

INclusivity in the OUTdoors

6 - Women in Outdoor Leadership

#INclusivityOUTdoors

- Demographics Poll
- Housekeeping – Mics off, chat (Gina/Neal)
- Survey and Research – This is being recorded.

- Webinar 1 - Starting the conversation - Why EDI matters
- Webinar 2 - How does inequality work?
- Webinar 3 - Injustice of multiple inequalities
- Webinar 4 - Finding Common Ground: Socio-Economic inequalities
- Webinar 5 - Becoming anti-racist
- **Webinar 6 - Women in outdoor leadership**
- Webinar 7 - Disability
- Webinar 8 - LGBTQ+
- Webinar 9 – Raising our game
- Webinar 10 – Making a change

Project Partners

- The 10-webinar series is a collaboration between :
- Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres
- Institute for Outdoor Learning
- MOSAIC Outdoors
- The Outward Bound Trust
- University of Cumbria Outdoor Studies

Supported by



- Poll Results
- Evening Outline

Trigger warning

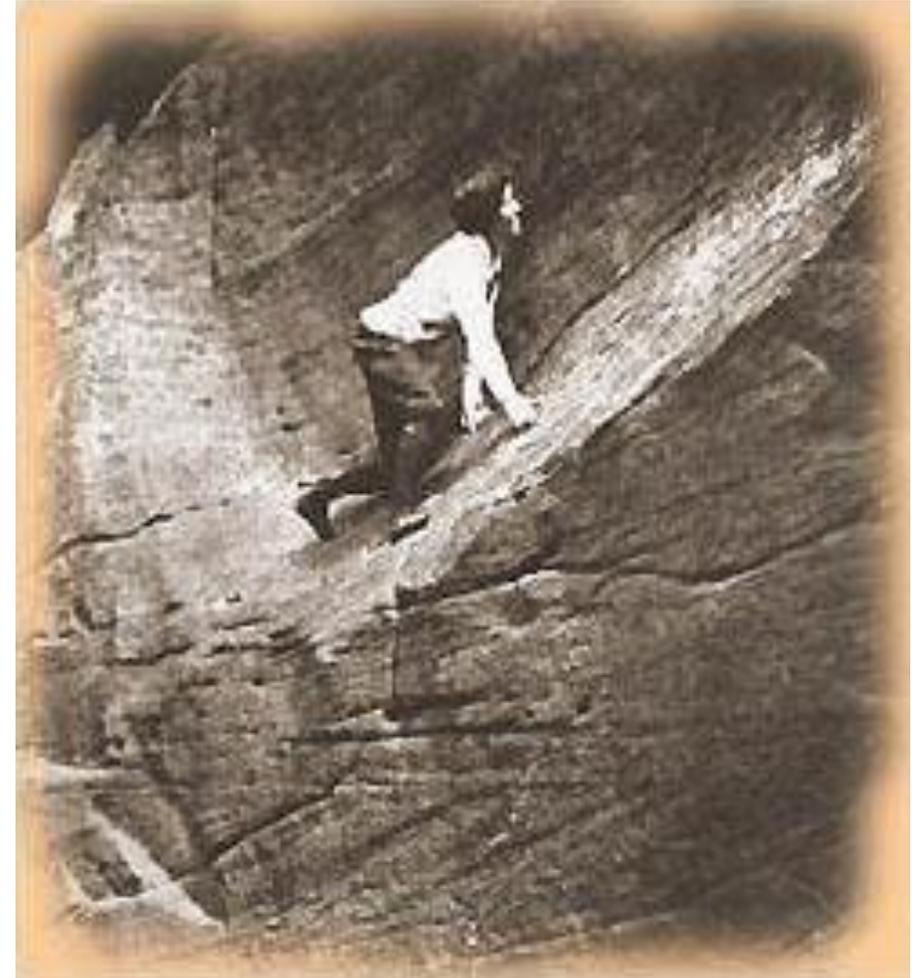
- ❖ **You may be challenged throughout this session as we talk about identity and gender.**
- ❖ Treat this as an open space - notice your own thoughts and feelings about privilege and oppression.
- ❖ It is up to you what you choose to share with others in the chat and breakout rooms.
- ❖ Respect others. Value diversity. Tread gently.

- **Introducing Dr Linda Allin**

The role of single gender environments

- Single sex [women specific] courses are not new
- Single sex outdoor environments consistently shown to be supportive, empowering spaces for women (Nolan and Priest, 1993; Humberstone, 2000; Mitten, 1882; 2018; Allen-Craig et al, 2018)
- Women specific courses are experienced as effective learning environments where women can be free to 'not know' (O'Brien & Allin, 2021; Avner et al., in review)
- Women specific courses are still controversial

WHY?



THE OUTWARD BOUND TRUST – WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

BEING BOLDER

Taking the first steps to attracting and retaining an Instructor Team which more closely represents the backgrounds of the young people we work with.

PRACTICALITIES

OBT ACTION

1. RAISING AWARENESS

2. EVERYDAY ACTIONS

3. DEVELOPING DIFFERENTLY



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3. DEVELOPING DIFFERENTLY: WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP COURSE



WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP COURSE

Practicalities

10 week course

Between training and assessment of core NGBs.

- Technical skills training
- Psychology of potential/personal development
- Mentoring and working alongside experienced instructors.



INITIAL CHALLENGES

What leadership or career challenges did applicants describe?

- Feelings of not belonging as a leader in the outdoors – self doubt
- Not feeling “good enough” to do certain job roles, pursue qualifications
- Lacking peers or networks to train with

- Being mistaken for the assistant, or teacher rather than outdoor leader
- Surprise from participants/staff that you can ... drive a minibus, rig a climb etc
- Being deferred to more pastoral or administrative roles
- Being talked over, taken over from or suggestions ignored
- Frequently being in a minority on courses or in workplaces



And, you know, it's one of those weird things - I couldn't necessarily give you... Oh, such-and-such person said this on this day - and that made me feel like that. It wasn't like that. It was very nuanced. It's really... Sort of, lots of passing comments and attitudes that are shared, and just a building repertoire of, oh, I'm not good enough.

Issy





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THE RESEARCH

Qualitative Study

1:1 Post Course Interviews

Thematic Analysis

Transformational Learning Theory (Jack Mezirow)

PERSONAL CHANGE

What changes occurred that could lead to overcoming career and leadership challenges?

Confidence...

1. TECHNICAL ABILITY
2. SENSE OF SELF, VALUES, PERSONAL STRENGTHS
3. TO PARTICIPATE IN LEARNING ENHANCING BEHAVIOURS

TECHNICAL PROGRESSION

View of qualifications

“Just the idea of going out climbing and being able to do the assessments. That just always was like, I’m never going to be able to do that sort of thing, like really unachievable, and actually that week doing my first... learning to place gear, doing it whilst on a top rope and then being able to go and do my first trad lead... I’m going, I can do this. It is possible. I will be able to do it.”



DEEPER PERSONAL CONFIDENCE

Self, values, strengths

“Yeah I feel I can stand up for myself now and like that my voice does matter and that if I don't agree with something or there is a different way of doing something I can contribute something”



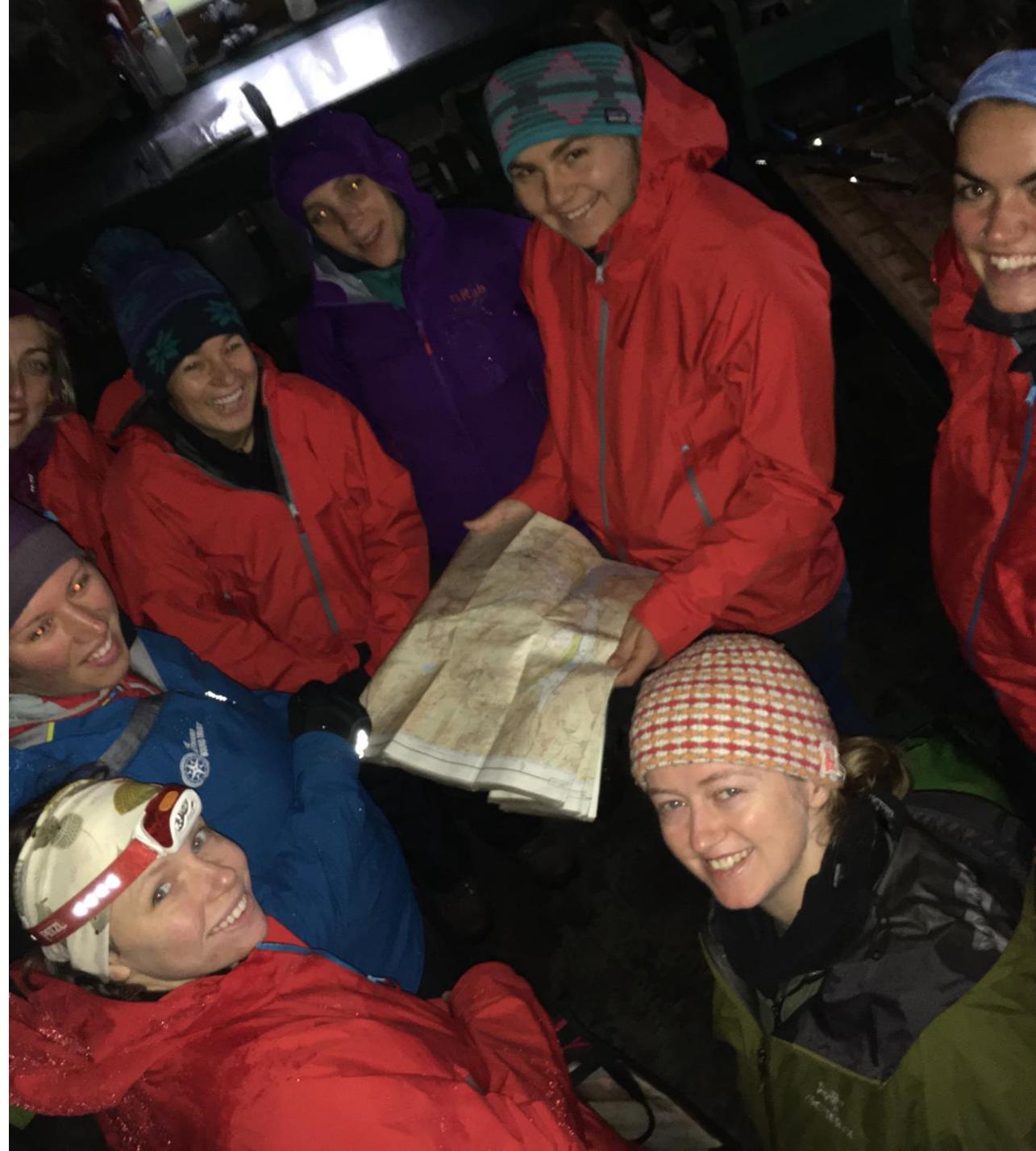
IMPROVING OR PROVING?

Confidence to participate in learning enhancing behaviours

"I feel confident to be able to go, yeah, I don't really know what I'm doing here - can you help me out? And not feel that that's a... That that's a representation of... Of me in the outdoors, and also all women in the outdoors. And I think, like, that kind of burden has been somewhat lifted. Because... Yeah, I just feel that it's an acceptable thing to do."



And this led to...





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WHAT CONTRIBUTED?

A supportive environment

Course ethos – Growth Mindset

Course Structure – Technical,
inter-personal and intra-personal

Female Peers



#MORETHANYOETHINK

A *SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

(*not to be confused with easy!)

- A very obvious lack of ego.'
- Feeling 'accepted.'
- Genuinely understanding, valuing and helping each other towards goals.
- Collaborating rather than competing
- Being able to 'ask questions about anything'
- An 'openness to being vulnerable and sharing how you're feeling.'



COURSE ETHOS GROWTH MINDSET

Positive learning environment
In your own mind!

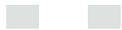
When all outcomes are viewed as a 'successful' part of learning, there is an acceptance, rather than judgement of current skill level as a start point to progress from. Coupled with a supportive learning environment meant for participants that *'it just frees you up to try.'*



COURSE STRUCTURE

Technical and Intra-personal

“They’ve taught us very good map reading skills and judgement making and decision-making and the psychology of holding yourself back and what is it that’s holding you back, and you delve deep into that and remove that ...blocker and you’re like right ok, that’s gone and that’s within me and you’ve now gone and taught me how to read a map and put good gear in and set up climbs, and I’ve a load of systems to work with now, that, there you go...”



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FEMALE ENVIRONMENT



#MORETHANYOUGHT



And I don't actually have that much contact with females within this industry. And so I find, as a result, I don't meet the females. And so I don't have females to go out with and progress with. So, I don't have that like... You know, that circle of friendship of females. Just men all the time. Which is fine. They're great. But it's nice to have some women around too, sometimes





“It’s nice to be, you know, the leader or the middle of the pack, you know. And just be able to be in that environment where you can recognise those things about yourself”





“Following this course I think, you know, my respect for women has grown as well. Like, I think... I don’t think I didn’t respect women before this course, but I think it’s just reinforced how... Like, how awesome women are!

You can go on these big adventures and be emotional and vulnerable, and at the same time – it doesn’t have to be one or the other.”



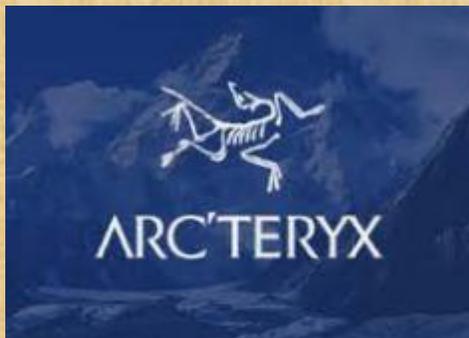
Green Recovery Challenge Fund



[HTTPS://WWW.OUTWARDBOUND.ORG.UK/WOMENS-OUTDOOR-LEADERSHIP-COURSE](https://www.outwardbound.org.uk/womens-outdoor-leadership-course)

WOLC 2021

APPLICATIONS OPENING NEXT WEEK!



POSITIVE RIPPLES

Actions inspired by conversations and the WOLC

Give people with power and influence permission and encouragement to explore and become more critically conscious and change can happen.

CONCLUDE...

Take Aways

- **AWARENESS** – become critically conscious of gender equality.
- **CHOICES** – notice where you have the influence to make new choices at an individual / organisational level.
- **CHANGE** – Act! Do something differently... and notice the impact.



Where can you
find opportunities
for ACTION and
CHANGE?



• Thank you