stream to fine-tune it to the group's dynamic goals?
6. Is the activity SAFE, including effective support systems in the group and allowing for you to interrupt if necessary to maintain that safety zone?

Facilitator's OUTLINE (steps) when Presenting Initiatives

(Prepped behind the scenes, before the group arrives:)

1. What PROPS (if any) are required? (i.e., Rope, bucket, blindfolds, etc.)
(The following is explained to the group after they have arrived):
2. What is the NAME of the initiative?
3. What is the OBJECTIVE of the initiative? (i.e., What action/event must be accomplished in brief terms?)
4. What is the STORYLINE to the initiative? (i.e., How can you present the challenge in a way that is pertinent metaphorically; Isomorphically? If the facilitator can be in tune with the parallel processing of the participant's own lives, s/he can assist in the creation of dynamics in the initiative that are truly exciting because they are so on target.)
5. What are the GROUND RULES? (i.e., How much time, what props are allowed, what conditions are ok, etc.)
6. What are the SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS if any? (i.e., No more than one person can cross at once, spotting is essential, two hands up at all times on the Wall, etc.)
7. What DEBRIEF/REFLECTION questions would you offer that will guide the group to insights and create (transfer) commitment to action in their own lives?

5 Questions to Consider:

1. Did you notice?
2. Why did this happen?
3. Does it happen in life or in school?
4. Why, why, why why?
5. How can you use this?

As mentioned earlier, creating the proper sequence of activities based on the needs and makeup of the group is an important part of effective facilitation. It is also an important tool in protecting a group Physically, Emotionally, and Socially. Generally, we don't want to begin our adventure experience with the most difficult event of the day! By using tasks of increasing difficulty with a group, the leader has the opportunity to build confidence within the members of the team. Slowly moving from activities of low / no physical contact, low social commitment, and low emotional risk to activities with increasing amounts of each, we effectively help a group push their boundaries and comfort zones so that they can learn from their experience. Proper sequencing also helps the leader assess the group, get to know them, and helps the group accomplish their objectives.

Developing a good sequence

There are deep and involved models for sequencing, the discussion of which is beyond the scope of this manual. The simple concept to keep in mind is that individuals and groups need time to warm up to you as the facilitator, to the activities, and to each other. They need to move from "distance" to "proximity", and that happens through a series of activities that intentionally moves them along that continuum. Each group is different, and part of a facilitator's role is to assess the group in order to put together a proper sequence for them. However, some generalizations can be made about what makes a good sequence.

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Generalized Sequence Template (Team Building and Low Ropes)

- Ice Breakers and Get Acquainted Activities (I): these activities help people get to know one another, learn names, and generally warm up to the group experience. At the outset FUN is a critical component. Moving around and being active is a good place to start.
- Low Level Team Building (L): these activities include activities that move the group toward working together to accomplish a specific goal or goals. These activities may involve some measure of physical contact as well as some emotional / social risk (i.e. being willing to look a little silly in front of the group), but in these activities the commitment is small.
- Higher Level Team Building (H): In these activities, physical, emotional, and social risk increase. The team is called upon to communicate effectively, support each other, give input / feedback, and be in physical contact that may include lifting, appropriately touching, and / or supporting each other.

Some activities can bridge categories simply by altering the rules or framing of the activity. The most important thing to remember in sequencing is that we move from distance to proximity, from easy to more difficult, from individual effort to group effort, from “me” to “us”. If you build your sequence on those simple concepts, you’ll never be far afield.

For an in-depth and more specifically developed treatment of sequencing, see the classic adventure learning text *Islands of Healing* by Jim Shoel, Dick Prouty, and Paul Radcliffe.

Facilitation Tips and Techniques

Techniques for Modifying Activities

Sometimes, based on what’s happening with a group, it is necessary to alter an activity. Sometimes a group will blast through an activity that you were sure would challenge them, and others will surprise you by how difficult an activity is for them. Paying close attention to the group and how they are responding will help you assess whether an activity should be altered. However, there is the temptation to alter an activity too quickly in order to help a group succeed. Struggle and frustration is part of the learning process.

Making events easier:

Each event can be made easier: you may give a group an additional rope or allow a generous number of “mistakes” or falls off an event, move boundaries to make them smaller or closer, or allow participants to help in ways that would not usually be in the “rules.” Remember: You do not want to give people the idea that you are making things easier because they are inferior. It is better to start easy and modify the event to make it more difficult, than to start too hard and patronize them by making it easier.

Making events harder:

It is ok to modify an event to increase the difficulty because a group performs very effectively together. Examples include: reverse roles; make all or some of the group mute (a particularly good idea if some of the members have done the events before and “know the secrets”); make all or a few of the participants “blind” (use blind folds or ask them to close their eyes-honor system!); “handicap” by not allowing some members to use an arm or leg; add physical obstacles: have the group reverse or go backwards. Use your imagination!

A creative way to approach altering an activity while it is underway is to utilize a technique made popular by ERI, called “Something Strange and Wonderful”. “Something strange and wonderful” is a tremendous tool. It seems that in the early days of challenge course programming anytime a group made a mistake during the course of an activity the only remedy was to begin again. That made for some frustrating times. Consider instead, something “strange and wonderful”. You can decide if a consequence is going to be “strange” or “wonderful”. Let the group decide if they want to begin again or take a chance with something “strange and/ or wonderful”. It can be anything you or the group decides. You can tether participants, give one or two a temporary case of laryngitis, give someone a free pass to the end of the activity, make talkers become listeners, or just about anything you can think of. Just remember to keep safety in mind.

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Another great idea is to prepare “strange and wonderful” cards ahead of time. Write out scenarios on cards with an appropriate consequence. In keeping with the theme of “strange and wonderful” some of the consequences on the cards are more challenging (or strange) and some are less (or wonderful.) Explain that not all mistakes lead to bad things. Every once in a while a mistake can lead to a wonderful discovery.

Risk (to be applied on trust fall especially, but is applicable for all activities at Challenge Course

Look for the following risks throughout the activity, and be prepared to facilitate accordingly:

Social risk is present in the faller’s perception of his/herself within the group prior to, during, and resulting from the activity. Do they really care about me and want to hear what I have to say? How will they perceive me based on the information I share? What if I don’t fall “right”?—what will they think of me then?

Emotional risk is often connected to the individual’s emotional reaction to such things as his role within the group, prior history (empowering or disempowering) with the group, sensitivity to the information he is willing to share, and sensitivity to the information shared by others. Participants will occasionally hold back or step back from information that begins to evoke an emotional reaction. Some will share “too much” information—more than the group is ready to handle.

Physical risk at the challenge course exists from beginning to end. From the moment the participant being the activity until she is safely back on the ground, potential for physical harm exists. The most frequent incidents reported during this activity occur during the physical fall and involve either the faller reaching out to protect herself while falling and accidentally striking one of her teammates in the head or face; or the receiving line failing to catch the faller, allowing him to fall through to the ground. Stories shared by participants who have experienced either of these reflect the degree to which they can be physically and emotionally traumatic.

Facilitator’s Role

The facilitator’s role throughout low elements is multi-layered and demanding. Factors to consider when determining whether to bring your group to Trust Fall include

- Is there a value placed on truly open and honest dialogue and vulnerability within the group?
- Who is in the group? What layers of authority or accountability are present?
- How do the group members appear to care about and interact with each other?

Observation and direction throughout the activity are essential. Remember:

- Be aware of levels of risk as experienced by participants and reactions to that risk.
- Focus on the participants engaging in dialogue with their faller. It is easy for the focus of the conversation to shift away from the faller to other individuals as they are reminded of their own experiences.
- Take note of the energy of the participants—are they staying actively and honorably engaged with the faller, especially as the activity progresses?
- Monitor the individuals and group continuously using visual, auditory, empathic, and intuitive listening. If anything raises a cautionary flag, you must intervene. Interventions will vary depending on the situation and should always seek to determine the source and depth of risk involved, as well as the best direction to pursue for both the individual(s) and the group.

Debrief and frequently includes in-the-moment facilitation, extensive debriefing following the activity is often not needed. This approach may last between four and five hours for a group of twelve, and time and energy may not be conducive to a long debrief. Throughout the activity, you can look for verbal and nonverbal cues to step in and facilitate in the moment. After each physical fall, assuming the fall and arrest happen without incident, you can invite a quick check-in about that experience. In the event of an incident, the facilitator should debrief the situation as soon as is appropriate and prior to moving on (if continuing the activity is in order).

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C4 Team Member Daily Task Checklist

Before Program:

1. Set up Office
 - A. Turn on TV & Apple TV. Sync with iCloud for photos/video
 - B. Turn on music using iPod. Use discretion on volume.
 - C. Cue iPads. Make sure Safari is open and only 2 tabs used (Waiver & Trip Advisor)
2. Pull Ropes
3. Ensure there is cash in drawer (go to Eagle Beach for change if necessary)
4. Clean Privy & Public Restroom
 - (A) Shake Rugs
 - (B) Sweep floor, Clean sink & toilet
 - (C) Windex seated areas (gloves located in red bin)
 - (D) Refill Toilet Paper and hand sanitizer
 - (E) Spray Lysol/air freshener
 - (F) Use drop ins/RV as needed
 - (G) Make notes of anything supplies needed
5. Walk the course and lows for sticks/pine cones/garbage
6. Blow Leap platform and swing platform
7. ***Greet guests with TREMENDOUS enthusiasm!*** Make this their best day ever!

During Program:

1. Communicate needs: help with flow check, schedule, etc as needed
2. We trust you! Safety concerns, ask for help! We want you to know you are the go-to for your group!
3. Safety and Communication Codes:
 - (A) Code ***Autumn***: Signifies a “fall” or emergency needing IMMEDIATE Assistance
 - (B) Code ***Misty***: Signifies a oversized/overweight participant. Need help talking to them “Misty Mountain harness”
 - (C) Code ***Clara***: Signifies minor scrape/injury. Follow-up required but not immediate. “Clara Barton- founder of Red Cross”
 - (D) Code ***Dennis***: Signifies a frustrated guest “Dennis the Menace”

After Program:

1. Remind guests about Trip Advisor
2. Fill out Google Sheets participant log (MAKE SURE TO mark how they heard about us)
3. Sweep office and gear shed
4. Check garbages in office, under picnic shelter and course
5. Fold or refold shirts
6. Pull ropes and put away all equipment (including any initiatives that are out)
7. PLEASE return all equipment to the appropriate location

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8. Turn off music
9. Double check if additional cash is needed
10. Charge iPads (if under 40%)
11. Make lists of any items that are needed

Downtime:

When you have time between groups, please complete the following tasks to keep the course looking immaculate.

1. Garbages
2. Pick up/organize equipment
3. Pick up sticks, pine cones,
4. Weed landscaped areas
5. Water plants as needed