

Admissions Handbook

Dear Student and Family,

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. By signing up for a HIOBS course, your journey has already begun. During your 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. Our courses are physically and mentally challenging, laying the groundwork for self-confidence and discovery to improve or replace old patterns within yourself. Compassion, leadership and service are all integral components of your Outward Bound experience. Now is the time to begin to prepare yourself mentally and physically for this remarkable, often life-changing, opportunity.

*You must **submit all requested enrollment forms within the timeline we provide in your welcome email**, and participate in a phone interview with a Course Advisor in order to be cleared for participation on your course...you may be asked for additional medical or other documentation as part of this process. Please respond quickly and efficiently so we can work you through to approval so you can book travel!*

Please create a plan to stay on top of pre-trip arrangements - including submitting your enrollment forms in a timely fashion, organizing your payment plan with our finance department (including 529's, scholarships or financial aid arrangements), arranging travel, purchasing trip insurance from a third party – as well as preparing physically and mentally for course.

If you do not already exercise regularly, start a plan NOW to get in shape. You can use the 8-week fitness plan we outline in our Physical Fitness and Preparedness document to help you get ready. Check out your course page for that and other helpful information! You will also receive weekly emails from us to help you prepare.

The following pages in this document contain important admission, participation and cancellation policies, as well as answers to frequently asked questions. It is important that you review these before proceeding further with your admissions process. Please do not hesitate to call or email your Course Advisor with any questions.

We look forward to seeing you!

Sincerely,

Mish Sommers, Director of Admissions

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)

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The Application Process

Please note that in your Welcome Email, there are links to your **Course Page** at the HIOBS website, which is classified by your COURSE NUMBER (e.g. HWYS-741).

Every HIOBS course has its own **Course Page** on www.hiobs.org with all the relevant documents you need access to. Please refer to the Welcome Email for which documents your Course Advisor has requested you to download. If you have trouble accessing the website, please contact your Course Advisor and we can send the documents to you in .pdf form.

At the very minimum, we will need you to complete and return the following:

- Medical form(s),
- Liability Release form,
- Student Questionnaire,
- possibly also a Parent Questionnaire, if the student is 21 years or younger,
- Commitment to Excellence,
- Trip Insurance Acknowledgement Page

Other documents your Course Advisor may request you download could include questionnaires regarding a particular condition you have, or a form to send to your doctor to complete. Our goal is for every student to have a successful course. By clearly explaining all physical, emotional or behavioral conditions with us on the medical record, you help us assist you in choosing and preparing for the course that is right for you. Failure to provide accurate and complete information could compromise safety and course quality for yourself or your child, and other students.

To hold your spot on course, these must be returned to us within the timeline your Course Advisor gives you in your Welcome Email. If it is fewer than 60 days to course start, you will need to return them within 5 days.

After we receive all of your forms, there may be additional follow-up, and your efficient participation in the process is appreciated. If you have a condition that we cannot accommodate safely on a remote, wilderness expedition, we will be unable to clear you (see Medical Screening and Accurate Information, p.4 and our Essential Eligibility Criteria). Our goal is to complete your enrollment as quickly as possible; and so the more information we have and the more promptly receive it, the more we can work with you in a timely fashion.

We schedule an interview with applicants only after we have completed the entire medical screening process.

On your Course Page, you will find a lot of information about your course that will help you to prepare and plan ahead, such as:

- Course Overview
- Clothing and Equipment Recommendations and Packing list
- Travel instructions.

Please note: we do not recommend you book travel until you are notified that you are cleared for participation.

If you do decide to book travel before you are cleared for participation, we highly recommend you purchase trip insurance in case you are not cleared, or the course is cancelled (see low course enrollment cancellations, p. 5).

If you enroll within 90 days of course, all of our policies still apply, so it is very important that you understand the admissions, cancellation and transfer policies as outlined.

Admissions Policies

Deposit

Outward Bound requires a \$500 deposit, submitted with a completed enrollment (often an online enrollment) to reserve your spot on course. The \$500 deposit is applied toward the total cost of tuition for the course, and includes a \$150 non-refundable enrollment processing fee. In most cases the \$500 deposit is not refundable within 90 days of course start.

Deposit Refund Policy

The deposit includes a \$150 non-refundable enrollment processing fee and the remaining \$350 is refundable if you cancel your enrollment more than 90 days before course start date. The following policies also apply:

1. In the event that you are on the waitlist and a spot does not open up, Outward Bound will refund the full \$500 deposit;
2. If the course is cancelled by Hurricane Island Outward Bound School, we will either offer you a different course that fits your schedule, and transfer you – or refund you the full \$500.
3. If you apply for financial aid, and then must cancel because you are still unable to attend the course due to insufficient funds, we will refund the full \$500.
4. In the event that you are not cleared to participate on the course, Outward Bound will retain the \$150 non-refundable enrollment processing fee and refund \$350 of the deposit.
5. If you are cleared to participate and cancel less than 90 days before course start, Outward Bound will retain the full \$500 deposit (see below for further cancellation policies regarding the balance of tuition <74 days).
6. If you are more than 30 days past due on paying the balance of your course tuition, Outward Bound will cancel your enrollment and retain the full deposit.

Please note: full payment for a course is due 90 days before course start – no matter where you are in the Admissions process. After that due date, we cannot guarantee your spot on the course without having received all of your paperwork, and the full tuition payment. We are happy to arrange **payment plans, we accept 529 plans through third parties, and have financial aid available so please let us know if you have specific financial constraints.**

Tuition

Tuition covers the cost of provided food, instructors, permits, gear and equipment. Not included in this cost are personal expenses such as clothing, insurance (health and course), airfare and baggage fees.

Inactive Status

If your paperwork and/or payment is not received by the due date noted in your WELCOME EMAIL, this may be considered a cancellation due to **inactive status** and you will lose your position on the course as well as the \$500 deposit. To avoid cancellation due to an **inactive status**, get your paperwork in quickly or contact your student services representative to discuss a possible extension.

Medical Screening and Accurate Information

Our powerful learning experiences start with a diverse group of individuals forming a team in a wild, natural setting. Our Admissions Department conducts individual assessments of each applicant’s motivation, physical, mental and emotional readiness. The goal of the process is to use the information that is provided to us to determine whether the applicant is able to participate in and complete their selected course. Please see our Essential Eligibility Criteria document for more information. Because of the intense and rigorous nature of the courses and the remote course environments, Outward Bound is not an appropriate choice for all applicants. Applicants who do not meet our criteria may be screened off, asked to consider a different course type, or one at a later date.

Failure to provide accurate complete information could compromise your or other participant’s safety and course quality. Our goal is for every student to have a successful course. By sharing all physical, emotional, or behavioral conditions we can help you choose the course that will provide you with the highest chance for success. Additionally, undisclosed conditions that result in early departure are not eligible for a refund (see Early Departures section).

Please report any new injuries, illnesses, new medications or changes to your prescription to the Admissions Department as soon as they happen. If you arrive on course with an unreported medical condition, other diagnosis, or if you have changed the type or amount of medications since submitting your application without informing the Admissions Department you may be dismissed from course.

Cancellation, Course Transfers and Early Departure Policies

Please review the Cancellation Policies thoroughly. If you are the parent of a student, we recommend you review this policy with your child, as you will be relying on him or her to put considerable effort into the course and be an active, responsible and safe participant.

Cancellation Penalties

If you cancel for any reason (including, but not limited to cancellations due to schedule changes, lack of motivation, summer school, work conflicts, unreported pre-existing conditions) fewer than 90 days from the course start date (regardless of your enrollment date), the cancellation penalties listed below will apply to the full published tuition. The penalty is not based on the amount paid to date but the amount due on the day you cancel relative to the course start date.

Time to Course Start:	89-75 days	74-60 days	59-45 days	44-0 days
Forfeiture:	We retain the \$500 non-refundable deposit	We retain \$500 deposit & 25% of remaining course tuition	We retain \$500 deposit & 50% of remaining course tuition	We retain 100% of course tuition

Course Transfers

You may transfer from your initial course to another, but such transfers may incur an additional cost. There is no penalty 60 or more days from the course start date. A \$100 Transfer Fee will apply to subsequent transfers within 60 days from the course start date, and you will forfeit 50% of your payment. Outward Bound will not issue a refund for any transfers fewer than 30 days from the course start date.

Waitlists

To be enrolled on the waitlist for a course, we require the \$500 deposit, your **completed paperwork** and an individual student interview. If a spot opens up on course, we will offer it to the first applicant who completed the paperwork and interview, not to the applicant who enrolled first. You will have 24 hours to respond to the offer of

a spot should it open up. If you elect not to take the open spot offered, or do not respond within 24 hours, the \$150 enrollment processing fee will not be refunded. If a spot has not opened by 30 days before course start, we will refund the deposit if you wish to drop off the list at that time. If we are unable to offer you a spot, we will refund the entire \$500 deposit. Waitlist spots sometimes become available as close as 5 days before course!

Early Departures or No-Shows

If a student does not intend to, or is not able to show up for course start on the day, it is vital that you let us know that immediately. If there is a delay in travel, we can often work around it, but if the student is not intending to be on course at all we will possibly need to make course and crew adjustments. There is no refund in this situation.

We strive to support and encourage students to successfully complete their course. Our instructors are experienced in helping students push past doubt and actively try to solve any issues that seem to be preventing them from fully engaging. If a student is exhibiting these behaviors on course, instructors typically start by working with the student individually, then contacting the base camp for additional resources or calling a parent, then, if the problems persist, removing the students from the course.

If a student is determined to leave the course or is not willing to fully participate and follow instructions, then for their personal safety and the safety of the group, we simply cannot and will not make them stay. Parents will be contacted to arrange for their child's travel home. **Expulsion** will result if we determine that a student is:

- Unwilling or unmotivated to participate in course activities;
- Unable or unwilling to adapt to the physical and interpersonal rigors of the expedition;
- Posing a danger to self or others through misconduct or unsafe practices;
- Defiant, harassing, or otherwise compromising the emotional or physical safety of others;
- Using alcohol, drugs (including misuse of prescription drugs) or tobacco; or
- Engaging in sexual activity

No matter the reason for no-shows at course start or early departures, there will be no refund or credit of tuition.

Low Enrollment Course Cancellation

In cases of low enrollment, we may need to cancel a course, and in this situation we will offer you the opportunity to transfer to another course or cancel your enrollment. We will advise applicants of their course cancellation no later than two weeks prior to the course start date (usually longer) or 30 days prior to an international or semester course start. Should we cancel your course, all payments are refundable or transferable to another course/school. HIOBS is not responsible for any other expenses including travel, insurances, lodging or clothing/gear and we will not "clear you to book travel" until we have our minimum number of enrollments. We define "firm" applicants as those who are fully paid and have been cleared to participate. Once we achieve these requirements, your Course Advisor will notify all "firm" applicants by email, phone or both. We work diligently to confirm courses as early as possible. However, some courses may enroll slowly, which may delay this process.

Trip Insurance Recommendation

We all know that the unexpected can happen. Sudden illness, injury or family emergencies are all things you cannot predict, but they can stop you or your child from attending or completing a HIOBS course. We ask that you let us know if you purchase, or intend to purchase, trip insurance by signing our Trip Insurance form.

Our investment in planning, staffing and provisioning for your attendance cannot be recovered in the event you cancel, transfer from one course to another, or depart a course early. It is important you understand our policies, clearly outlined above. Please read them carefully (and, if you are the parent of a HIOBS student, review them with your child) because there are financial consequences associated with last minute enrollment changes and course departures, even if the reason was out of your control.

The best way to protect yourself from financial loss is to purchase a trip insurance policy that will reimburse you for unrecoverable expenses (e.g., course tuition, airfare, and/or emergency evacuation) or an event that forces you to cancel, transfer or leave a course early. We strongly recommend that all students purchase a trip insurance plan

through a third party. Some families prefer to shop for trip insurance online (for example insuremytrip.com) or a travel agent can help you. If you prefer to work through an agent, Ruby Fredericks at Southlands Travel works primarily with Travelex Insurance, and is knowledgeable about all of our programs – her # is (303) 680-5241.

Whether you shop for your own coverage, or buy it through an agent, make sure that you know what is covered and what is excluded. For instance, not all plans will cover an injury that is a pre-existing condition. Most plans will not cover a student who is choosing not to attend. Also, some trip insurance policies require you sign up within a certain number of days (often 30 days, or less) of placing your deposit, so **prompt action is recommended**.

Risks and Safety

Living and traveling in remote wilderness settings exposes students 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 students stands alongside our commitment to safety.

Our staff members at all levels are dedicated to students' 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.

Students 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 our students' safety, it is extremely important that any and all medical or psychological issues are shared 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 students absolute safety; as 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 prescription medications must be approved by the Admissions Department prior to your course. There is often additional paperwork required from your health care professional and we will address this in the medical screening process.

On courses for 14-17 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. It is vital that we have current documentation for medications, so if there are ANY CHANGES in medication you MUST inform your Course Advisor.

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, then dial 1, 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 raingear 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, 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. Tobacco products are not allowed on course.
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.