

OUTDOOR PURSUITS PRE-COURSE ASSIGNMENT

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Please bring this assignment to the first day of your Outdoor Pursuits course.

Part A

Research one type of mental illness or addiction.

- Choose a mental health issue or addiction from the list below.
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Dissociative Identity Disorder
 - Internet Addiction
 - Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
 - Alcohol Addiction
 - Marijuana Addiction
 - Prescription Drug Addiction
 - Cocaine Addiction
 - Eating Disorders

(Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)

- Provide a general description of the mental illness/addiction. *(This should be thorough enough for someone to read it and be able to understand the basic concepts of the mental illness or addiction.)*

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental illness. It involves exposure to trauma involving death/the threat of death or serious injury. Trauma is often unexpected, and many people say that they felt powerless to stop or change the event.

Traumatic events may include crimes, natural disasters, accidents, war or conflict, or other threats to life. It could be an event or situation that you experience yourself or something that happens to others, including loved ones.

- What are some signs and symptoms that accompany this mental illness/addiction?

Signs (detectable by an observer)	Symptoms (felt by the individual)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Trying to avoid thinking or talking about the traumatic event</i><i>Irritability,</i><i>angry outbursts or aggressive behaviour</i><i>Being easily startled or frightened</i><i>problems sleeping</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>re-experiencing the traumatic event</i><i>vivid nightmares</i><i>flashbacks</i><i>feel very nervous or 'on edge' all the time</i><i>Trouble concentrating</i><i>Overwhelming guilt or shame</i>

- What are some social, environmental or physical causes or precursors of this mental illness or that may start someone on the path to this addiction?

- Inherited mental health risks, such as an increased risk of anxiety and depression*
- Life experiences, including the amount and severity of trauma you've gone through since early childhood*
- Inherited aspects of your personality — often called your temperament*
- The way your brain regulates the chemicals and hormones your body releases in response to stress*
- Having experienced other trauma earlier in life, including childhood abuse or neglect*
- Having a job that increases your risk of being exposed to traumatic events, such as military personnel and first responders*
- Having other mental health problems, such as anxiety or depression*
- Lacking a good support system of family and friends*
- Having biological (blood) relatives with mental health problems, including PTSD or depression*

5. How does this mental illness/addiction affect a person emotionally?

- *Difficulty regulating emotions*
- *Difficulty feeling emotions*
- *Guilt*

How does it affect them physically?

- *Can give way to eating disorders because eating becomes something the person can control in their lives*
- *Sleep problems*
- *Self-harm; self-mutilation*

How does it affect them socially?

- *Inability to maintain stable relationships*
- *Have problems coping with large crowds*
- *May avoid places that remind them of the trauma*

6. Where can someone go to get help in your community for this mental illness/addiction?

- *Friends and family are great support*
- *Family Doctor*
- *Talk to a Psychologist or go to counselling*
- *There are also many community resources (ex. Canadian Mental Health Association)*

7. What are some ways you can help or support someone with this mental illness/addiction?

- *Learn more about PTSD*
- *Ask what you can do to help, but don't push unwanted advice.*
 - *Sometimes the actions of someone suffering from PTSD can be hard to handle, so support the feeling and don't take the actions personally.*
- *Seek outside help if the illness is affecting other family members (ex. Family counselling)*

Additional Notes/Information

Part B

Research an outdoor/wilderness based facility/program that helps treat or support individuals with the mental illness/addiction which you researched above. If you are struggling with this section, feel free to contact our OP coordinator, Lyndsay Segee (ballaghsegl@limestone.on.ca), or the Gould Lake office for ideas.

1. What is the name of the facility or program and what is their website address?

The Journey Wilderness

<http://journeywilderness.com/>

2. What is the demographic they serve?

Mental Health Issues: ADHD or ADD, Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, **PTSD**, Panic Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Learning Disabilities.

Addictive Patterns of Behavior: Substance Abuse, Internet Use, Pornography and other Addictive Behaviors

Problems Resulting from Stressful Life Events: Family Divorce, Attachment Problems, Self Injury, Trauma from Accidents, Trauma from Medical Problems, Abandonment Issues, Bereavement Issues, Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, Neglect and **PTSD**

Problems with Motivation and Behavior: Oppositional/Defiant, Anger Problems, Apathy, Irresponsibility, being Idle/Lazy, Entitlement, Expectations of Over-Indulgence and School/Legal Problems

Family Issues: Aftercare, Family Conflict, Parent-Child Difficulties, Divorce Issues, Sibling Problems and Marital Issues (as it affects the adolescent)

3. Where is the facility/program located and what type of facilities do they have?

During the Winter and Spring students will be in the west desert of Utah where it is a warmer, drier and safer environment. In the summer time the wilderness program is located adjacent to the historic lodge and cabin retreat in the pristine alpine forest at Spirit Lake. It is 10,200 feet in the Uinta Mountains of Northern Utah. The Journey Wilderness operates in different areas depending on the seasons. Students may also have opportunities to spend their time in other settings, such as Utah's West Desert, the San Rafael Swell, and the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument.

4. What is the mission statement?

"Our mission at Journey Wilderness Therapy is to provide a safe place where youth and their families can: Explore choices, discover possibilities, restore balance in their lives and Become."

5. What are the goals of the facility or program?

At Journey Wilderness their goals are to help their students to:

Honesty

- *Take a look at their lives and reflect on the positive and negative aspects. They are guided through the process of figuring out what needs to change and then helping the students to find the path to real change. This is done by helping the students to understand the nature of responsibility and accountability while being honest with themselves.*

Respect

- *Here students begin to develop a sense of community along with an appreciation of parents and family. They are encouraged and invited to use a positive attitude to make every day a personal best. They are also taught that it is OK to ask for help, and that setting goals and planning ahead is the best way to get what they want in the future. Students begin to achieve a vision of what they are capable of being.*

Trust

- *Here they will be learning new skills that they will use to change the things that get in their way of progress.*

students begin to glimpse their own potential as they become more self-sufficient, and here is where the true change of heart begins. By embracing the process of change, they are able to move forward and see they are changing.

Courage

- *students take action. They implement the things they are learning, and practice skills. Students focus on their relationship with others, particularly their families. Students work on developing communication skills, re-establishing trust, experiencing empathy and increasing tolerance. Starting with their families, they learn how to express love and appreciation, they increase their understanding of their family, and, when necessary, they begin to repair and restore their core relationships.*

6. *Describe the programming. (What do the clients do each day? How long are clients typically at the facility/program? How do the clients interact with the outdoor environment?...)*

Programs can be anywhere from 1 to 6 days in length and is dependant on where students sit on the stages of change continuum.

Trekking Day (4 to 5 days per week)

Sunrise: Wake-up, clean-up, make your own breakfast.

Pack-up and form the Morning Council Circle (This is used to line out the day, summarize the previous day, talk about the activities to come...)

Interact with nature (ie, hike, snowshoe, cross-country ski, track animals, observing habitats, eat lunch...). This takes up the majority of the day

Set up camp

Evening: Cook supper, have social development group, work on Guidebooks

Evening Council Circle (share poems and quotes, as well as talk about the word of the day)

Sundown: Settle in and complete journals ... go to sleep.

Base Camp (2 to 3 days per week)

Sunrise: Wake-up, clean-up, make your own breakfast.

Form the Morning Council Circle (This is used to line out the day, summarize the previous day, talk about the activities to come...)

Individual therapy session

Practice Woodcraft skills (ie, blacksmithing, pioneer carpentry, hide tanning, herbal medicine, eat lunch...). Multiple groups are conducted during the base camp. These include therapy groups, communication skills groups, problem-solving groups, and wilderness skills groups. These days are intense clinical days. They are referred to clinically as Intensive Outpatient (IOP), or Partial Hospitalization (PHP). We also use these days for the psychological testing and spending time going over the testing with the clients and with their parents for the teen clients and if appropriate the young adult parents with the permission of the young adults. This takes up the majority of the day

Take showers and wash clothes

Evening: Cook supper, work on the Guidebooks or Curriculum

Evening Council Circle (share poems and quotes, as well as talk about the word of the day, etc.)

Sundown: Settle in and complete journals ... go to sleep.

Additional Notes/Information

If you can find answers to any of the following questions, please do! Also, feel free to include any additional information that makes this facility or program unique.

What is the cost of entering the facility and who covers this cost?

How many staff are at the facility? What roles do they fulfill? What are their qualifications?

Students taking part in The Journey Wilderness Programs have the opportunity to receive high school credits.

Students can earn the following credits:

Language Arts: .5 credit

Science – Biology: .5 credit

Science – Earth Systems: .5 credit

Health: .5 credit

Teen Living: .5 credit

Consumer Science- Culinary Arts: .5 credit

P.E.: .5 to 1 credit

Fine Arts: .5 credit

Total: *4.5 to 5.0 credits*

At The Journey Wilderness they have 18 people working for them. They have 6 field guides, 3 trained medical professionals, 3 clinical therapists, 2 communication liaisons and 4 members that make up their leadership team.