Outdoor Leadership

Theory and Practice

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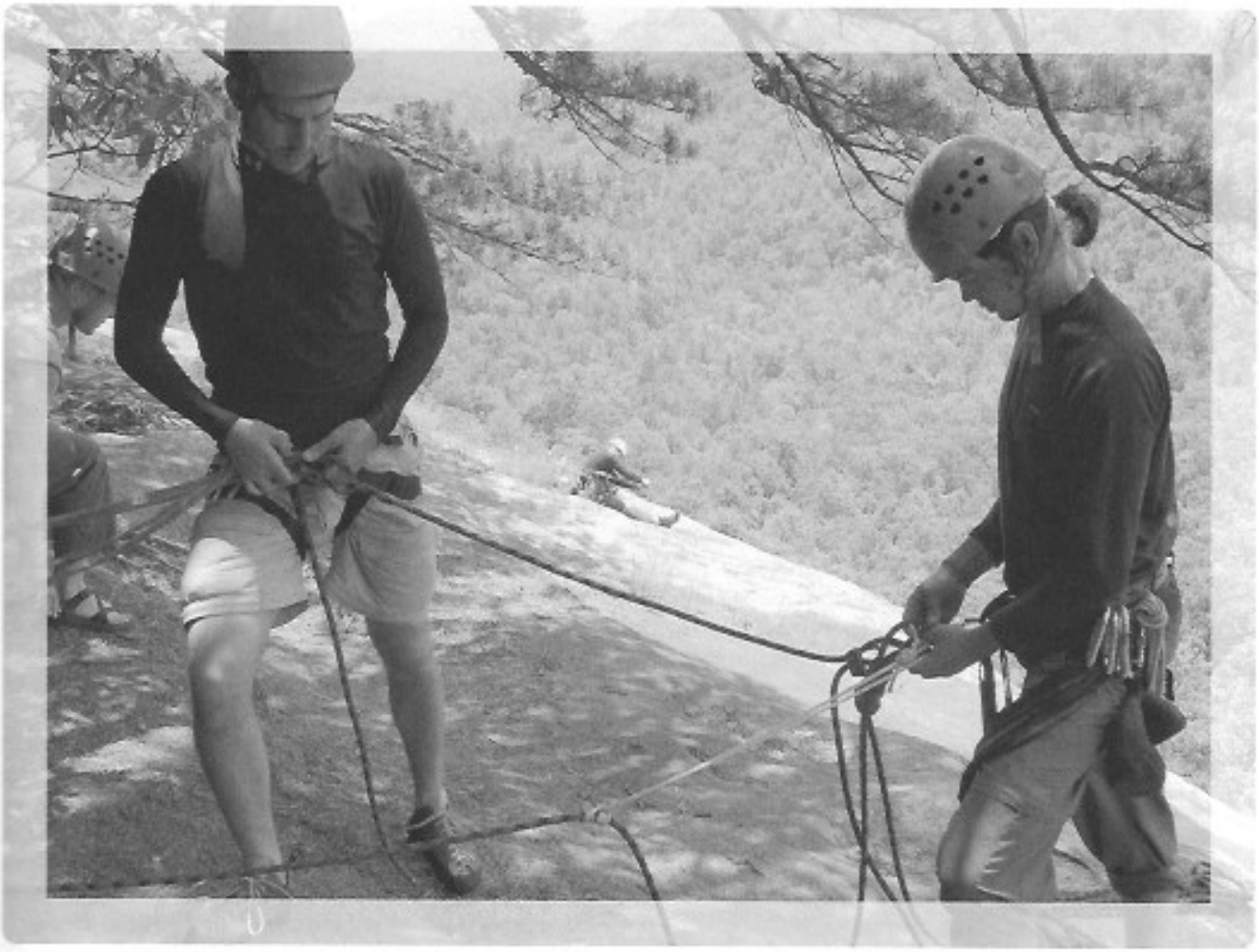
chapter 5

Leadership in Practice



"I focus on what you can put into people rather than what you can get out of them." —Leroy H. Kurtz

Chapter Concepts

- Leadership traits and qualities—This chapter will discuss the traits and qualities of successful outdoor leaders.
- Leadership power—Power comes from a number of sources. It may be reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, or expert (French and Raven 1968).
- Leadership styles—Style of leadership refers to the way in which leaders express their influence.
- Leadership models—A number of models are introduced in this chapter.
- Caring leaders—The caring leader acts out of an ethic of care and service by attending to the group and ensuring that the needs of individuals within the group are met.

The chapter concepts relate to the following core competencies:

- Foundational knowledge (CC-1)—An understanding of outdoor leadership theory is an important aspect of the field's foundational knowledge.
- Self-awareness and professional conduct (CC-2)—Acting mindfully and intentionally as an outdoor leader and developing knowledge and sensitivity about how we affect others are part of self-awareness and professional conduct.

Laird could not believe his good fortune. This was only his second year as a camp counselor and he had been hired as part of the camp's wilderness trip staff. Laird was in his second year of college, studying economics. He had originally been hired as a water-ski instructor and had joined his cabin group on a 5-day wilderness trip on the Flambeau River in Wisconsin the previous summer. He and his group returned from that trip with a sense of accomplishment and community that Laird had never before experienced. He was enthusiastic about the opportunity to do more paddling this summer as an assistant trip leader.

Laird's first trip of the summer was a 3-day Namekagon River trip with eight campers. His coleader on the trip was Ashley. Ashley was in her early 20s and had just graduated from college with a degree in outdoor recreation. The group set off from camp and was on the water by late morning. The trip pace was relaxed and everyone seemed to be getting along. They arrived into camp at 5 in the evening, tired and hungry. Laird hopped out of his boat, grabbed his tent, and headed for a flat, scenic spot along the riverbank to set up his camp. The campers eagerly hopped out of their boats as well and looked around, wondering what to do next.

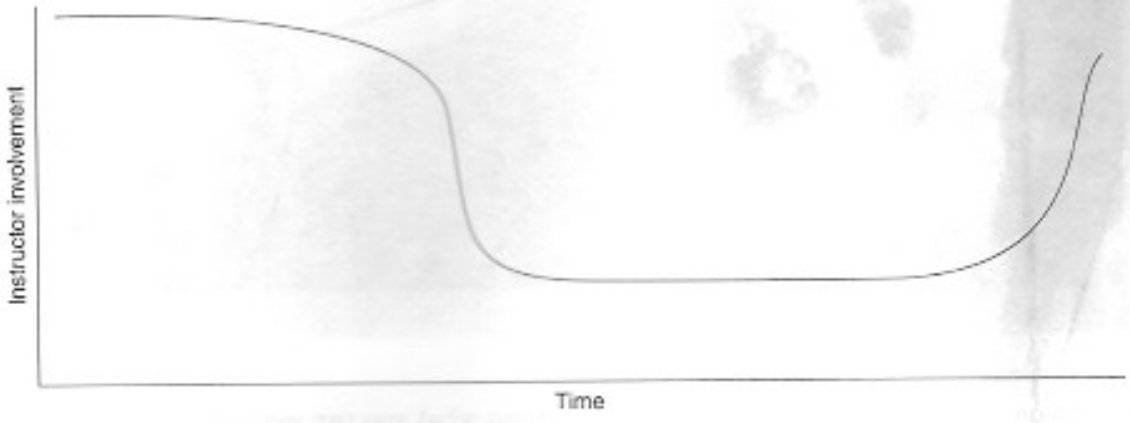


Figure 5.1 A representation of the level of instructor involvement over the course of a wilderness trip.

(continued)

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Ashley asked the group to get in a circle and proceeded with a lesson on how to set up camp. With this information, the group sprang into action and in an hour, all tents were up and a pot of water was boiling.

As the group sat down with Ashley for a hot drink, Laird wandered over, noticing that Ashley's tent was not even up yet. "Looks like you missed out on all the good spots, Ashley. Bummer for you," he said. Ashley said that she was sure that she would find a good spot later. The group ate dinner and told ghost stories around the campfire until it was time to go to bed.

Ashley and Laird had a quick meeting around the campfire that night. Ashley told Laird that his sense of humor and enthusiasm benefited the group, but she also expressed her concern that Laird took too much time for himself. She explained to him that at the beginning of a trip, a group typically needs a lot of direction. She would start a trip with a somewhat autocratic approach and as the trip progressed, she would become more abdicratic in her leadership style. She explained how she tried to be flexible with her leadership style and that her style depended a lot upon factors such as the weather, the group, the trip route, and the length of the trip. Ashley took a stick and drew a graph in the sand for Laird, displaying the level of leader involvement over time on a typical trip and how leadership style needed to accommodate the group's changing needs (figure 5.1).

Needless to say, Laird was impressed. Ashley was equally surprised at herself, saying, "You know, I never thought that I would use all that theory I learned in school!"

Chapter 4 introduced leadership models and theories in an attempt to provide a solid foundation of leadership knowledge. The focus of this chapter will be to connect those general theories to the practice of outdoor leadership. Learning outdoor leadership is no small task. Your task as a burgeoning outdoor leader is to take some of what you're learning from your leadership course, this textbook, your peers, and your professors and then practice, practice, practice. Learning about outdoor leadership is only the first step in the process of becoming an outdoor leader.

Ashley and Laird's experiences in the opening narrative highlight the fact that leadership is more art than science. It is more than a set of learned skills and competencies. Your previous experiences, your personality, the group, and other variables all factor into the practice of leadership. There are as many different styles of leadership as there are leaders. Consider your classmates for a moment. Some seem to possess a great deal of natural leadership ability. They volunteer often, use a tone of voice that commands attention, display a high level of self-confidence, and tend to have peers respond to them in a positive way. Other students have a quiet competence that can inspire great confidence in their peers. These leaders are often thoughtful listeners and supportive members of the group and may often lead from the middle or back of the group rather than the front.

Your own leadership development begins with identifying your natural leadership style and then developing an understanding of other styles and approaches as a means to developing your leadership ability. Remember that you can't be everything to everyone. Your leadership style may not always be a perfect fit for every situation and every group member. You must be authentic. Yet, natural inclination and ability alone are also insufficient. You must develop an understanding of your limitations and strive to balance your natural strengths by overcoming your limitations. As a preliminary activity to identifying your leadership style, consider learning activity 5.1 on the next page.

Outdoor leadership preparation is not an exact science; however, this chapter will introduce some of the elements that factor into your development as an outdoor leader. This chapter will first examine outdoor leader qualities and traits alongside leadership competencies and skills. The questions "Who will lead?" and "How will they lead?" will be posited as a means to identify the ways in which we become leaders and express leadership. Leadership styles will be introduced and you will have the opportunity to further examine your own leadership style. A number of outdoor leadership theories and models will be presented, including conditional outdoor leadership theory (COLT), the Outward Bound process model, the change model, and the motivational needs theory. Developing an ethic of service and an ethic of care as an outdoor leader will be emphasized, as well as the ideal of leading with integrity and humility.

Learning Activity 5.1

The concept of yin and yang is the Chinese perspective of balance and continual change.

Yin and yang are dependent opposites that must always be in balance. The opposites flow in a natural cycle, each always replacing the other. Just as the seasons cycle and create a time of heat and cold, yin and yang cycles through active and passive, dark and light, and so on. Yin and yang evolved from a belief of mutually dependent opposites that cannot live without the other. The Eastern view of opposites is, if you will excuse the pun, opposite of a Western view.

The Western perspective tends to look at things as black or white, right or wrong. There is separation and unrelatedness in the Western perspective, whereas the Eastern view sees opposites as evolving and cycling. There is neither right nor wrong. Instead there is balance, transformation, interaction, and dependent opposition. We need both to maintain a balance.

Yin and yang can further be explained as a duality that cannot exist without both parts.

Use the yin and yang symbol to list your individual strengths on one side and limitations on the other, and then share your thoughts with one or two other people. Then list specific actions you could do to try to bring your strengths and weaknesses into better balance.

For example, if your strengths are relationship oriented (you listen well, you solicit frequent participant feedback, you have an ability to "read" a group, you exhibit a flexible leadership style) while your limitations are that you need to improve paddling skills, learn how to light a fire in any weather condition, and get Wilderness First Responder certification, then you can begin to develop a plan to bring these two parts of yourself into balance. You may need to consider specific strategies for how you will begin to improve upon your limitations, for example, by concentrating on developing your technical skills.

Leadership Qualities

Effective leadership begins with an understanding of the traits and qualities and skills and competencies that factor into that process. It also begins by considering the question, "Who will lead?" If you recall, chapter 4 outlined the trait theory of leadership, which maintains that leaders are born, not made. This early theory of leadership described a leader as one who exhibits a certain set of characteristics. Such a leader speaks firmly, acts confidently, is task oriented, and is assertive. Although this theory of leadership is antiquated, it can help inform this discussion. It has been shown that certain **leadership traits and qualities** as well as skills and competencies are important in outdoor leadership.

Traits and Qualities

A trait is a distinguishing characteristic or quality. In general, people believe that a leader is someone who has many positive qualities. Studies have suggested that those qualities include creativity, positive attitude, high expectations, integrity, sense of responsibility, courage, authenticity, self-awareness, and high ethical standards.

While research has shown that many of these qualities are significant (Bass 1990; Hitt 1990; Jordan 1996), you must possess a variety of traits, qualities, skills, and competencies to be an effective leader. Unfortunately, there is no simple equation to calculate effective leadership. In addition, simply possessing these qualities will not necessarily provide you with the ability to effectively lead. Effective leaders must develop a level of self-awareness that enhances the study and practice of leadership. Each individual's personality contributes to leadership and each person innately possesses many of the aforementioned traits and qualities. Other behaviors are learned with time and experience. Developing your ability as a leader boils down to practice, practice, and more practice.

Skills and Competencies

Kouzes and Posner (2003) are two authorities on leadership. They have categorized the attributes of successful leaders into five practices, including modeling, having a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart.

- Modeling. This practice refers to the adage, "I would never ask anyone to do anything that I was unwilling to do myself." Not only does this apply to physical tasks, it also includes talking about values and beliefs.
- Inspiring a shared vision. This means finding a way to express what could be and allowing others to buy into that goal. Kouzes and Posner maintain that leadership is a dialogue, not a monologue. Knowing other people's visions, fears, and dreams can help formulate a plan.
- Challenging the process. This involves having a goal and figuring out how to accomplish that goal.
- Enabling others to act. Enabling others to act means allowing others to do good work. If individuals within a group never have an opportunity to practice decision making, for example, they will not improve that skill.
- Encouraging the heart. This involves displaying authentic acts of caring. Voicing appreciation and celebrating success can be ways to encourage the heart.

Recent research on outdoor leadership (Jordan 1996; Priest and Gass 1997) outlines the skills and competencies necessary for outdoor leadership. For the purpose of this text, we have outlined the eight core competencies that we deem necessary for effective outdoor leadership:

- foundational knowledge (CC-1)
- self-awareness and professional conduct (CC-2)
- decision making and judgment (CC-3)
- teaching and facilitation (CC-4)
- environmental stewardship (CC-5)
- program management (CC-6)
- safety and risk management (CC-7)
- technical ability (CC-8)

As an outdoor leader, you need to be attentive to developing each of these competencies as a component of your leadership development.

Part of this development involves understanding leadership theories and how they can be employed. Part of this development also involves understanding your own personal strengths and limitations. Your growth as an outdoor leader will come about experientially, but you can help foster this growth through journal writing and other forms of reflection. You can also help foster personal growth by soliciting and responding to feedback from mentors and participants. These aspects of leadership will be discussed in other chapters.

Who Will Lead?

A leader is either appointed or emerges from the membership to lead. It is important to consider

Learning Activity 5.2

Consider your own outdoor trip experiences. What traits and qualities did the leader possess? How did these factors influence the group? The trip experience?

the question of "Who will lead?" because both the quality of an experience and the outcome of that experience may be in doubt without adequate leadership. Responding to this query may not be as easy as it seems. Some groups may naturally be drawn to the individual who exhibits the most leadership traits. Other groups may naturally defer to the individual with the most experience. Still other groups may feel that no one person needs to be designated as a leader and leadership should be shared among its members. Often groups devote so much time and energy to the leadership question that the productivity of the group suffers.

Designated Leader

A person who is appointed as a leader is generally referred to as a **designated leader.** As an outdoor leader, you will most often find yourself in this role. You may be the leader of the day on a field-based experience for class or you may find yourself leading a group of campers as your paid summer employment. Most often you will assume the role of leader because someone has hired you or appointed you as the designated leader for a particular trip.

Emergent Leader

When leaders are appointed, an interesting problem may occur. On occasion the appointed leader has never led any group and may be unable or unwilling to carry out the role. In such cases, one person from within the group will often emerge as the leader. (There may be other circumstances that lead to emergent leaders as well.) Consider some of your previous experiences with your classmates. Do one or two people come to mind when you think of the concept of the emergent leader? Do you know of certain individuals who naturally rise to the occasion in class and field-based experiences? Those individuals may be recognized by the group as leaders because of their previous experience, conflict resolution abilities, or general enthusiasm, without ever having been appointed as the leader. A leader who emerges from a group often has the respect of the group members. Sometimes a group has both a designated leader and an **emergent leader.**

Elected Leader

You may find yourself in the position of being an **elected leader.** For example, as an outdoor recreation student, you may have displayed natural leadership ability by taking initiative, volunteering to lead weekend trips for the outing club, or serving as a peer mentor to incoming freshman. Because of these activities, a student nominates you to be vice president of the outing club and you win the election—you are an elected leader. Elected leaders are often admired by those who follow.

Shared Leadership

Occasionally, no single person takes on the responsibility to lead and several members of the group share the leadership role. For some groups, **shared leadership** may in fact be the ultimate goal. Shared leadership works well when several group members are skilled in the tasks necessary to lead the group. For example, you and a group of friends decide to spend a weekend further honing your rock-climbing skills and you adopt a shared leadership approach. Each student contributes skills and knowledge to the weekend outing based on previous experience and areas of expertise.

A variety of outdoor leadership skills and competencies contribute to effective leadership.

Halo Effect

Sometimes a person who emerges as a leader in one group or situation and experiences success is expected to be a leader in other groups and situations. Jordan (1996) calls this the **halo effect,** which refers to "how certain attributes or thoughts about a person are carried over into other situations" (p. 25). For instance, you

may be out with your recreation course for an introductory ice-climbing day. During the drive to the site, both your peers and your professor have expressed their expectation that you will rise to the occasion on the cold and windy day ahead based on their observation of you during the introductory rock-climbing day. You are nervous about their high expectations for you because although you are a skilled rock climber, you have never been ice climbing before and have never spent a full day outside in such cold temperatures. This is an example of the halo effect.

There are numerous avenues through which individuals may be identified as leaders. No matter how a person gained the role of leader, that person may not be best suited to meet the needs of the group and the situation. Returning to the definition of leadership that was introduced in chapter 4 highlights this idea. Leadership is intentional, aiming toward the accomplishment of particular goals and outcomes, and it is interactional, involving a relationship between two or more individuals in a particular situation. A peer who is playful and able to motivate the class but also influences the class in a disruptive way may be a leader, but the influence would not qualify as leadership because it is not directed toward the desired purpose. Similarly, a leader who is highly task oriented and skilled at accomplishing the intended outcome but does not include the group members in accomplishing the goal would not qualify as a successful leader. That is why both the group and the leader must be aware of what leadership style and competencies are required to move the group toward an intended purpose or outcome.

Leadership Power

Once a leader has been established through a combination of traits and qualities, skills and competencies, and designation, election, or emergence, the next question to be asked is, "How will that person lead?" This section will address that question, examining leadership power.

It has been established that leadership is a process of influence and influence is a key concept in the definition of power (Wilson 2002). Power has been defined as the ability to influence others. Leadership power comes from a number of sources; it may be reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, or expert (French and Raven 1968). No matter what your natural leadership inclination may be or what leadership styles you choose to express, you possess some bases of power that you employ to influence other people.

Reward and Coercive Power

Reward power is influence that comes from a person's ability to provide a benefit that is valued by another person. In other words, it is achieved by rewarding effort. A leader might provide compliments, special attention, or incentives, such as not having to clean up after dinner, for a job well done. A leader can withhold favors as well. This is often referred to as coercive power and usually follows the failure of reward power.

Legitimate Power

Legitimate power is influence that is granted to those who are elected, appointed, or selected to direct others. This power is inherent in the leader's position. For example, the head of a department holds a degree of legitimate power. The person who holds legitimate power has the power to make assignments related to the group's task. Most group members are likely to follow you if you have been given the responsibility to make certain decisions on their behalf.

Referent Power

Referent power is influence that comes when group members identify with a person or greatly value the person's contributions. This form of charismatic power may impel group members to work harder to please the leader. It may also cause members to want to be like the leader and emulate that person's behavior.

Expert Power

Expert power is influence based on a person's abilities or knowledge. The power comes from the fact that the leader or group member has expertise that is important to the group. For example, a person may exercise influence during a rock-climbing trip because she possesses the most technical skills within the group and is seen as the individual most capable of making decisions.

Just because group members have any or several bases of power does not mean they have influence or control in a group. Members seek help from one another to achieve the group's goal. They also need information to determine strategies for accomplishing the goal. When a group is cooperating and when goals are compatible, the group's power is moving in the same direction and there is little resistance. When competition

is present or goals are not compatible, the members' power is going in opposite directions and resistance occurs. Groups need to be mutually dependent and share power. However, power is a perception of a group member's resources. Actual resources may be greater or less than that perception. A person can possess many resources that are unknown or ignored by others and therefore have little power in the group. Conversely, a group member can have few essential resources but be perceived as having many resources and is therefore given a great deal of power by others.

Every person within a group has power. The leader has the most power, at least initially. A leader will almost always express more than one source of power. The more sources of power, the greater the potential influence of the person. Leaders who are self-aware and confident have the best chance of using power to help the group move toward the desired outcome. While all five sources of power are present within a group, Priest and Gass (1997) argue that coercive power ethically has no part in outdoor leadership, since forcing people to act in a certain manner based on negative incentives ignores challenge by choice (see chapter 8) and has the potential to destroy the adventure experience and create barriers to learning.

Groups accomplish goals when they cooperate and share power.

Leadership Styles

As mentioned in chapter 4, leadership styles are the ways in which leaders express their influence. The three main categories of leadership styles are autocratic, democratic, and abdicratic (Bass 1990; Jordan 1996).

Recognizing some of the limiting factors of these three leadership styles, Tannebaum and Schmidt (1973) identify six subcategories of leadership that place leadership styles on a continuum (see figure 5.2). These subcategories portray a range of approaches to leadership and influence based on a leader's level of authority and the level of contribution from group members. The subcategories include telling, selling, testing, consulting, joining, and delegating. These orientations help determine what leadership style an individual employs in any given situation.

Leadership Models

This section will introduce you to a number of leadership models. These models build upon the intersection of people's innate abilities, an understanding of leadership power and influence, and an understanding of leadership styles. Situational leadership theory will be introduced first as it is the foundation for the

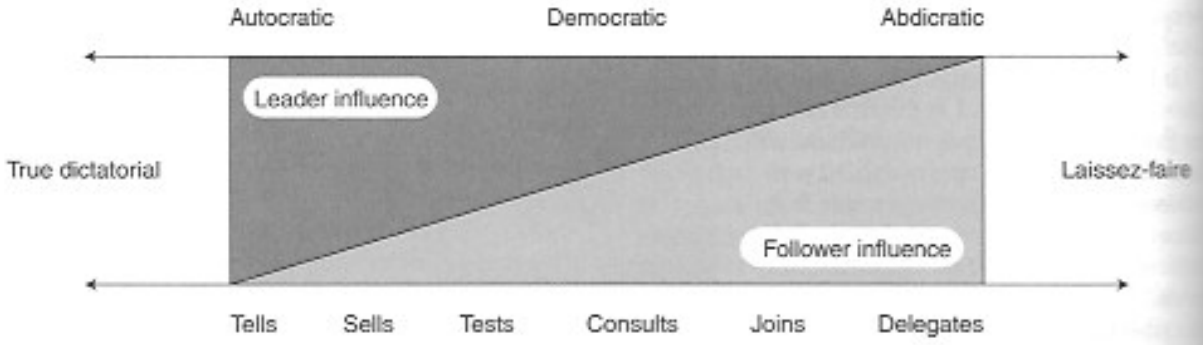

Figure 5.2 A continuum of outdoor leadership styles.

Adapted, by permission, from S. Priest and M.A. Gass, 2005, *Effective leadership in adventure programming*, 2nd ed. (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics), 245.

outdoor leadership models that follow, including conditional outdoor leadership theory, the Outward Bound process model, a feminist model of outdoor leadership, and motivational needs theory.

Situational Leadership Theory

Hersey and Blanchard's (1982) research of situational leadership is based on the premise that most leadership activities can be classified into either task or relationship dimensions. Task actions involve one-way communication, while relationship or maintenance behaviors involve two-way communication. Hersey and Blanchard's grid of task and relationship actions results in an array of possibilities for how leadership influence is expressed (see figure 5.3). Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson (1996) built upon this theory by suggesting that leaders must be flexible enough to change their style according to the needs of the group. This model is based on the concept of group readiness. Readiness level is defined in terms of three components: group ability, motivation, and education or experience. Following are the four levels of group readiness:

- R1 (low)—Members are unable and unwilling to do a task or are insecure about it.
- R2 (moderate)—Members are unable to do the task but are willing or confident about it.
- R3 (moderate)—Members are able to do the task but are unwilling or insecure about it.
- R4 (high)—Members are able and willing to do the task and are confident about it.

Leader behavior is thus determined by both the readiness of the group and the group's orientation to the dimensions of task and relationship. Figure 5.4 on page 62 helps illustrate this. The key assumption of the situational model of leadership is that leaders are both able and willing to adapt their leadership approach to the group's situation.

Conditional Outdoor Leadership Theory (COLT)

Priest and Gass (1997) have further developed the situational model and adapted it specifically for outdoor leaders. The **conditional outdoor leadership theory (COLT) model** postulates that outdoor leaders must go beyond the dimensions of relationship, task, and group readiness and look at the level of conditional favorability. This model is illustrated in figure 5.4. Conditional favorability is based on five factors:

1. Environmental dangers: weather, perils, hazards, and objective and subjective risks
2. Individual competence: experience, confidence, skill, attitude, behavior, and knowledge

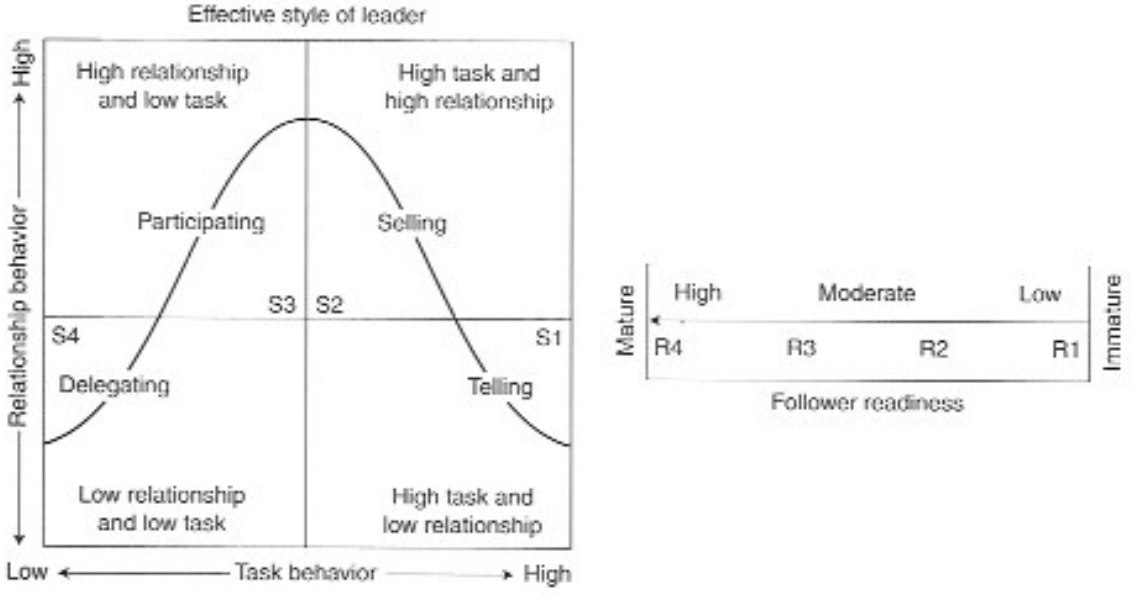

Figure 5.3 Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson's situational leadership model.

Adapted, by permission, from G. Wilson and M. Hanna, 2002, *Groups in context*, 6th ed. (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Higher Education), 193.

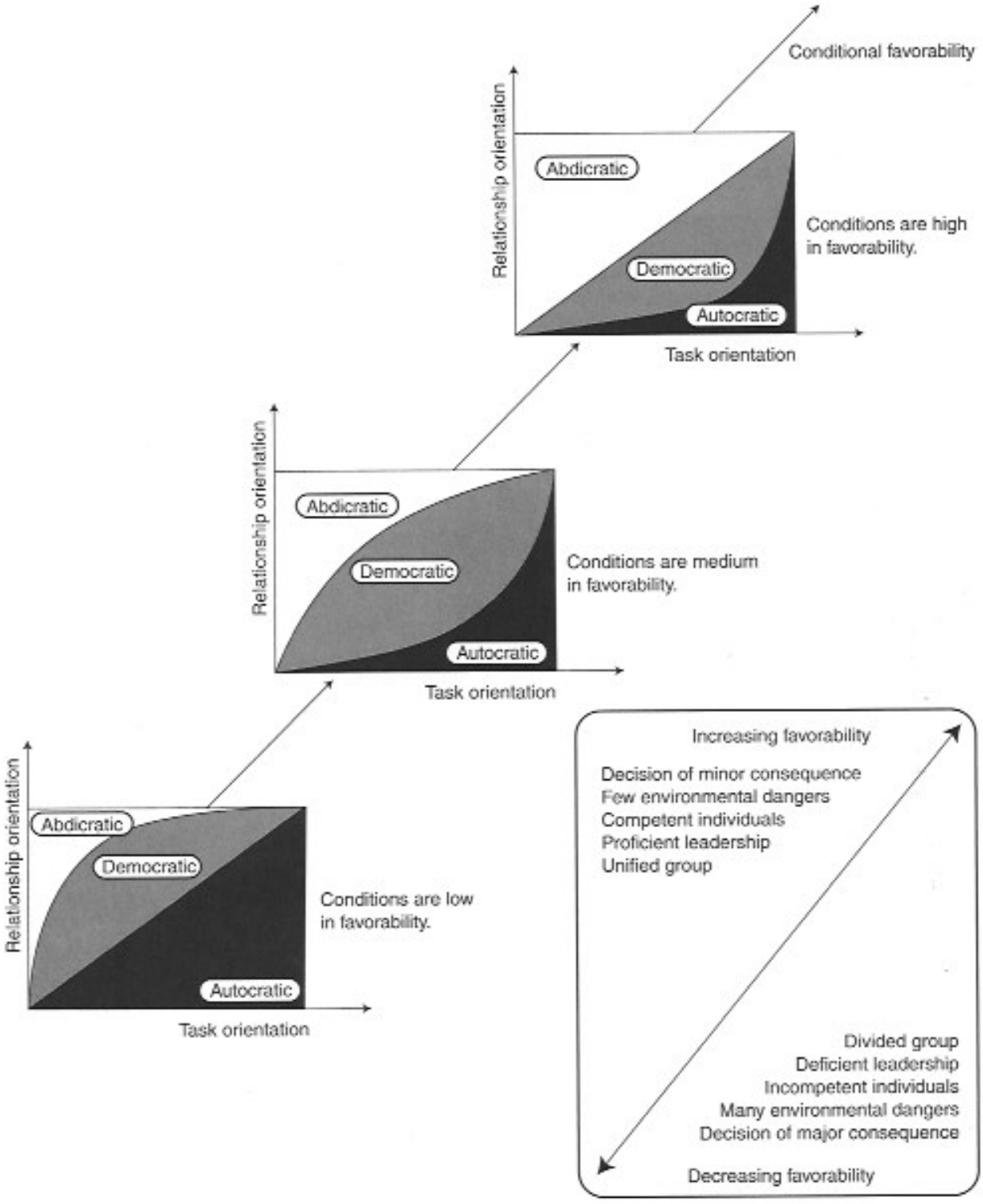

Figure 5.4 Priest and Gass' conditional outdoor leadership theory (COLT).

Adapted, by permission, from S. Priest and M.A. Gass, 2005, *Effective leadership in adventure programming*, 2nd ed. (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics), 248.

3. Group unity: morale, maturity, cooperation, communication, trust, responsibility, and interest
4. Leader proficiency: credibility, judgment, level of stress, fatigue, and perceived capability
5. Decision consequences: clarity of the problem, sufficient solution time, available resources, expected ramification, and degree of uncertainty or challenge

The COLT model combines leadership styles, leadership orientations of relationship and task, and conditional favorability to help leaders identify whether conditions are low, medium, or high. Conditions of low favorability represent a setting where the dangers may be extreme, the leader lacks certain core competencies, the participants are inexperienced and uncertain, group morale is low, and the consequences of decisions are major. As illustrated in figure 5.4, when conditional favorability is low, the leader may shift toward a task orientation, favoring a more autocratic style. Under these conditions, it is typical for a leader to pay stricter attention to the task to ensure group safety and to retain the majority of the decision-making responsibility (Priest and Gass 1997). Luckily, low favorability is not representative of the more typical outdoor setting. In fact, if conditions of low favorability are routine for you, you need to examine why this is occurring as it may indicate a more systemic problem with the outdoor program or your own leadership ability.

Conditions of medium favorability represent the more typical outdoor setting in which dangers are within acceptable limits and may be more perceived than real, the leader is self-aware and proficient enough, the individuals are responsible, the group gets along relatively well, and the consequences of decisions are reasonable. Under these conditions, if your personal orientation is more focused on relationships, you may prefer to adopt an abdicratic style. If you are more focused on tasks, you may choose a more autocratic style. A democratic style may be most appropriate as a means to balance both tasks and relationships. The aforementioned ideal of a balanced yin and yang style of leadership may be most easily accomplished under conditions of medium favorability.

A trip setting that represents a condition of high favorability is usually desirable because dangers are minimal, the leader is proficient, the individuals are competent and keen, group morale is high, and the consequences of decisions are minor. Under these conditions, the leader may adopt an abdicratic style of leadership that tends to be more oriented toward relationships. This allows the group to have more opportunities for shared leadership and, depending upon the context, may allow for increased group development and opportunities for individual members to grow and learn.

Applying the COLT Model

Let's return to the opening vignette. Use the information in that short narrative to list the level of the five factors of conditional favorability (environmental danger, individual competence, group unity, leader proficiency, and decision consequences). In your opinion, what is the level of conditional favorability? Which leadership style did Laird employ? Which leadership style did Ashley employ? With your increased understanding of COLT, which leadership style was most appropriate and why?

In applying the COLT model to outdoor settings, you must realize that as the situation changes, so must the leadership style. It is also important to realize that the leader's style affects the level of conditional favorability. For example, imagine if Laird had maintained his extreme abdicratic style of leadership as the evening progressed. What would have been the result? Morale would have likely eroded as the group became more confused, tired, and hungry. If Laird adjusted his inclination toward abdicratic leadership to better fit the situation, he most likely would have been able to achieve a result similar to what Ashley

Learning Activity 5.3

Apply the COLT theory to a wilderness trip experience that you have either led or participated in.

achieved. By adopting a more autocratic approach to the group's first night out, Ashley helped maintain a high level of conditional favorability.

Although conditional outdoor leadership theory is one of the best fits as an outdoor leadership model, it would be an oversight to not include some of the other models that inform leadership practice. The model that is employed will be dependent on the leadership situation, the leader, and the group. These models include the Outward Bound process model, the change model, and motivational needs theory.

Outward Bound Process Model

The **Outward Bound process model** (Walsh and Golins 1976) is one of the most influential models in outdoor programming for describing the key elements of an adventure experience. The seven key elements include the learner, prescribed physical environment, prescribed social environment, characteristic problem-solving tasks, state of adaptive dissonance, mastery or competence, and transfer of new learning (see figure 5.5).

This model is one of the earliest efforts at identifying how the process of adventure learning achieves the intended results of a program. Whether the intent of the program is development of technical skills, interpersonal development, or the social and emotional development of each individual, this model has proven effective as a means to accomplish those goals (Priest and Gass 1997). As an outdoor leader, you may wish to consider this model as you develop the sequencing of your own trips and outdoor programs.

Applying the Outward Bound Process Model

Let's return again to the opening vignette for an example of this model in practice. One of the campers, or learners, is Sam. Sam finds himself in a novel and stimulating environment as a group member on the Namekagon River trip. Because Sam is traveling with his cabin group from summer camp and two counselors, his social environment represents a collective effort based on mutual support and trust. The goal is to develop an interdependent peer group that shares a common objective.

The problem-solving tasks that will arise throughout the trip represent all learning domains: cognitive, physical, and affective. Tasks will be sequentially ordered and will increase in difficulty once a base of skills and confidence has been established. Ashley's efforts on the first night represent this progression. Ashley stayed

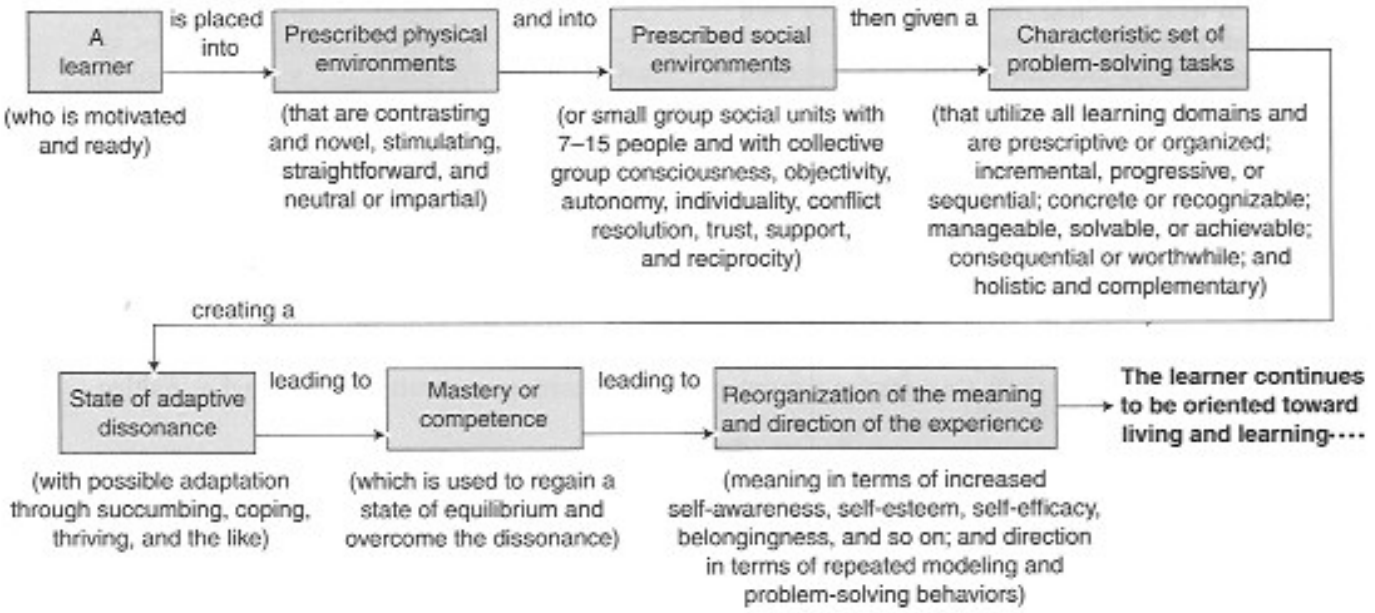

Figure 5.5 Walsh and Golins' Outward Bound process model.
(Walsh & Golins, 1976)

attentive to the group, offering them support when needed so that the group would achieve success with the setup of the first night's camp. If successful, Ashley will need to be less attentive throughout the course of the trip as the campers continue to develop their skills. A state of adaptive dissonance may result as some skills are acquired more quickly than others. Additionally, as the group develops, moments of disquiet may result among certain individuals within the group as behaviors and emotions cause dissonance. Mastery and competence of both technical skills and the affective domain will help regain the equilibrium. This will lead to increased self-awareness and self-efficacy of individuals within the group and the group itself.

Outdoor leaders should bear in mind that their level of involvement throughout this process will vary. Figure 5.1 (page 54) represents instructor involvement over the course of a trip. This graph will change somewhat depending upon the length of the trip and the conditional favorability.

The outdoor setting provides a unique site for personal growth as a result of this process. Mastery alone can provide the motivation for change, but completing such a task in a unique physical and social environment has been shown to have a particularly strong effect. The goal is for this effect to last, which can only be accomplished if individuals are provided with knowledge of how to transfer their newfound learning into other contexts. The importance of this knowledge cannot be overstated. The potential for lasting transformation in people's lives is what makes outdoor leadership such an exciting practice.

Feminist Model of Leadership

While there is no one definition of feminist leadership, there are certain qualities that feminist outdoor leaders may have in common. Warren (1996) identifies some of these commonalities as follows:

1. Many feminist leaders pay attention to relationships, believing that accomplishing tasks and establishing relationships among group members are both central to an outdoor experience.
2. Attention is paid to power relations and authority is often redefined to encompass more egalitarian principles.
3. Risk management becomes a shared concern and consensual decision making is key.
4. Personal experience is validated, particularly the experiences of those individuals who are not privileged by the dominant social structure.
5. The dichotomies of success and failure and right and wrong are eschewed.

While it may be easy to assume that any discussion of feminist leadership is connected to a discussion of women-only wilderness trips, there is value in employing a feminist model of outdoor leadership for coed groups as well (Henderson 1996; Warren 1996). The central concern of any discussion of feminist leadership is that these forms of leadership focus on the correction of invisibility and the inequality, marginalization, and oppression that women have experienced within society; the focus is not on excluding males from the trip experiences (Henderson et al. 1989). A feminist model of outdoor leadership is therefore a more egalitarian approach to outdoor leadership, one in which women have equal rights in outdoor participation and equal opportunities to become outdoor leaders, and in which their "ways of knowing" receive credence alongside more dominant ways of knowing.

Warren and Rheingold (1996) propose one model for educators to consider when implementing a more feminist way of learning and teaching. Warren and Rheingold suggest the following:

1. Work to minimize power differentials. Outdoor leaders need to recognize their power as leaders and seek methods to redistribute that power among group members.
2. Value students' personal experiences. Outdoor leaders need to develop prebriefing, **debriefing,** and reflection sessions that allow students to have a voice in their experiences. Outdoor leaders need to communicate honestly and openly through intent listening and overt action that encourages participant communication and input.
3. Advocate for female learners and use teaching methods that address diverse learning styles. Given that women have distinctly different "ways of knowing" than men, outdoor leaders need to find ways to address these ways of knowing and the learning styles of not only women but of all trip participants. Instructional methods may include consensus decision making, shared responsibility, peer mentoring, and both experiential and more traditional teaching methodologies.

The leader is displaying a feminist style of leadership through collaborative decision making and employing an ethic of care.

4. Create organizational structures that prevent the marginalization of women. Explicit policies need to be established that reinforce parity for women. Pay equity, clear paths for career advancement, skill development, and equal voices in decision making are a start (Warren and Rheingold 1996). Policies for dealing with sexual harassment and for preventing discrimination are also important.
5. Develop a critical consciousness about outdoor leadership. If reducing the marginalization and oppression of not only women but of all people is central to an outdoor trip experience, then consider the ways in which the dominant ideology influences wilderness trip experiences.

This model of feminist leadership provides one framework for outdoor educators to consider if they wish to employ outdoor leadership that actively embraces the egalitarianism that outdoor educators so often profess is central to their practice.

Motivational Needs Theory

American David McClelland is perhaps best known for his development of the needs-based motivation model. In his 1988 book, *Human Motivation*, McClelland identifies three types of motivation needs: achievement motivation, whereby people seek the attainment of realistic but challenging goals and advancement in their position; the need for authority and power, whereby people have a need to be effective and influential; and the need for affiliation, whereby people have a need for friendly relationships and are motivated toward interaction with other people.

What you should glean from **motivational needs theory** is the ability to identify your motivation and your own needs as an outdoor leader. Far too often, people become outdoor leaders for all the wrong reasons. For some, outdoor leadership provides the opportunity to be in the field and play with the latest and greatest equipment, and these individuals display little regard for their role as leaders and their responsibility to the group. Many outdoor leaders far too often, perhaps subconsciously, use their authority and power to exclude rather than include. Steve Simpson, in a book entitled *The Leader Who Is Hardly Known* (2003), illustrates this with a story (see page 68).

He concludes this story by suggesting that whatever the leaders' motivation or need fulfillment, the result was that the leaders stood out from their students and although the students may have admired the leaders' ability, Simpson

Learning Activity 5.4

Consider some of the following questions that Warren and Rheingold (1996) have encouraged outdoor educators to examine:

- Is using high-tech equipment on wilderness trips and providing trip participants with a detailed list of required personal clothing displaying an ignorance or insensitivity about class issues?
- Are trips scheduled around certain religious holidays and not others?
- Do you believe that you have had equal access to role models, including women and people of color, in your own wilderness experiences and in your training and certification courses?
- Are community service projects meeting the needs of the community, or are they quick-fix trips into disadvantaged communities?

What do these experiences communicate about who is heard and what is valued within the field of outdoor leadership?

queries, "Does being admired contribute to effective leadership?" (p. 14). Some understanding of your own motivation and needs as an outdoor leader should help you respond to this question and further develop your self-awareness as an outdoor leader.

Caring Leaders

Chapter 7 will further discuss what it means to develop an ethic of care as it relates to leadership. For the purposes of this chapter, think back to chapter 4 and the central figure of Herman Hesse's *Journey to the East* (page 49). Leo was the group's servant but was also the group member who emerged as the leader, sustaining the group through his spirit and song. At the time, no one knew that Leo was, in fact, the titular head of the Order and a great leader in his own right. Leo exhibited the characteristics of a caring leader and based his leadership on an ethic of service that superseded his own social class. The great leader is servant first. A leader who is a servant first cares for the group by ensuring that other peoples' needs are being met.

There are far too many examples of individuals who exhibit a sanctimonious or know-it-all attitude to cover up their own insecurities or skill deficiencies. There are also numerous examples of individuals similar to the two leaders in Simpson's story, who put their own needs before the needs of the group. While it may be difficult to teach people how to care and to serve, this ethic must be the foundation of your leadership practice. It may help to ask yourself the following questions: Why did I make the decisions that I made today? Whose interests did they serve? Who benefited from those decisions? Am I truly listening to and understanding the needs of my group? Am I showing acceptance for each individual within the group?

Developing this level of self-awareness is a lifetime commitment and no small task. The results, however, will enhance your abilities as a leader and will grant you the group's respect and admiration. The importance of developing integrity, humility, a caring attitude, and an ethic of service cannot be underscored. Actively working toward the development of this level of self-awareness can be further encouraged through journaling, participant and coinstructor feedback, and peer mentoring, which may help outdoor leaders become more self-aware and develop strategies to turn this awareness into overt action that further encourages their growth and development.

Summary

Leadership in practice involves the influence of leadership traits as well as the necessary skills and competencies required for effective leadership.

Leader Who Is Hardly Known

The paddlers beached their canoes and walked fifty yards downstream to Beaver Rapids. At breakfast earlier that morning, the leaders had forewarned the participants that this stretch of white-water would be the most difficult of the trip and that they would have to scout it out to see whether it was runnable. The group had been paddling for four days, and all the students were now trained both in paddling skills and in treading water. They correctly identified the only possible route through Beaver Rapids. They also, to a person, felt that their skills were not ready for the difficult ferry that would be necessary to position their canoe for the last of three chutes. All of the students decided to portage.

Two of the trip's leaders, however, decided to run the rapids. They asked the Leader Who is Hardly Known and another paddler to go downstream and serve as a rescue boat. They had another student positioned on shore with a throw rope. Fortunately none of the precautions were necessary, as the leaders paddled to perfection the route the students had laid out. All the students cheered as the skilled team shot the last rapid and blasted through the last standing wave.

Later that evening Kathy, one of the two trip leaders who had run Beaver Rapids, waited for the Leader Who is Hardly Known to walk away from the group at the campfire. She followed him and said, "I have something to ask you. It is about the rapids Dennis and I ran today. I have seen you canoe many times, and I know your canoe skills are better than mine. You would have enjoyed running the rapids, yet you chose to portage with the rest of the group. I am sure that you portaged for a reason, and I suspect that you did it because you did not want to stand out from the group. Is this true, and do you think that I was showing off when I decided to run the rapids? That was not my intent, but it has been bothering me all day."

The Leader Who is Hardly Known smiled at the leader. "Chuangtze tells a great story about showing off.[1] The story begins with the ancient King of Wu boating on the Yangtze River. The river flows past a place called Monkey Mountain. The king and his entourage leave the river and hike up the mountain. They soon see the monkey for which the mountain is named, and when the monkeys see the king, they drop what they are doing and run off to hide in the deep brush. But one monkey stays. It jumps around and grabs at things to show the king its dexterity. When the king shoots at this monkey, the monkey snatches the arrow out of the air and shakes it at the king. The king then orders his attendants to shoot at the monkey. They bombard the monkey with arrows, and, of course, it is quickly killed.

"The king picks up the dead monkey and hands it to his friend, Yen Pu-i, and says, 'This monkey flaunted its skills and relied on its tricks—and it met with misfortune. Take this as a lesson! Do not exhibit your pride in front of others.'

"Yen Pu-i returns home and goes into training. He rids himself of pride, he learns to wipe any hint of superiority from his face, he always excuses himself from actions that would lead to fame—and at the end of three years he was known throughout his homeland for humility.

"Now you ask me if running the rapids was showing off. That is for you to decide. You are not an arrogant monkey, but neither are you a model of humility. Even if you ran the rapids strictly for fun, you stood out from your students. From what I could tell, the students admired you for it and did not resent your skills. So the question is, does being admired contribute to effective leadership?"

Reprinted, by permission, from S. Simpson, 2003, *The leader who is hardly known: Self-less teaching from the Chinese tradition* (Oklahoma City, OK: Wood 'N' Barnes Publishing & Distribution), 13-14.

However, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, simply possessing such qualities does not necessarily mean that you are an effective outdoor leader. Effective leadership comes with practice. An understanding of leadership traits and the core competencies of outdoor leadership along with a solid base of experience and a high level of self-awareness will contribute to your development as an outdoor leader.

Understanding the context of outdoor leadership is also important. Understanding your own natural inclination and leadership style will help you begin to develop a leadership ability that is balanced and adaptable to different situations. The conditional outdoor leadership theory (COLT) and the Outward Bound process model further confirm the notion that leadership must be context specific. The leadership ideal that above all you must know yourself in order to be an effective leader is emphasized along with the importance of being a caring leader, displaying integrity and humility, and seeing yourself as a servant first.