

Outdoor Adventure Therapy: Why, What and How?

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Topics to Be Covered

- What is outdoor/adventure therapy?
- How does it differ from conventional therapy?
- How does it work: What are its key ingredients?

Outdoor/adventure Therapy

An extraordinary breadth & range

Main areas of application

- Highly adventurous activities such as long wilderness journeys
- Facility based adventurous activities, using natural or purpose built features
- Quiet forms of outdoor therapy, involving contact with Nature

Sharp contrasts:

- Extreme forms of challenge, where danger and discomfort are real
- Settings in which danger is perceived rather than real
- Ecological and horticultural settings where emphasis is on being with Nature

- How does
Outdoor/Adventure Therapy
map onto other therapeutic
approaches?

Examples of contrasting approaches

- Our work with disordered eating – Client-centred approach
- Group wilderness journeys – Narrative Therapy/ Psychodynamic approach
- Brat Camp - CBT

How does O/At differ from conventional therapy?

- Importance of client/therapist relationship
- Significant role played by Nature
- Choice of setting
- Numerous distinct key ingredients

Key Ingredients

- Novel settings
- Experiential/activity oriented
- Working on the edge of comfort zones
- Pharmacological effects of endorphins
- Use of metaphor
- Transfer of effect
- Existential givens of Nature
- Variety of processing opportunities

Working with Metaphors

- **Experiential Activity:**
- In groups of three, work together: two clients, one therapist
- Location: In the Conference Centre grounds.
- Groups should use the walk to and from the site a part of the therapeutic experience