



There is more to us than we know. If we can be made to see it, perhaps for the rest of our lives, we will be unwilling to settle for less.

-Kurt Hahn

*(Founder of
Outward Bound
1886-1974)*

Dear Participant,

Welcome! We are so excited to have you on board. Your upcoming Outward Bound course is an incredible opportunity to learn new skills, take on challenges with new friends and create memories that will last a lifetime.

It is our mission to help you realize your potential and get the most from your experience. During your HIOBS course you will have the opportunity to stretch your pre-conceived limits, discover new internal motivation to seek and meet challenges, connect with the beauty of nature, learn the power of teamwork and practice compassion.

The rest of this document contains more information and participation policies, as well as answers to frequently asked questions. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to seeing you at course start!

Sincerely,

Sarah Cotton

Custom Program Coordinator & Course Advisor

Risks and Safety

Living and traveling in remote wilderness settings exposes you to risks, many of which may be unfamiliar. We believe that learning about and accepting risks, and training and preparing students to manage those risks, provides valuable insight and experience unavailable in any other classroom. Risk and uncertainty are central to the concept of challenge and adventure. The intent is not to avoid activities involving risk but to recognize, prepare for, and successfully manage that risk. Risk, along with challenge, is a platform for delivering meaningful growth, physical fitness, and leadership. Our commitment to delivering those benefits to you stands alongside our commitment to safety.

Our staff members at all levels are dedicated to your safety by their words, actions and values. Outward Bound instructors receive regular training in the outdoor activities and environments in which we run our courses. Our programs are regularly reviewed by outdoor professionals from inside and outside the Outward Bound system in order to identify potential hazards and update best practices. Outward Bound has been a national leader in wilderness safety for over 50 years, and frequently advises and assists other organizations in outdoor adventure risk management.

You will be traveling in remote areas that are many hours - even days - away from definitive medical care. Each course carries a cell or satellite phone for emergency communication. However, coverage in the backcountry is limited and there is no guarantee that any electronic device will work at any given time from any given location. For your safety, it is extremely important that you share any and all medical or psychological issues you have when filling out the medical history section of the application.

Instructors

Hurricane Island Outward Bound School instructors range in age from 20 to 73. The average age is around 30. Some are full time wilderness instructors; others are working toward bachelor or graduate degrees in a variety of fields; many of them work for most of the year as classroom teachers, firefighters, engineers, consultants, ski instructors, geologists and EMTs. They share a love of wilderness travel and the power of the wilderness classroom on the lives of people of all ages. They believe that traveling through demanding environments and collaboratively and creatively meeting challenges builds skills and habits that students will apply throughout the rest of the lives, wherever their interests take them.

Our instructors are trained to anticipate and teach the management of the risks inherent in travel in remote areas. They are trained in first aid, search, rescue and emergency management, but they cannot guarantee your absolute safety; risk and uncertainty are always present.

Instructors work in teams of two or three, teaching six to eleven students. Instructor teams are usually made up of men and women, but skill and teaching ability are the primary staffing criteria. One instructor in every team is a lead instructor with multiple seasons of training and experience who has single point accountability for the safety and effectiveness of the course in the field, and for mentoring the other staff.

Our instructors must meet rigorous minimum technical requirements:

- Medical: All have CPR, and are Wilderness First Responders; Emergency Medical Technician, Medical Person in Charge (US Coast Guard), or Outdoor Emergency Care (National Ski Patrol) certified.
- Guiding: All instructor teams have at least one who holds a Maine Trip Leader Permit, and some are Registered Maine Guides.
- Sailing: Lead instructors hold a US Coast Guard Captain's License.
- Instructors who teach sailing and canoeing courses hold Lifeguard or Emergency Water safety certifications.
- Whitewater and rock climbing instructors are trained and assessed according to an industry leading, specific in-house standard that draws from American Canoe Association (ACA) canoe & swift water rescue standards, and American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA) climbing instructor standards.

Supervision

Our supervision policies are based on our belief that well-trained and educated teenagers and adults alike make good decisions with or without direct instructor supervision. Outward Bound maintains high staff-to- student ratios (approximately 1:5), and throughout the course students will learn the skills necessary for safe wilderness living and travel. There will also be times when students are not directly supervised, such as when cooking, setting up tarps, camping, sleeping, solo, longer backpacking trips, and traveling on Final Expedition. At such times, the instructors will be nearby and the students will be able to ask questions or get help if needed. For the majority of the course, students will be with their instructors. However, the instructors often do not sleep in the same shelters with them and they do not monitor them constantly.

Final Expedition and Independent Student Travel

A core component of Outward Bound learning is for students to put into practice the skills they have learned. Courses two weeks or longer may culminate in a Final Expedition that will include independent student travel. We vary the level of independence allowed based on student age, course length, time spent in an activity, environment, and the instructors' assessment of the group's technical and social competence. On sailing expeditions, students will make decisions independent of the instructors but the instructors will be present on the boat.

General Course Information

Electronics

All electronic devices (including cell phones, music players, computers and navigation devices) will be stored in a safe location at the base, and are not permitted on course.

Medications

All medications must be approved by the Admissions Department prior to your course. On courses for 13-17 year olds, medication is overseen by the instructors. Prescription medications must be in their original containers, and necessary OTC medications in original, unopened containers. We recommend bringing backup doses in separate containers for those medications that are required to prevent serious consequences. For safety, please pack back-up essential medications in carry-on luggage.

Emergency Notification

If there is an emergency at home and it is necessary to contact a student, please call **855-802-0307**. During office hours (Monday - Friday 8 AM to 5 PM Eastern Time), you will reach our Camden office. **After hours, call 855-802-0307, and then follow the prompts for emergencies.** This line forwards automatically to the on-call cell phone where you should leave a message with your contact details, the course number, name of student and brief synopsis of the reason for your call. The on-call person will return your call ASAP.

Daily Life

A Typical Day—A typical day usually begins with getting up early, making breakfast, taking down shelters, planning the route and then traveling most of the day, stopping occasionally for breaks, lunch and lessons along the way. Once you reach that day's destination, group members divide and conquer to get dinner cooked and shelters set up. After dinner you may meet to discuss the next day's plans, or to discuss leadership and teamwork methods before crawling into your sleeping bag for a well-deserved rest. What do we do on days when it rains? It's the same, with rain gear on.

Camp Chores—Because this is an experiential course and not a guided trip, all group members will pitch in to do all camp chores, including cooking, washing pots, setting up tents and organizing food and equipment. You'll find that as the expedition progresses, your mastery of these camp craft skills will enable you to operate more efficiently and effectively around camp. Students participate in cleaning and repairing equipment at course end,

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readying it for use by the next group.

Group Living—Working and living within a small group is an opportunity to make lifelong friends and create memories that will last a lifetime. It is also often a source of friction and challenge. You may feel frustration or annoyance with your teammates at times as your group attempts to set and meet your goals, and make decisions big and small. Our students are diverse in their backgrounds and previous experience, and everyone reacts to challenges differently. It is essential to come ready to work as a team, be inclusive, offer help to others, and ask for it when you need it! All courses are co-ed unless otherwise published, but there is no guarantee that a course will attract a mixed gender group.

Hygiene—Though showering and washing hair are typically not options during course, groups carry soap with them and hand washing is a regular routine. Students may bring sanitary wipes for personal use. Each course environment has its own appropriate hygiene practices, and the instructors will explain these at the beginning of your course. Every course environment has different techniques and environmentally appropriate practices for going to the bathroom. You will learn how to dispose of human waste in latrines, cat holes and other wilderness-area specific methods.

Food—All students take turns preparing hot, tasty meals, initially with coaching from the instructors. The foods are mainly vegetarian, consisting of grains, pasta, nuts, beans, fruit and cereals. A typical breakfast might be granola or oatmeal; lunch could include tortillas and cheese, or peanut butter and jam on crackers; dinner might be macaroni and cheese or beans and rice. We are able to accommodate some dietary requirements and restrictions, and these are reviewed on a case-by-case basis - so please let your course advisor know well in advance. All students must be prepared to eat what's available to maintain their energy, even if it isn't familiar or preferred.

Solo:

The solo experience is a standard element of Outward Bound courses. Students do not travel during this time; they are camped apart from the rest of the group and the instructors (by 50-200 yards, generally) to rest and reflect in solitude.

While on solo, students have drinking water, warm clothes, a tarp for shelter, sleeping bag, journal, pens and a little food. Students on solo also have a whistle with which they may alert their instructors in the unlikely event of an emergency. Before solo, students receive basic first aid training, are carefully briefed in expectations and emergency signaling, and are given ideas for using the time to the advantage of the rest of the course and life after returning home. Instructors check on each student every 12-24 hours and resupply their water as needed. Solo on one-week courses is generally four to twelve hours; on two-week courses, students solo for 12 to 48 hours. On three-week courses or longer, solo is at least 48 hours, with a maximum length of 72 hours.

Preparing Yourself

While you do not have to be a gifted athlete or in peak physical condition to attend an Outward Bound course, you do have to be in shape and motivated, ready to take on the challenges you will find on your course. There are two kinds of strength necessary to complete your course: physical and mental. Your body needs to be strong, but you must also come with an open mind, determined spirit and willing teamwork mentality.

Whether you paddle a canoe or row a boat for six or eight hours in a day, carry a 50+ pound pack for 10 miles, climb 2500 feet of elevation gain in a single morning or scale a rock wall, it will push you and reward you on many levels. Most people find that Outward Bound presents them with challenges that they are not sure they can accomplish. That's okay; it's actually the point.

Every single course—regardless of the activities—is unique since there are so many different routes, weather patterns and personalities. No matter how much you read the materials we provide and no matter how many questions you ask a Course Advisor, the reality is you will not really know exactly what it will be like until you get

there and do your best. So...how do you prepare for the unknown?

Mental Preparation

We can't really offer you a training regimen to mentally prepare for Outward Bound. But we can suggest a few things to think about and be prepared for:

Teamwork—Be ready to be part of a team. Think about other team experiences you have had in the past whether they are sports teams, school plays or business meetings. Come up with a few observations about what has made your teams successful in the past and plan on being a positive contributor during your course.

Living with Less—Look around your house and the “real” world and think about what you have and what you need. Things you currently take for granted like hot running water, upholstered furniture and sidewalks will not be part of your experience. When you get into the rhythm of wilderness living, you will see that despite the complexity of your everyday life, life on the trail is ultimately about food, clothing, shelter and each other. We will also ask you to leave behind non-essentials like deodorant, make up, electronic devices and books.

Being Away from Home—Whether it is the first or the 27th time you have been away from home, you might not ever have been this out of touch. The feeling of being alone and away from family might not happen immediately, but in a lot of cases it will occur while on course. Please ask your instructors and teammates for help.

Compassion—Compassion is one of Outward Bound's core values. Be prepared to offer it, and expect it from your teammates. You will travel with—and rely upon—a group of strangers each of whom has different reasons for attending Outward Bound and will come with varying levels of physical and mental strength. You may find that you will need to make compromises in your own expectations to support other members of your team. It is important to remember that in such a small group setting, your attitude and actions affect everyone.

Group Discussion—Outward Bound delivers learning, in large part, by discussing course experiences and creating strategies to take new ideas home and apply them at work, school, and your community. Be prepared to share your perspective and gain insight from others.

Physical Preparation

Every minute you put in prior to your course will pay off once you get out there. We know that if you don't already do it, adopting a daily exercise routine is not easy and that it can be challenging to find the motivation. So, if you do not already engage in 30 minutes of intense aerobic exercise at least three times a week, begin now. The most important thing is to find an activity that you enjoy doing. While exercising three times a week is the minimum, five or six times a week is optimum.

Build Aerobic Fitness

Before starting any fitness program it is always a good idea to consult your physician. The most important kind of training is aerobic fitness (running, bicycling, skating, swimming, etc.), which stimulates heart and lung activity for at least 30 continuous minutes. The aim of your training program will be to increase your body's capacity to maximize oxygen intake. This will increase the capability of your heart and circulatory system to supply blood and oxygen to all organs and tissues. If you are currently working out three days a week, consider building to five or six days. Stretch and work out with light weights to maintain flexibility and build strength.

Running is a great option for aerobic fitness. You should also consider specific training techniques to prepare for your course such as climbing stairs with weight on your back or using a rowing machine. Please contact your Course Advisor to learn about specific training needed for your course activities.

Adopt Healthy Habits

A great way to prepare physically is to adopt healthy eating habits and focus on being well-hydrated.

1. Arrive at your course start well rested.
2. Reduce consumption of fatty foods, excessive alcohol and caffeine, as these substances require a lot of water and oxygen to metabolize.
3. Eat plenty of vegetables, fruit and unrefined carbohydrates (i.e., whole grains).
4. Drink water regularly - instead of juice or soda – and start drinking it whenever you're thirsty.
5. If you use tobacco or nicotine, stop now.
6. Practice "tech free time". You will be leaving electronics (including your cellphone) either at home, or locked away at base while you are on course. Giving yourself a chance to have some time before course where you are not reliant on these technologies may help you adjust when you get on course.

Don't overdo it. Many people (especially those who delay the start of an exercise routine) try to do too much too quickly, the result of believing that the harder the body is pushed the faster it will improve. In fact, the opposite is true. The more moderately you increase your training, as long as you are increasing your heart rate adequately, the more quickly you will improve. Going too fast too soon can result in discomfort and discouragement, and even injury.

And, finally – please refer to our document "Physical Fitness Preparation" for more ideas on how to prepare. It includes a suggested 8-week fitness program and expands upon how to be prepared physically AND mentally for this fantastic opportunity.