Department of Outdoor Education

Challenge Course Facilitator Handbook

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Section One: The Challenge Course Facilitator Handbook

The PPM and Facilitator Handbook

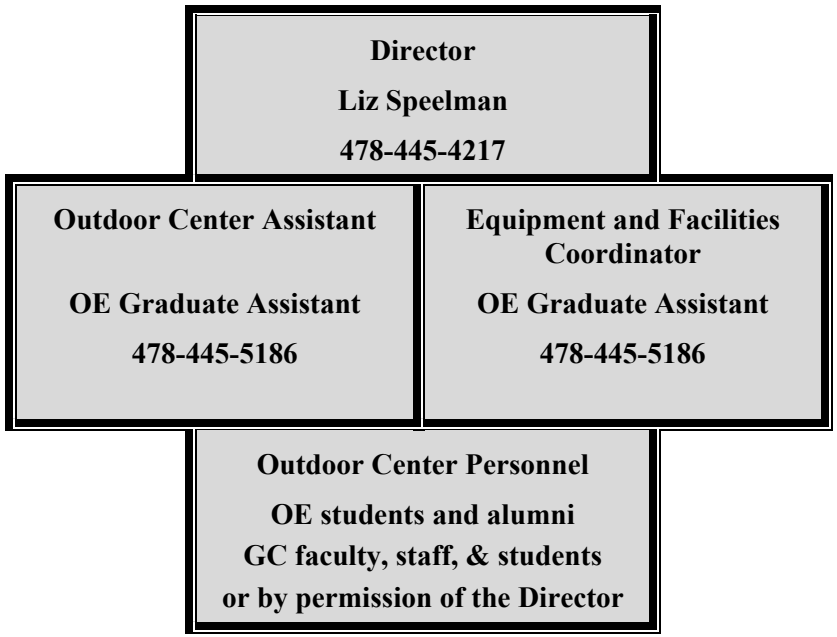
The Outdoor Center at Georgia College (OC) offers group development, challenge course and Tango Tower programs for Georgia College (GC) students, faculty and staff, and the local and professional community. This facilitator handbook contains Local Operating Procedures (LOP's) for OC staff conducting these programs. It is different from the Department of Outdoor Education Policy and Procedures Manual (PPM) in that it is focused solely on a specific set of activities for OC program delivery. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the PPM, which contains detailed information about general administrative policy and technical activities taught in outdoor education classes or trainings. To facilitate the use of this handbook, **PPM Reminders** are inserted throughout.

Outdoor Center at Georgia College Mission

The Outdoor Center at Georgia College provides excellent technical training, outdoor recreation education, leadership training, and group development experiences. We serve outdoor education professionals, Georgia College faculty, staff, and students, and members of the surrounding community. We provide programs and services led by competent personnel in compliance with The Association for Experiential Education accreditation standards. The Outdoor Center at Georgia College seeks to enhance the mission of the state's public liberal arts university through safe[1], environmentally sound, and effective programs and services.

Organization Chart

[1] Outdoor activities by their nature involve inherent risk. Every effort is made to provide programs that respect emotional, social, intellectual, and physical safety. However, it is impossible to anticipate all factors that impact safety. Students acknowledge their understanding of and agreement to participate in potentially unsafe programs by signing appropriate risk management forms.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Definitions

Behavioral Contracts are used by facilitators to help groups develop operating norms and to explain non-negotiable rules. There are a wide range of options for integrating behavioral norms with program activities depending on program goals, client characteristics, sequence, and logistics.

Buddy Spotter is the spokesperson for the spotting team and is selected by the active participant (i.e. climber, faller, etc.) to support her/him throughout the activity. The buddy spotter checks to make sure that spotters are "ready to spot" and interacts with the participant on behalf of other spotters. The buddy spotter supports the participant from beginning to end of an activity.

Challenge of and by choice is a concept that is used by facilitators to communicate that participants have a choice about level and type of participation in program activities, as well as a challenge to stretch themselves. Challenge of and by choice should be used to support individual and group accomplishment and engagement. The concept should be introduced early on in the program and reinforced throughout the program as necessary.

Equipment Drop Box is a holding area for some equipment for programs. It is located outside of the Yurt and the key is on the key ring given to the lead facilitator by appointment.

Facilitator Key Ring is given to lead facilitators and provides access to challenge course padlocks (including ladders), the Yurt, and Lake Laurel Lodge.

Goal Setting is used by facilitators in two ways. One is to encourage small groups to set goals for a specific activity. The other is to negotiate individual learning goals with program participants. There are options for integrating goals with program activities depending on program goals, client characteristics and expectations, sequence, and logistics.

Ground School is built on poles and is adjacent to the high challenge course. It is pre-requisite to the static high challenge course, used to teach communication protocols and procedures for transfer between static elements. It may be used for teaching dynamic belay systems for the high challenge course or the Tango Tower.

Group development activities include sequences of warm-ups, icebreakers, acclimatizers, and initiative tasks. They may comprise an entire program or be used to develop skills for subsequent activities.

High challenge course elements are built on poles. The course offers dynamic-belay elements and static-belay elements that are separated by group elements. The high challenge course is connected to the tandem Zip Lines.

Initiative Tasks are pre-constructed or partially constructed and mobile elements that are normally used in conjunction with low challenge course elements and often require the use of spotting techniques. OC initiative tasks components are situated in the area of the yurt.

Low challenge course elements include permanent low ropes course components. Cable construction properties include dynamics that may be unpredictable and require close attention to spotting. OC low challenge course elements are situated in various locations around the general challenge course area and on the Ground School structure.

Metal File is used to hold program documents and extra forms.

Spotting sequences are a planned set of experiences focused on building spotting skills before taking participants "off the ground" on cable elements or initiative tasks. Off the ground is normally defined as 18" or higher. They may be used to prepare participants to spot off the ground activities or to enhance program goals.

The Tango Tower is built on poles. It is a multi-climber structure that includes two artificial climbing walls, several individual and tandem climbing elements, and a processing platform. Its components may be used as a group initiative incorporating vertical and horizontal options.

The Yurt is located past the Tango Tower. It is an indoor program site adjacent to the challenge course.

Section Two: Facilitator Roles and Responsibilities

General Responsibilities

Teaching

1. Sequence activities with consideration for client characteristics, agency or program goals, and emotional, social and physical safety needs.
2. Assess individual and group readiness for moving forward to new challenges.
3. Participate in warm-ups, ice-breakers and acclimatizers as appropriate. Avoid participation that interferes with the group experience.
4. Observe and monitor activities to inform processing strategies and provide an appropriate level of supervision and control.
5. Use a variety of processing approaches and techniques to encourage individuals and groups to make personal and collective meaning from experiences as appropriate.
6. Provide opportunities for individuals and groups to self-regulate as appropriate.
7. Use challenge of and by choice to encourage appropriate levels of participation and behavioral contracting to encourage groups to monitor their own process.

Communication

1. Teach and practice appropriate spotting, climbing, and communication systems.
2. Emphasize the importance of simple, timely, and clear communication.
3. Note environmental noise or lack of visual access to the system that may interfere with information flow between participant and spotters or belayers.
4. Match commands and responses within communication systems according to the activity including the following components in each:
   a. participant readiness to spotters or belayers;
   b. spotters or belayers readiness to participant;
   c. participant intention to begin action;
   d. spotters or belayers signal to start action.
5. Appoint or ask the participant to select a buddy spotter or belayer who will communicate readiness on behalf of multiple spotters or belayers.

Safety

1. Place first aid and emergency response equipment in a location that is accessible to staff.
2. Continue visual inspections of program equipment throughout the program.
3. Maintain appropriate staff /participant ratios and position facilitators to maximize participant supervision for all activities.
4. Review current instructional and safety guidelines for all activities and discuss adaptations thoroughly with the facilitation team.
5. Set activity parameters that are safe and flexible.
6. Deal with safety issues in a meaningful way that will contribute to the emotional, physical, intellectual, and social safety of individuals and groups by using techniques such as:
   a. clarifying instructions, purpose, boundaries, or expectations;
   b. refocusing the group;
   c. reviewing challenge of and by choice and behavioral contract components;
   d. speaking with a person privately;
   e. changing or renegotiating the activity or the program design to accommodate group readiness.
7. Consider personal competency limits, and process issues that are within the skill and training experience of facilitators.

Responsibilities by Role

Lead Facilitator

Pre-program

1. Obtain the program information from the OC Director or designate (program file, metal file with keys).
2. Review program file contents (client intake form, contact information, risk management forms, etc).
3. Contact the program sponsor well in advance of the program to:
   a. confirm logistics (times, location, risk management forms, etc.), and discuss program goals, program design, group and/or individual characteristics, and other topics as necessary;
   b. communicate to the program sponsor the need for participants to wear loose fitting clothing appropriate for the climate in general and the specific weather forecast;
   c. communicate to the program sponsor the option for participants to bring extra clothing, water and snacks, in consideration of the duration of the program and weather;

   d. communicate to the program sponsor the need for participants to wear closed shoes (not sandals) that are secured at the toe and the heel.
4. Disseminate (unless the OC Director or designate does so), collect, and review participant forms. **PPM Reminder: Risk Management**
5. Consult with OC Director or designate about facilitation team, questions, concerns and program design outline.
6. Design a program to meet client needs and expectations using appropriate forms and when possible in conjunction with the facilitation team. **PPM Reminder: Program Administration: Forms: Program Administration Forms**
7. Meet with facilitation team members to:
   a. establish facilitator learning goals;
   b. communicate client needs and characteristics, program design, participant information, risk management procedures, and facility and equipment logistics;
   c. assign roles and responsibilities for program set-up and delivery, greet participants, and conduct housekeeping and risk management requirements;
   d. review the Emergency Action Plan and establish roles and responsibilities;
   e. review relevant PPM Sections. **PPM Reminder: Personnel Administration, Program Administration, Risk Management, Logistics, Group Development and Challenge Course Activities**
8. Email copy of program design to OC Director or designate for approval.
9. Reserve program equipment. Equipment reservation forms should be completed by the lead facilitator for all equipment needs. Completed reservation forms should be submitted to the Equipment and Facilities Coordinator a minimum of <u>one week prior to the program date</u>. Completed forms may be emailed to the Equipment and Facilities Coordinator (oecequip@gcsu.edu). It is helpful to include information beyond that required on the form that will assist staff in providing appropriate equipment. Equipment reserved for weekend programs will be placed in the Yurt or Lodge as negotiated between the lead facilitator and the Equipment and Facilities Coordinator. Equipment pickup and drop off for weekday programs should be negotiated with the Equipment and Facilities Coordinator. Inspect equipment and make any necessary repairs <u>before use</u> in conjunction with the OC Equipment and Facilities Coordinator. Do not use damaged equipment. **PPM Reminder: Logistics: Equipment Management**
10. Arrange in consultation with OC Director or designate for program support logistics (food, water, facilities, transportation, publicity, etc).

11. Obtain a weather report and in conjunction with the OC Director or designate to make arrangements with the program sponsor for communicating program adaptations or cancellation to participants.

Day of Program

Prior to program

1. Inspect program site, facilities and equipment prior to the program as appropriate for program activities.
2. Complete program set-up requirements with the facilitation team prior to participant arrival and assign staff to meet and greet participants near the parking lot.

During Program

1. Collect outstanding forms and organize the group for the program.
2. Process outstanding participant forms and collect missing information on forms that were pre-submitted. Collect additional medical screening information as appropriate. **PPM Reminder: Risk Management: Medical Screening**
3. Introduce staff and welcome participants to the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.
4. Ensure the provision of housekeeping and program related information (rules, expectations, challenge of and by choice, goals, and behavioral expectations or contract).
5. Ensure the conduct of preliminary and ongoing safety briefings. **PPM Reminder: Risk Management: Safety Briefings**
6. Provide oversight for program implementation, site safety and security, equipment, and staff and supervise group management. **PPM Reminder: Personnel Administration, Program Administration & Risk Management**
7. Complete incident/accident forms as necessary.
8. Conduct program closure and disseminate and collect program evaluation forms from participants. The University System of Georgia requires program evaluation forms to be completed for all OC programs by every participant unless otherwise justifiable. At minimum the program sponsor should complete the form in cases where participants cannot or will not complete the form.

After Program

1. Record number of participants present for program (including leaders who participated).
2. Inspect and clean equipment as appropriate and record first-aid kit use information on the form in the kit.
3. Return equipment ad completed equipment reservation forms (include rope log information) to designated locations. Store wet ropes loosely coiled on a tarp in the Yurt.
4. Conduct staff debrief and program evaluation.
5. Have facilitation team complete Facilitator Feedback forms.
6. Record program notes on the program file summary.

Post Program

1. Revise program design form in accordance with actual events of program day.
2. Return metal file and keys to the Outdoor Center.
3. Submit the completed program file to the OC Director or designate within 14 days of the program.

Assistant Facilitator

1. Assist the lead facilitator as required.
2. Attend pre- and post-program meetings.
3. Share learning goals and negotiate roles and responsibilities with facilitation team.
4. Review relevant policy and procedures prior to program.
5. Submit Facilitator Feedback forms as assigned by Lead Facilitator.

Technician

1. Assist the lead facilitator as required and according to policy limitations. **PPM Reminder: Personnel Administration: Program Staff Qualifications: Technician**
2. Attend pre- and post-program meetings.
3. Share learning goals and negotiate role and responsibilities with facilitation team.
4. Review relevant policy and procedures prior to program.
5. Submit Facilitator Feedback forms as assigned by Lead Facilitator.

Section Three: Program Design

Staff/Participant Ratios

There will a minimum of two (2) facilitators (a lead facilitator and an assistant facilitator) for all activities. Therefore, the following ratios are minimum guidelines. These ratios are general and are used to allocate staff. They may be changed based on type of challenge course activities, facilitator experience, client characteristics, and group readiness. Modifications to these guidelines should be based on a careful assessment of client needs and characteristics, and the nature of the program activities. In most cases, if a change to these guidelines is justifiable, the ratio will decrease. In some cases it may be appropriate to include supervisory staff from the sponsoring agency in the staff/participant ratio if they are willing to play a supervisory role in the program delivery and are informed of their roles and responsibilities in advance of the program implementation. As an example, teachers may be counted as supervisory staff for group development activities, provided the procedures outlined for group development activities in this manual are followed.

Staff/Participant Ratios ****Minimum 2 staff for all programs****	
Group Development Activities	**1:12**
Low Challenge Course	**1:10**
Tango Tower	**1:8**
High Challenge Course-static elements	**1:8 (min. 3)**
High Challenge Course-dynamic elements	**1:8**

Purpose

1. To use a planned sequence of group development and challenge course experiences to meet the goals of groups and individuals.
2. To provide a safe and supportive environment for individuals and groups.
3. To provide an opportunity for individuals and groups to:
   a. work as an effective team;
   b. communicate effectively;
   c. solve problems collectively and creatively;
   d. explore decision making;
   e. foster a sense of empathy and respect for others;
   f. provide honest, constructive feedback to group members;
   g. resolve conflicts constructively;
   h. manage resources effectively;
   i. build community.

Program Design Sequence

Ignition	Introductory, warm-ups, icebreakers, and acclimatizing activities are used to ignite the program, seed behavioral and safety expectations, and provide opportunities to observe individual and group behavior. They develop a foundation for group building, goal setting, behavioral contracting and challenge of and by choice. They set the stage and the tone of the program.
Level 1	Level 1 activities take place on the ground and provide the facilitator with goal-focused assessment information about client's social, intellectual, emotional, and physical characteristics. Subsequent activities are selected, implemented, and processed based on assessment insights. Goal setting, behavioral contracting, challenges of and by choice, and spotting/trust activities may be integrated throughout this level. Level 1 activities are FUNN, novel, and challenging.
Level 2	Level 2 activities take place on the ground and provide the facilitator with opportunities to focus on goal-related skill development and competency building. Groups begin to identify and address individual and group topics. Processing may be increasingly more intentional and in depth. Activities are more complex and challenging, involving increasing levels of physical, social and emotional risk. Goal setting, contracting, challenge of and by choice and spotting/trust skills are completed by the conclusion of this level.
Level 3	Level 3 activities may take place off the ground and are used to deepen and refine goal-related competencies, develop realistic strategies and applications, and celebrate success. Groups begin to self-monitor and processing becomes less facilitator driven. The group revisits earlier commitments and competency areas.
Level 4	Level 4 activities are the "peak experiences" that vary based on program goals. They are used to apply learning to challenging tasks. They may be include the development of action plans for application to real world settings. They draw on everything achieved to this point. They may include high ropes elements, demanding initiative tasks, service projects, or an expedition. Participants demonstrate individual and group effectiveness.
Closure	Closure provides facilitators, individuals, and groups with opportunities to celebrate success, acknowledge relationships, and begin to transition back to the real world. Commitment to action and real world applications is central. Activities may be summary in nature, fun, and emotional – all at the same time!

Section Four: Risk Management

Safety Procedures

1. Facilitators are responsible for participants and therefore have an obligation to anticipate and avoid potential dangers. Participants look to facilitators for informed, professional instruction and guidance so that they can participate in our programs and services in reasonable safety.
2. Lead facilitators should be thoroughly acquainted with participant forms prior to the commencement of a program, and ensure that they are complete, and that relevant information is disseminated to staff at a suitable level of confidentiality. **PPM Reminder: Risk Management: Medical Screening**
3. Participants are entitled to know the nature and scope of risks involved in the program-specific activities before participation. All participants will sign appropriate informed consent and assumption of risk forms**. PPM Reminder: Program Administration: Forms: Participant Forms**
4. Brief all participants about on site and activity risks and safety procedures before they engage in the activity. Do not assume that a potential danger is evident to participants. Discuss the dangers and risks with them until you are confident that each person understands and voluntarily assumes the risks involved. Judgment is crucial in this matter, especially when dealing with hesitant participants. Be as persuasive as possible in an effort to reinforce confidence and to motivate participation. However, do not force a participant to participate and use challenge of and by choice strategies to negotiate levels of successful participation.
5. Common issues that may impact program delivery include, but are not limited to, expectations that:
    a. roles and responsibilities for staff and participants are understood - check and recheck;
    b. instructions are clear and understood - never assume;
    c. supervision is working - as the degree of risk increases so must the level of supervision;
    d. equipment and facilities are suitable for a program and that staff and participants know how to use them – inspect carefully;
    e. hydration and nutrition are the responsibility of participants and facilitators – monitor closely.

Safety Briefings

1. Brief participants about safety and the conduct of the activity, and offer opportunities to ask questions and clarify procedures. **PPM Reminder: Risk Management: Safety Briefings**
2. Establish a climate of safety and caution including, but not limited to:
   a. inherent dangers and preventative information in the area such as flora and fauna, weather, other environmental hazards, etc.;
   b. inherent dangers and preventative information about activities such as falling, spotting, buddy systems, etc.;
   c. program goals and how they relate to specific activities;
   d. safety equipment use and location;
   e. challenge of and by choice options and behavioral contracts; and
   f. participant responsibilities.

Emergency Action Plan

The Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is a set of steps that guide emergency response by providing staff members with relevant, clear information. Every emergency situation is different and requires some degree of judgment. The following process should be used to develop an EAP that permits staff members to exercise professional judgment in the way they respond to a specific situation. The EAP should be implemented for accidents in which a participant is evacuated from the program site to primary medical care or leaves the program site on their own to seek outside medical care. Incidents that require basic first aid do not necessitate implementation of an EAP. Incidents and accidents require the completion of the Incident/Accident Form.

Emergency action planning involves:

1. Prior to the program, establish emergency response roles and responsibilities including a primary responder (PR) and an emergency response manager (ERM).
2. The PR, also known as the “first-in,” provides initial first aid to the patient and is a staff member with appropriate or highest, current level of medical training. **PPM Reminder: Personnel Administration: Program Staff Qualifications**
3. The lead facilitator may elect to be the ERM based on the qualifications of other staff members to perform PR roles and responsibilities.
4. Other staff members will manage the group to minimize risk of further harm to participants and assist the PR or ERM as necessary.
5. The ERM in conjunction with the PR will determine if primary medical or emergency response system assistance is necessary. If outside assistance is required:

a. call 911 and provide your name, the location of the program, the patient's name, the patient's condition, any suspected injuries, and anything else that the dispatcher may ask for;
b. direct emergency response personnel to meet the group at the Lake Laurel Lodge parking lot;
c. do not end the call until the dispatcher hangs up;
d. instruct a facilitator or client representative to wait for emergency personnel in the parking lot to provide instructions or escort to the scene and to transfer patient information;
e. write related information clearly on a SOAP note or piece of paper to give to emergency medical personnel;
f. transport the patient to the Lake Laurel Lodge parking lot if appropriate based on patient assessment and a judgment that further injury is not likely during transit. OC staff should defer to EMS personnel regarding transport on Kubota or other options. If the Kubota is used to transport a patient, the patient should ride in the front seat with seat belt, or secured in the bed with four spotters accompanying the transport. Driver should use low gear and move slowly, aware of patient and spotters' safety. **PPM Reminder: Logistics: Transportation: Kubota**
g. do not move a patient with a possible neck or back injury, an unstable skeletal injury, or any condition where moving the patient could worsen the situation. In such a situation, treat, monitor and comfort patient until emergency medical personnel arrive on site to manage the situation;
h. comply with emergency response personnel instructions and requests for information;
i. make a copy of information to be transferred to emergency or primary care personnel if possible;
j. a facilitator or client representative should accompany the patient to the primary care facility;
k. Administrative Backup should be contacted as soon as possible; **PPM Reminder: Risk Management: Notification Protocol**
l. the ERM or Administrative Backup should notify the emergency contact listed on the medical form. **PPM Reminder: Risk Management: Information to an Emergency Contact**

6. GC Public Safety should be contacted as necessary by the Administrative Backup; however, if backup procedures cannot be implemented in a reasonable amount of time, Public Safety may be called at (478) 445-4400. **PPM Reminder: Risk Management: Notification Protocol**

7. The lead facilitator, Administrative Backup, OE Faculty, or a professional may debrief the situation as appropriate and within the parameters of facilitator competency.
8. Complete an Incident/Accident form. **PPM Reminder: Risk Management: Incident/Accident Reporting**
9. Obtain written statements from witnesses if appropriate.
10. Cancel or postpone the program in consideration of client/staff ratios or contextual factors that may be unsafe or detrimental to learning and growth. **PPM Reminder: Program Administration: Program Cancellation**
11. In the case of a life threatening injury or fatality:
    a. GC University Communications should be contacted by the Administrative Backup, however, if backup procedures cannot be implemented in a reasonable amount of time University Communications may be called at (478) 445-4477;
    b. University Communications should speak directly with the emergency contact listed on the Medical Information form;
    c. do not remove the body unless instructed by legal authority to do so;
    d. limit access to the scene of the accident;
    e. attend to the physical and emotional needs of staff and other participants.

Environmental Hazards

Every environmental hazard is unique; some are weather related and others are inherent in a location. The decision to continue or move a program, seek temporary shelter, or postpone or cancel a program should be made based on program goals, client characteristics, and the specific environmental conditions both on the site and for traveling to another location. The Yurt is available to programs and Lake Laurel Lodge may be requested for backup. There is no substitute for having a keen weather eye to help anticipate and prepare for inclement weather and for knowing how to recognize the presence of hazardous animals and plants. **PPM Reminder: Risk Management: Inclement Weather: Non-wilderness Context**

Inspect program areas prior to use for signs of dangerous or nuisance flora and fauna, weather damage, and dangerous ground and overhead conditions. Establish activity boundaries that are free from harzards. Inform participants about hazards such as nails, splinters, rocks and surface roots.

Weather-Related Hazards

Rain

Rain, especially heavy rain, increases the likelihood of slipping on wet poles, cables, or ground cover. Heavy rain may be accompanied by heavy winds and lightning, and on occasion produce rare weather systems like a tornado. Rain does not necessarily indicate that a challenge course program should be cancelled.

Wind

Heavy wind may pick up debris from the ground cover making visual supervision difficult and may affect hanging structures by creating difficult situations for climbing. In such cases, the use of high challenge course elements or the Tango Tower may need to be postponed.

Lightning

Lightning is the leading direct meteorological cause of casualties in the Untied States. Lightning may take the form of a direct strike, induced currents near a strike, and/or ground currents. Participants should be instructed about specific lightening drill procedures during the initial safety briefing if a storm is noted. The following is a list of protection measures that the lead facilitator should utilize when possible to make a decision about lightning storm response.

1. Counting the interval between a flash and the following thunder and dividing the number by 5 may estimate the distance of lightning potential. Five seconds = l mile.

2. Lightning protection measures should begin no later than an estimated five-mile distance (25 seconds) from group location. Activity may resume when the lightning is a minimum of an estimated five miles away (25 seconds).
3. Groups should seek shelter in a nearby building (the Yurt, Lake Laurel Lodge, Outdoor Center, etc.) until activity can resume.

Tornados

The National Weather Service issues two types of information related to tornados: watches and warnings. A tornado watch indicates that conditions are conducive to the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area. A tornado warning indicates that a tornado has actually been sighted or indicated on radar and is occurring or imminent in the warning area. OC programs should be adapted or cancelled in the event of a tornado watch or warning. If a tornado appears without warning, take the following action:

1. Seek shelter in a safe building, away from windows and doors.
2. Lie down in a ditch or other low area.
3. Evacuate vehicles.

Flora and Fauna

Contact with any fauna in the wild should be avoided. Sensitivity to toxins associated with poisonous plants may vary with age, weight, physical condition, and individual susceptibility. Snakes, alligators, red ants, and ticks may be found in and around areas at Lake Laurel Campus used for OC programs. Poisonous plants such as Poison Ivy, Tread Softly, and Coral Bean may be a hazard. **PPM Reminder: Risk Management: Flora & Fauna**

General procedures

1. Adhere to LNT ethics to minimize contact with flora and fauna.
2. Move away from animals slowly, while facing the animal, if a sighting/contact takes place.
3. Know common poisonous flora for the area.
4. Inspect the site prior to use.
5. Include information about poisonous flora and hazardous fauna in safety briefings as appropriate.
6. Suggest “tick-checks” as appropriate.

Section Five: Group Development Activities

Group development activities may comprise an entire program or be used to develop individuals and groups for subsequent activities on the low or high challenge course and/or the Tango Tower. They include warm ups, ice breakers, acclimatizers, a variety of level 1 & 2 initiative tasks, and closure activities.

They are focused on having FUNN (functional understanding not necessary) and intra and inter personal skills, such as: communication, problem solving and decision making, respect for diversity, constructive controversy, leadership, and goal setting. They require careful sequencing (see Section Three: Program Design: Program Design Sequence) to develop emotional, social, physical and intellectual safety. They may be used to clarify expectations, introduce rules, establish behavioral contracts, set goals, and introduce active challenge of and by choice.

Activities are normally conducted at the open space area in front of Lake Laurel Lodge, in the parking area, in one of several appropriate spaces at the challenge course site, or on the patio in front of the OC. Site selection should be based on factors such as the number of participants, the nature of the activity, client goals, equipment, proximity to indoor facilities, and site characteristics such as ground surface, contour, noise interference and other safety features.

Facilitators may participate in some group development activities at the beginning of a program, however should be cognizant of interfering with group processes as a program progresses. Facilitators should not participate in activities which require focus, such as: spotting boundaries, keeping time, monitoring the conduct of the activity, or providing backup spotting. Since group development activities are a source of information about how individuals and groups behave and interact, good observation skills from outside the group are necessary for processing experiences at an appropriate level.

General Procedures

1. Inspect sites and equipment.
2. Explain the purpose of the activity and present instructions in a clear manner.
3. Set appropriate boundaries.
4. Answer questions prior to starting the activity and throughout as they arise.

5. Review rules, expectations, behavioral contract components, and challenge of and by choice as appropriate to the sequence and activity characteristics.
6. Discuss safety considerations including using appropriate communication, keeping “bumpers up” and other relevant parameters.
7. Encourage participants to ask for what they need.
8. Monitor activities closely for unsafe behavior such as pushing or pulling, not following rules or instruction, distracting behavior, inappropriate touch, inappropriate communication sequence, or horseplay.
9. Intervene in a timely and purposeful fashion as necessary.
10. Provide backup spotting support as necessary.
11. Process the activity as appropriate.

Section Six: Spotting Skills

Spotting Skills

Spotting is a concept that is used in two ways. First, it describes a set of technical skills that are taught before participants are responsible for spotting each other off the ground. When included in a program for this purpose, a sequence of at least four activities is required (see Spotting Sequence). The entire spotting sequence may be taught at once or integrated throughout Level 1 and 2 activities.

Additionally, spotting is a concept that may also be used to determine the development of social, emotional, and physical support of individuals within a group. In this sense, facilitators are always developing spotting skills because they are central to group growth. Spotting skills may take the form of participants caring for each other, offering "put-ups" instead of "put-downs," encouraging fellow participants to perform, speak up in a debrief, or ask for what they need during an activity, etc. Facilitators often model caring, positive approaches for supporting individual and group interactions early in a program, gradually encouraging or explicitly asking group members to do so themselves. Spotting activities may also include games and initiatives that lay a foundation for a particular level of behavior that is desired.

Buddy spotters are used in both of these ways. Technically, the buddy spotter monitors the communication system on behalf of the participant doing an activity when there is more than one spotter. Supportively, the buddy spotter encourages, communicates, and engages in an experience with a participant doing an activity from start to finish. When a climber touches the ground, the buddy spotter is there to provide a steady hand, celebrate success, and help with equipment.

Spotting skills are often overlooked and yet are some of the most important skills to develop early on and throughout a program.

Spotting Sequence

1. Minimum requirements for teaching spotting skills for taking participant off the ground include:
   a. a two person Tic;
   b. a three person Tic Toc;
   c. Wind In The Willows;
   d. at least one additional activity, appropriate to the program design and assessment of group and individual readiness, is required to prepare groups for lifting, falling, catching, or specific cable elements. Therefore, one or more activities may be used to reinforce spotting requirements for particular activities. Examples include: Levitation, Gauntlet, and/or Magic Hat (see Spotting Sequence Activities).
2. Use additional activities that provide specific skill practice as needed.
3. Teach readiness for spotting responsibilities including bumpers up, spotter's stance, and positioning in relation to movement, type of spotting structure, protecting critical areas (neck and head), and environmental conditions.
4. Require a buddy spotter as appropriate.
5. Encourage participants to ask for what they need.
6. Encourage groups to self-regulate and monitor spotted activities.
7. Emphasize communication sequences.

Spotting Structures

Spotting structures should match the spotting requirements for program activities. The fourth activity in a spotting skills instructional sequence may include one or more spotting structures.

Spotting Structure	Description
Group Spot	. The **group spot** is used when the group is engaged in an activity where individuals are connected in a way that provides stability and support to the group as a whole. Facilitators provide on the ground **basic spot** coverage. Group members may ask for additional spotting or be asked to assist with on the ground **basic spot** coverage. Participants and facilitators may be spotters as appropriate.
Basic Spot	The **basic spot** is used to spot anyone who is ascending or descending, or moving along a cable traverse element. It is the "basic" spotting structure used often for any situation in which a participant may be unstable. A minimum of two spotters are positioned in each fall zone. Participants and facilitators may be spotters as appropriate
Running Spot	The **running spot** is named for the action that it requires from spotters. It is used when participants move across an area where other participants are not permitted. The **running spot** is used for swinging cable elements or initiatives requiring a moving **basic spot**. It is typically a technique employed by staff rather than participants.
Catching/Lifting Spot	The **catching/lifting spot** is used to catch a pre-planned fall or lift a person. It is used in conjunction with the **basic spot** as participants are moving into or from positions that require them to be caught or lifted. Formations differ according to the activity (zippers, buddy positioning, stance, etc.), however lifting using leg muscles, catching critical areas, participant readiness and strength, and faller tendencies to jackknife or flail should be addressed.
Bridge Spot	The **bridge spot** is used in conjunction with the **basic spot**. It is used when participants are performing an activity that requires them to lean against each other to the point of falling inward. Spotters bend over placing hands on lower thighs, with head down to support and strengthen their ability to catch participants on their backs. Spotters move with the action, positioning themselves so that the strongest part of the back receives the impact. Spotters are added to the bridge as soon as space permits.

Spotting Sequence Activities

General Procedures

1. Inspect the site.
2. Explain the purpose of the activity and present instructions in a clear manner.
3. Answer questions prior to starting the activity and throughout as they arise.
4. Review challenge of and by choice.
5. Demonstrate spotting procedures that are appropriate for the activity.
6. Discuss safety considerations, including: faller body position, spotter body position and readiness, distance parameters, and actions that promote safe spotting.
7. Discuss appropriate touch.
8. Teach appropriate spotting command systems.
9. Explain the concept of team spotting for activities that require more than one spotter to act together.
10. Encourage participants to ask for what they need.
11. Ask the faller to designate a 'buddy spotter' to respond on behalf of multiple spotters and explain the buddy spotter role before starting the activity. Maintain appropriate distance between the faller and spotters.
12. Monitor activities closely for unsafe behavior such as pushing or pulling, inappropriate distance between the faller and spotters, distracting behavior, inappropriate touch, inappropriate communication sequence, or horseplay. Reinforce behavioral contract elements, challenge of and by choice and other strategies for monitoring behavior.
13. Intervene in a timely and purposeful fashion as necessary.
14. Provide backup spotting support as necessary.
15. Process the activity as appropriate.

Basic Spot

Spotter Information

1. For *basic* spotting technique, spotter's:
    a. knees are bent and feet in athletic stance creating a stable base with one forward and one back;
    b. hands are up and ready;
    c. eyes are on the participant at all times;
    d. support is provided by absorbing the faller's weight like a shock absorber, bending at the elbows and knees, and then extending to bring the faller upright.

Tic

Description

Spotting and/or catching a partner develops an understanding of body weight and movement, as well as concepts like appropriate touch. Supportive spotting and catching allows participants to develop balance, judgment and appropriate falling posture, rather than enabling a participant to overly depend on spotters. This activity introduces a *basic* spotting stance and a communication system that will be adapted and used in subsequent activities. The faller crosses arms in front of body and initiates commands. The spotter supports the faller as he/she leans backward a small distance towards the spotter and is then assisted back to center. Gradually, and using a progression of leans, small increases in distance are added as appropriately negotiated.

Tic Toc

Description

Two spotters are positioned to the front and back of a faller to promote an understanding of body weight and movement. Emphasize the difference between supportive spotting and enabling a faller to depend on spotters rather than developing balance, judgment and appropriate falling posture. This activity reinforces the basic communication system that will be adapted and used in subsequent activities and may be used to introduce or review concepts such as appropriate touch. Two spotters take a spotting position in front of and behind the faller. The faller may fall forward, then be brought to center before falling backward, and brought back to center. The faller will select a controlled fall to the forward and back spotters before trying a slow, continuous forward to back motion. The faller crosses arms in front of body and initiates commands.

Facilitator Information

In addition to teaching spotting, catching a fall may be taught with the Tic or Tic Toc activities, if the group is ready, to prepare for low challenge course activities. When falling, the faller will possibly bend at the hips. In this event, the catcher moves hands under the arms and gently rests the faller against the thigh of the forward leg as the faller is slowly brought to a sitting position on the ground. The faller is then assisted to a standing position.

Wind in the Willows

Description

The group forms a circle to spot and guide the faller who stands in the center of the circle and may fall at any angle, toward any direction within the circle. The activity reinforces body weight and movement, supportive

spotting, the basic communication system, appropriate touch, spotting posture, the buddy spotter, and introduces team spotting. There should be a minimum of 8 spotters and a maximum number of spotters to ensure that the circle is not too big. Larger groups can form into appropriately sized smaller groups. Form a shoulder-to-shoulder circle around the faller and assume spotting posture. The faller selects a buddy spotter who will respond with verbal spotting commands for the group as a whole and return the faller to an upright position. The faller initiates the motion by starting commands and falling in any direction. The group smoothly passes the faller around or across the circle and back to center.

Gauntlet

Description

Group members form two shoulder to shoulder lines facing one another, approximately 3' across. A participant walks through the center of the lines, falling in any direction, at any time, unannounced. This activity reinforces previously learned spotting skills and introduces spotting someone who is moving along a course such as a foot cable. This is an appropriate lead-up activity for low cable elements. The faller selects a buddy spotter who will stand at the other end of the line. Spotters must react by moving into spotting positions around the faller while supporting the faller as she/he continues walking the imaginary cable.

Running Spot

Magic Hat

Description

This activity is a diminishing loads puzzle. It models a spotting structure in which facilitators, with assistance from participants as required, spot active participants through a zone in which other participants are not permitted. It prepares participants to carry each other safely and with regard for appropriate touch, individual diversity, and loading of weight. Boundaries are set with webbing approximately twenty-five feet apart (a larger area may be used as appropriate). The group must get from one side to the other using the magic hat to designate who can walk through the area. Each participant may only use the magic hat once and it can only be returned to the other side for subsequent use by a participant returning it by walking through the area. The challenge is to get everyone to the other side with limited resources while making group decisions about order and individual needs.

Facilitator Information

1. A *running* spot is used in the crossing zone.

2. Position spotters to protect the head and neck in according to how people are carried across the zone.
3. Provide oversight for decisions about how to carry others safely (load bearing and speed).
4. Encourage participants on both sides to assist each other when lifting, carrying and dismounting.
5. Monitor behavior that might indicate that someone is over extending themselves.

Catching/Lifting Spot

Levitation

Description

This activity prepares participants for lifting another participant. It is an appropriate lead-up to the Spider's Web or other lifting-type activities and reinforces the basic communication system that will be adapted and used in subsequent activities, as well as concepts like appropriate touch, buddy spotter role, and co-spotting. One participant lies on the ground in ready position. A minimum of eight lifters place hands, palm up beneath the participant at intervals down the length of the body to support key weight and movement. The participant designates a buddy spotter who will support the head and keep it in line with the body, communicate with the lifters, help the participant up and walk the person to standing position at the end of the activity. Lifters lift the body slowly to a height that does not require lifters to change hand positions. Attempt to keep participant's head level or higher than feet at all times. Lifters then slowly lower the participant, either to the ground or a level that permits the feet to be lowered to the ground, and assist the participant to a standing position. The participant may close their eyes. Rocking and tilting should be avoided.

Section Seven: Low Challenge Course

Low challenge course elements and initiative tasks are located throughout the ridge area above the OC. The Ground School structure also offers facilitators an opportunity to design low challenge course elements that meet the needs of program goals by creating sequences of experiences that are interchangeable and temporary. Props for the Ground School structure are located in the box outside of the yurt. Additional initiative tasks that are not described in this handbook may be reserved through the OC Equipment and Facilities Coordinator. Groups complete a spotting sequence prior to doing any activity that is "off the ground" and requires participants to spot each other.

General Procedures

1. Inspect the site and element components.
2. Explain the purpose of the activity and present instructions in a clear manner.
3. Answer questions prior to starting the activity and throughout.
4. Reinforce challenge of and by choice.
5. Demonstrate activity specific spotting procedures.
6. Discuss safety considerations including stepping off the cable, platform, or log, and spotter body position and readiness.
7. Require appropriate spotting command systems.
8. Review the concept of team spotting for activities that require more than one spotter to act together.
9. Remind participants that they may ask for additional spotters or be asked by the facilitator to assist with spotting.
10. Encourage participants to ask for what they need.
11. Ask group to agree to attempt solutions that provide adequate spotting.
12. Be aware of the strength and body size of group members and ask for agreement not to have members lifting, supporting, or being supported in a manner in which they are not comfortable.
13. Ask the faller to designate a buddy spotter to respond on behalf of multiple spotters and review role of the buddy spotter.
14. Maintain appropriate distance between the faller and spotters.
15. Monitor activities closely for unsafe behavior such as pushing or pulling, inappropriate distance between the faller and spotters, distracting behavior, inappropriate touch, or inappropriate communication sequence. Reinforce group behavioral contract.
16. Intervene in a timely and purposeful fashion as necessary.
17. Provide backup spotting support as necessary.
18. Process the activity as appropriate.

A-Frame

Description

This initiative task consists of a 10' tall wooden "A" that can be assembled as a part of the initiative or be pre-assembled. Control ropes can also be pre-attached or added as a part of the building process. All ropes are girth hitched to the element in a way that they cannot slide off. Group members use the control lines to maneuver the A-Frame along a predetermined course while one group member rides the cross bar of the A-Frame. The *basic* spot is used to support the rider.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* spotting procedures.
2. Instruct riders to step off the crossbar to avoid uncontrolled falls.
3. Have participant "riding" the element wear a helmet.
4. Be positioned to provide *basic* spotting for the participant riding the A-Frame.

Participant Information

1. Agree not to use excessive force to maneuver the A-Frame around.
2. Agree to maneuver the A-Frame such that control ropes are only pulled outward or downward (no lifting is required).
3. Agree to maintain support for the A-Frame until the rider steps off of the crossbar.
4. Agree to not wrap the control ropes around arms, hands or wrists.

All Aboard

Description

This low challenge course element consists of a wooden platform on which the entire group attempts to balance for a predetermined or a progressively more challenging period of time. The *basic* spot or *group* spot structure is used as appropriate.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *group* and *basic* spotting procedures.
2. Inform participants that they cannot stack people or ride on shoulders.
3. Be positioned to provide a *basic* spot to the participants.

Participant Information

1. Agree to assist any and all group members who might need or ask for it.
2. Agree to step off the element when falling.

Cable Traverses, Triangle Traverse & Group Traverse

Description

These low challenge course elements consist of one or more single foot cables between poles. Individuals or groups traverse one or more cables using group members and/or hand props that may be permanently or temporarily affixed to poles. Hand props are sequenced to develop skills by the facilitator or may be proposed by the group. Hand props include single and multiple rope attachments that may be used to create elements such as the vine walk and various types of tension for two line elements. The *basic* spot or *group* spot structure is used as appropriate.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* and *group* spot procedures.
2. Design, or negotiate with the group, element sequences based on program goals and client assessment.
3. Be positioned to provide a *basic* spot to the participants.

Participant Information

1. Agree to provide *basic* spotting reinforcement to a *group* spot as needed before starting or when finished.
2. Agree to assist any and all group members who might need or ask for it.
3. Agree to step off the element when falling.

Fall from Height

Description

This low challenge course element consists of a platform attached to a tree. This activity allows a participant to fall backwards from a platform in a controlled fashion. This activity requires a minimum of nine spotters. The facilitator stands at the platform to prepare the faller and to supervise the initial stages of the activity as appropriate. Use judgment to determine most appropriate placement with each faller. A minimum of eight catchers place arms, palm up in the *zipper* spotting formation. The faller designates an additional buddy spotter who will ensure the faller is appropriately aligned and spotters are appropriately positioned, with head and shoulders back. Spotters will support faller's head after the catch and help the faller to a feet-first standing position. When spotters are ready, the faller turns backwards to the spotters, moves to the edge of the platform with heels slightly over and

assumes ready position, to begin the communication system. The faller falls stiffly into the arms of the catchers who return the faller to a standing position. The *zipper* spot is used to catch the falling participant and the *basic* spot is used when participants climb to the platform. The Buddy Spotter is used to speak to the readiness of the *zipper* spot.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* spot procedures.
2. Review and assess readiness for *zipper* spotting procedures.
3. Have participants remove personal items and clothing that might hamper a fall or hurt the faller or catchers.
4. Provide or ask for volunteers to spot the initial climb to the platform.
5. Encourage participants to perform different roles and responsibilities.
6. Assess catcher placement for catching heavier body parts and potential jack-knife falls and adjust accordingly.

Participant Information

1. Agree to maintain a rigid position with hands tucked into chest when falling.
2. Agree to perform *zipper* spotting technique:
   a. knees are bent, feet shoulder width apart in athletic stance;
   b. arms are extended, palms up and arms bent at elbow;
   c. arms alternate with spotter across from them, with fingertips extending to the opposite spotter's elbows;
   d. head is tilted back with eyes on the participant at all times.
3. Agree to remove jewelry, hats and other personal items that might harm either catchers of faller.

Fidget Ladder

Description

This low challenge course element consist of an approximately 12' long ladder suspended between two trees. The ladder has an "hourglass" shape that allows it to rotate in the horizontal plane. The task is for a participant to start at the lower end of the ladder and attempt to climb to the elevated end with the support of the group. One person is allowed on the ladder at a time. A *basic* spot is used as participants traverse the element.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* spot procedures.
2. Remind participants that the ladder has the potential to fully rotate.

Participant Information

1. Agree to keep three points of contact at all times.
2. Agree to have a minimum of two "ladder holders" (one on each side).
3. Agree to have two spotters on each side of the ladder.
4. Agree to mount and dismount the element at a low point on the ladder.

Islands

Description

This low challenge course element consists of three wooden platforms placed 4-6 feet apart. The group is given two props, one plank that is about two feet long and one plank that is about 1.5 feet shorter than the distance between the platforms, and asked to move the group across a series of platforms. The *basic* spot or *group* spot structure is used as appropriate.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* and *group* spot procedures.
2. Review safety hazards associated with the height of the planks when lifted and the platforms.
3. Inform the group that there is to be no jumping between platforms.
4. Approve the plank positioning before participants traverse them.
5. Be positioned to provide a *basic* spot to the participants as they move between platforms.

Participant Information

1. Agree to keep planks below waist height.
2. Agree to step off the element when falling.
3. Agree to have both feet from at least two participants supporting the plank.

King's Finger

Description

This initiative task consists of a wooden base in which a PVC pipe can be inserted to stand approximately 10 feet tall. A hula hoop or rope circle is placed around the pipe. The group is challenged to remove the hoop or rope without touching the pipe. The *basic* spot is used as appropriate.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* spot procedures.

Participant Information

1. Agree to have two spotters for every participant who is off the ground.

Multi Swing

Description

This low challenge course element consists of a multiline rope suspended from a cable between two trees. Multiline rope is set-up prior to program and removed at the end of the program to prevent access. The group uses the rope to cross a designated area without touching the ground between the marked boundaries. No additional props are typically provided and the group may only use the resources they have to accomplish the task. The basic Multi Swing may be modified by specifying the order in which the group must cross or adding landing limitations such as hula hoops or one or more loops. The use of a foot loop is optional. Caution should be exercised when participants choose to use the foot loop. A *running* spot is used in the area between the boundaries and a *basic* spot is provided as a participant prepares to swing and lands on the other side.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* and *running* spot procedures.
2. Ask participants not to jump, dive, or do stunts while swinging or attempting to get the rope.
3. Perform the *running* spot and ask for additional spotters as needed.

Participant Information

1. Agree not to use excessive force to swing participants across.
2. Agree to not wrap hands, feet or other body parts in the swing.
3. Agree to encourage and support each person's swinging effort.
4. Agree to spot take-offs and landings carefully.
5. If foot loop is being used, agree to support swinger and assist with removing foot from loop upon landing.

Port Hole

Description

This low challenge course element consists of a large tire hung at waist height between two trees. The group's challenge is to pass all team members through the tire without disturbing it. If the tire is disturbed the group may be asked to return to the beginning side, or the person who touches may be asked to return. A *lifting* spot is used.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* and *lifting* spot procedures.
2. Ensure that the group has a designated spotter for the head/neck.

Participant Information

1. Agree to maintain a rigid position with arms, legs, and hands staying still while being lifted and passed.
2. Agree to support the head and neck while lifting a participant.
3. Agree to pass participants face up and feet first.
4. Agree to continue to spot participants even when the tire is touched.
5. Agree to lift with legs and not the back.
6. Agree to lower participants feet first.

Spider's Web

Description

This low challenge course element consists of a prefabricated web strung between two trees made up of many holes or open web sections that normally differ in size. The group challenge is to pass members from one side to the other using the holes and without touching anything that is part of the structure of the web. Participants may be passed through separate holes or everyone may go through one hole. The group may be asked to return to the beginning side, the person who touches may be asked to return, or the group may lose holes if a touch occurs. A *lifting* spot is used to pass participants through the holes and a *basic* spot is provided for participants moving under their own initiative.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* and *lifting* spot procedures.
2. Ensure that the group has a designated spotter for the head/neck.

Participant Information

1. Agree to maintain a rigid position with arms, legs, and hands staying still while being lifted and passed.
2. Agree to support the head and neck while lifting a participant.
3. Agree to pass participants face up and feet first when lifted completely off the ground.
4. Agree to continue to spot participants even when the web is touched.
5. Agree to lift with legs and not the back.
6. Agree to lower participants feet first.

Team Wall

Description

This low challenge course element consists of a 12 foot, flat wall (start side) with a small platform close to the top of the other side for participants to stand on (finish side) and a ladder on the side for participants to lower themselves. The task is to get the group up and over the wall using no props. Participants who are on the platform may assist participants to ascend the wall. Three people are allowed on the platform at one time and normally participants must descend the platform in the same order they came over the wall. A *basic* spot is used to spot exits off the platform. A *basic* spot is used to spot climbers from behind and to the sides of the wall face, in a tight rainbow formation. A *running* spot with other participants closing in using a *basic* spot is used to spot final participants who choose to run at the wall intending to jump and reach the hands of the people on the platform.

Facilitator Information

1. Review variations on *basic* and *running* spotting procedures with participants, emphasizing the need to spot all possible fall directions.
2. Review safety issues related to lifting and pulling participants over the wall, and supporting and pushing participants up the wall.
3. Emphasize that spotter's must keep hands up until climber is completely over the wall and standing upright.
4. Indicate that both feet of all participants on the platform must remain in contact with the platform at all times.

Participant Information

1. Agree to communicate clearly with other group members.
2. Agree to spot each other from the beginning of starting the wall, while on the top, and all the way down the exit.
3. Agree to have a maximum of three people on the top of the platform and one in transition.
4. Agree that participant's feet will always be above their head.

TP Shuffle & Maybe a Rectangle

Description

These low challenge course elements consist of one or more utility poles that are on the ground. The classic TP Shuffle is a single pole and the Maybe a Rectangle is a number of different size and length logs that provide corners to maneuver. Participants are challenged to change/switch positions on the log(s) without stepping off. This may be accomplished through many variations including a variety of line-up tasks or switching ends. Variations may be used as part of a sequence that should be determined based on client assessment and program goals. The *basic* spot or *group* spot structure is used as appropriate.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *group* and *basic* spotting procedures.
2. Be positioned to provide a *basic* spot to the participants in transition.

Participant Information

1. Agree to assist any and all group members who might need or ask for it.
2. Agree to step off the element when falling.

Trolleys

Description

This initiative task consists of two boards with a number of ropes inserted through the boards for participants to hold. The group walks on the boards over a prescribed course (straight line, with obstacles on the ground, around obstacles, etc.) with each foot placed on one trolley. Participants who touch the ground may be asked to start at the back of the trolley, or turn backwards. The *basic* spot or *group* spot structure is used as appropriate.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *group* and *basic* spotting procedures.
2. Be positioned to provide a *basic* spot to the participants in transition.

Participant Information

1. Agree to assist any and all group members who might need or ask for it.
2. Agree to step off the element when falling.

Whale Watch

Description

This low challenge course element/initiative task is available in two forms: rectangular and round. The round Whale Watch is movable and smaller than the rectangular Whale Watch. Both include a platform balanced on a fulcrum like a giant seesaw or a spinning top. The group is challenged to balance itself on the platform for a negotiated amount of time or for long enough to complete a short task that does not require them to move. The *basic* spot or *group* spot structure is used as appropriate.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* and *group* spotting procedures.
2. Set up the circular platform for the round Whale Watch so that the pivot point is centered on the small sheet of plywood that accompanies it.
3. Instruct participants to enter and exit in an established way (near the fulcrum for the rectangular Whale Watch).
4. Instruct participants to step off the platform carefully to avoid uncontrolled falls.

5. Inform participants of safety issues, such as not having toes or fingers under the platform.

Participant Information

1. Agree to communicate when stepping off the element.

Wild Woozy

Description

This low challenge course element consists of two cables that form a "V." Two participants, one per cable, walk the diverging cables while maintaining physical contact to a point where they can no longer continue without falling or they reach the end. A *bridge* spot is used in the center of the cables and a *basic* spot is used outside the cables.

Facilitator Information

1. Review *basic* and *bridge* spots.
2. Inform participants not to interlock fingers during activity.

Participant Information

1. Agree to not interlock fingers with partner.
2. Agree to *basic* spot participants from the outside of the cables.
3. Agree to perform *bridge* spotting technique between active participants:
   a. place hands above knees to avoid injury;
   b. maintain position to ensure that fallers contact the upper back;
   c. keep head down;
   d. continue to add *bridge* spotters to the outside of spotters who are in place in a way that does not unnecessarily interfere with the progress of participants.

Ground School

Ground School is built on five 25 foot poles and is located adjacent to the high challenge course. The structure includes a foot cable, platforms, and two belay cables at approximately 9 feet and 17 feet. Ground School is designed to prepare participants for the high challenge course in two ways. It offers an approximate replication of the static belay experience, including platforms, for teaching static belay transfers. It also offers a location to teach dynamic belay skills to climbers and belayers, should participants be ready and willing to belay each other based on client assessment and program design.

Low Challenge Course Elements

Ground School is also designed to provide low challenge course elements that may be tailored to participant needs and characteristics.

Static Belay Instruction

Static belay transfer practice is pre-requisite to the use of static elements on the high course. The lower level of Ground School provides an opportunity to practice this skill in a controlled environment. Skill instruction includes an overview provided by staff of the process of belay transfers, focusing on belay transfers with appropriate communication systems, and emphasizing the responsibility of the participant for their own safety throughout the experience. Participants practice two or more transfers until they can demonstrate physical and emotional readiness to self-belay using lobster claws. Participants may also practice adjusting the length of the lobster claws and regaining a foot cable. The facilitation team should implement a system to ensure that all participants have completed Ground School prior to using static elements on the high course.

Dynamic Belay Instruction

Ground School may be used to teach participants to belay using a dynamic belay system. Belay ropes can be affixed to the middle cable of Ground School using a steel locking carabiner to simulate a dynamic belay system. The climber and belayer start approximately 20 feet from Ground School, where they check and double check each other's equipment. The climber initiates the communication system and then moves towards Ground School, simulating a vertical climb, while the belayer takes in rope. Climbers may move left and right on the ground or on a foot cable if a *basic* spot is used to simulate traversing an element. Groups should practice using a back-up belayer, anchor, buddy and other roles that will be used in programs to promote group involvement and responsibility. Participants should practice

the dynamic belay skills until they demonstrate physical and emotional readiness to belay others using a dynamic belay system.

Section Eight: High Challenge Course

The high challenge course is designed to accommodate a variety of individual and group experiences. Three types of high challenge course elements are available: dynamic belay elements, static belay elements, and Zip Lines. The high challenge course procedures included in this handbook require facilitators to be experienced in and able to teach specific spotting and belay techniques to participants as appropriate. Most programs that include the high challenge course are sequenced to culminate with this peak experience. If at any time the lead facilitator determines that the group is not ready for the high challenge course, the program should be adapted to achieve readiness for the high challenge course or be adapted to provide alternative, developmentally-appropriate activities.

The Tango Tower is an exclusive ERi, Inc. dynamic climbing structure. It challenges individuals and groups to climb to the top of a tower using various route options that support individual or paired efforts. Once at the top, participants may "top off" and enjoy the view while processing the experience individually or with their group.

Set-Up and Take-Down

During periods of regular use, belay hardware is left on the course and lazy lines are used to string belay ropes prior to each use. All ladders when in use as access points should be securely attached to a pole by means of a cam strap. At the end of programs, lazy lines and hanging element structures (i.e. hand lines) should be securely wrapped around staples at least 12 feet off of the ground to deter unapproved access. All climbing holds below 12 feet should also be removed. Ladders should be locked to trees, poles or other permanent structures when not in use. During periods of irregular use, belay hardware may be removed and facilitators may have to climb via leading edge to set up the belay system.

Leading Edge Climbing

Facilitators should avoid climbing in leading edge environments whenever possible by using dynamic belay systems. Leading edge lobster claws are to be used with LEAP anchors when leading edge climbing is necessary. Staples are not an appropriate anchor for leading edge climbing. Participants should never climb in a leading edge environment.

Ladder Access

Ladders are used by both facilitators and participants to reach the lowest level of staples when climbing poles. Participants must have a minimum of two spotters holding the ladder while climbing up or down. Instruct climbers to use every rung of the ladder and not step off early. A rope ladder is also be attached to the Tango Tower and may belayed as an additional means of access.

Equipment

1. Handle hardware carefully by not dropping or throwing hardware to prevent potential fatigue and stress fractures.
2. Yell 'ROCK' in the event that something falls from height to alert people on the ground.
3. Place equipment on a ground cloth or tarp out of the way of participant and facilitator traffic.
4. Instruct participants in the proper use and care of equipment including, but not limited to, helmets, harnesses, static belay claws, belay ropes, and carabiners.
5. Teach the proper use of helmets to protect the head from bumps, scrapes, and falling objects including:
    a. adjusting for proper fit;
    b. wearing helmets within the "fall zone" (area within an element's guy lines).
6. Demonstrate to the participant how to put on and properly fit a harness.
7. Offer participants the option of using a chest harness and encourage it for participants who may desire or require more upper body support.
8. Require the use of a chest harness and a seat harness on elements that specify to do so.
9. Attach dynamic belay lines to the harness using a double figure eight loop with a locking carabiner or a figure eight follow through directly into the harness.
10. Use static belays, called lobster claws, on static belay elements.
11. Demonstrate how to adjust lobster claws to lengthen or shorten as needed.
12. Girth hitch lobster claws onto carabiner and clip the carabiner to the seat harness according to the manufacturer's specifications.
13. Check harnesses for proper fit, attachment, and buckles prior to ascending the course.

Harness Types

The **Challenge Seat Harness** manufactured by **Edelweiss** can be used with both a dynamic belay line and static belays. The dynamic belay line can be clipped into the large black belay loop or tied into the belay loop. Static belay claws should be clipped into the belay loop.
The Head Wall **Chest Harness** is used in conjunction with either of the above seat harnesses. The seat-chest harness combination is clipped into one double figure eight loop on the end of the belay line with a separate locking carabiner into each harness.
The **kids and adults full-body harnesses** made by **Singing Rock** should be tied directly into the two front chest loops. These harnesses should not be used with a front clip-in and consequently cannot be used for the static course or Zip Line. The adult's full body harness may also be clipped into at the large metal ring on the back of the harness.

Belay Procedures

High challenge course elements include dynamic belay, static belay systems, and special element belay systems. Element descriptions are grouped according to belay systems.

Participant Belayers

1. The lead facilitator may elect to teach participants how to belay other participants. This decision should be based on, but not limited to:
   a. the number of facilitators available to teach, supervise, or provide belay systems;
   b. participant readiness to participate as dynamic belay teams;
   c. program length and design;
   d. number of participants;
   e. physical attributes of the element.
2. Teach participants belay techniques at Ground School.
3. Provide direct supervision for the belay system or perform a backup belay role to a participant belayer.
4. Ensure that participant belayers have both a backup belayer and an anchor (person or belay bench) prior to belaying.

Dynamic Belay Systems

1. Maintain a clear view of the climber from a place on the ground that is free from environmental obstruction and is accessible to backup assistance.
2. Inspect the climber for readiness to climb by doing a visual and/or tactile check prior to climbing, including:
   a. ensuring that the harness and helmet are secured properly;
   b. ensuring that the dynamic belay rope is secured to the harness (in accordance with manufacturer specifications) using the appropriate knot that is properly tied;
   c. ensuring that carabiners are locked with a “squeeze check” and properly positioned;
   d. ensuring that objects, clothing, or hair that affect the system are removed or tucked in.
3. Use proper spotting and climbing commands.
4. Review spotting and belay procedures and commands with participants as needed.
5. Use the “BUS Method” (below, under, slide) of belaying with an ATC. The belay line is held in the “braking position” while the brake hand slides up the rope to take in slack.

6. Remain attentive to a climber's needs, taking in or letting out slack as necessary.
7. Remind climbers to "follow their rope up" to prevent the belay rope from snagging on element structures and causing falls to result in swings.
8. Control descents when a climber descends an element for any reason.
9. In the unlikely event that a participant cannot be lowered via ground belay, a designated facilitator will initiate and manage rescue lowering procedures.
10. The primary belayer will be responsible for the safety of the climber until the climber communicates that he/she is "off belay."
11. Limit one participant to a single belay cable to enable a facilitator to move on any cable in an emergency.
12. Several dynamic elements have double belay lines allowing the element to be used with two participants at once. In this case:
    a. element ropes are designated for use on the inner or outer belay cable;
    b. belayer should be located inside or outside the respective belay cable;
    c. care should be exercised when two contiguous "inner" elements are used at the same time to prevent confusion at the joining poles.
13. Dynamic elements on the High Challenge Course are typically "traversing" elements in which the participant moves from one pole to another, while those on the Tango Tower, the Pamper Pole, and the Static Course access are "ascending" elements in which the participant climbs to the top of the element and is then lowered to the ground. Different techniques are utilized for traversing and ascending elements.
    a. Ascending elements allow for the use of belay benches such as at the Tango Tower. People are used as anchors for traversing elements or when belay benches are not accessible or selected for use. In these cases, the anchor person stands behind the belayer and securely holds the belayer's harness waistbelt.
    b. Pole climbs and lowering at the end of an element should be belayed as an ascending element. Falls while a climber is on a pole could lead to a pendulum swing due to the sag built into the belay cable. Belayers should position themselves to bring the belay system as close as possible to the starting pole while the participant is ascending and have the participant move back out onto the element approximately 8-10 feet to be lowered whenever possible.
    c. Belayers should stay inline with the climber and move along the ground in front of the element. Ensure that this area is clear of obstructions and coordinate with other facilitators to minimize contact between belay teams on contiguous elements.

Dynamic Belay Commands

Belayer	Climber/Rappeller	Meaning and Response Needed
	"on belay?"	Are you ready? Is the belay on?
"belay on"		All set. The belay will now catch you if you fall.
	"climbing"/ "rappelling"	I am ready to climb/rappel.
"climb on"/ "rappel on"		Go ahead. The rope will be controlled by the belay.
	"slack"	The climber needs some slack in the rope. The belayer should feed out a small amount of rope. No verbal answer required.
	"tension"/ "that's me"	The climber has some slack in the rope. The Belayer should take in rope until the climber communicates "that's me."
	"rope" or "rock"	A rope or another object is coming down – do not look.
"clear"		You may drop the rope, the area is clear.
	"off belay"	Take off the belay, I am secure and will no longer need the belay.
"belay off"		The belay is off, echoed to ensure there is not misunderstanding.

Static Belay Systems

1. Designate platform supervisor(s) to monitor climbers ready to commence a belay-assisted ascent or descent from a platform, including establishing a static belay prior to removing dynamic belay and vice versa.
2. "In the air" minimum ratio for supervising transfers is 1:4. The number of facilitators to participants may be increased (ie. 1:3, 1:2) based on program design, group readiness, and facilitator experience.
3. Teach static changeovers at Ground School prior to climbing.
4. Use dynamic belay systems to access static elements.
5. Inform climbers of their responsibility for personal safety.

6. Review the use of spotting, climbing, and transfer commands used throughout the experience.
7. Secure the dynamic belay rope and static lobster claws to the harness.
8. Limit three participants to a single belay cable at the same time to enable a facilitator to move on any cable in an emergency. Exceptions are the platform on the Tango Tower and the group elements which may have four participants on a single cable.
9. Position at least one facilitator on each level of the static course when both levels are being used.
10. Position facilitators comfortably "in the air" on platforms or other structures.
11. Require participants to execute the appropriate communication system for transfers between elements and to receive verbal authorization from the supervising facilitator for every transfer.

Static Transfer Commands

Participant to facilitator on platform:	"Will you watch me transfer?"
Facilitator to participant:	"Yes I will."
Participant to facilitator on platform:	"May I transfer first carabiner?"
Facilitator to participant:	"Transfer first carabiner. Please flip and squeeze-check gate."
Participant to facilitator on platform:	"Squeeze check. May I transfer second carabiner?"
Facilitator to participant:	"Transfer second carabiner. Please flip and squeeze-check gate."
Participant to facilitator on platform:	"Squeeze check. May I continue?"

Special Element Belay Systems

1. The **Four-Way Pamper Pole** makes use of a special belay technique called a Z-belay which uses two permanently installed eyebolts on a pole for creating friction. The eyebolt on the very bottom of each pole is not part of the Z-belay system.
    a. The Z-belay is set up by running the belay rope down the pole from the shear reduction device on the belay cable, through the lower eyebolt, up through the upper eyebolt, and finally back down along the pole. The final set-up should resemble a sideways "Z."
    b. The Z-belay is managed by a minimum of three participant belayers or two facilitators. The belayers alternate sides of the belay rope and use an alternating hand sliding technique to move rope through the belay system.
2. **Ziplines** utilize a tether attached to a steel double-wheeled cable pulley. The full use of this system is described below.
3. **Tango Tower and static access platforms** often do not require participants to transfer from one static belay cable to another, such as when participants have a group debrief or are preparing to use the Zipline. A static tether may be used in these situations.
    a. Static belay lobster claws are used "upside down" so that two participants may tether to each leg of the lobster claw.
    b. Up to four people may be attached to each belay cable on the top of the Tango Tower and the Static Access platforms.
    c. Designate one facilitator "in the air" for every eight participants "in the air" to supervise static tethers. This is a minimum ratio and should be adjusted based on the amount of activity on the platform (e.g. zipline).
    d. One facilitator should remain on the ground to manage emergency situations.
    e. Participants using static tethers are not required to complete Ground School training if a facilitator directly supervises (hands-on) all transfers to and from the tether.

Climbing on Poles

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Remind participants to climb staples and not poles.
2. Discuss potential hazards of climbing poles, including but not limited to:
    a. splinters;
    b. allergies to chemicals used to treat poles.

Rescue Procedures

1. Review general guidelines. **PPM Reminder: Group Development and Challenge Course Activities: Rescue Procedures**
2. Designate one facilitator to initiate and manage standard rescue procedures.
3. Locate rescue bags for dynamic course elements to enhance potential rescue requirements considering client assessment and program design; locate rescue bags for static course elements on the static course.
4. Inspect the contents of rescue bags prior to the program for the following contents:
   a. belay rope;
   b. rescue figure 8;
   c. rescue knife or EMT shears;
   d. etrier;
   e. two steel carabiners;
   f. two cordelette loops.
5. Encourage facilitators to carry personal rescue equipment which may include shears or a knife, cordelette loops or slings, carabiners, and a belay device.
6. Provide calm, deliberate, and safe actions to provide help.
7. Rescue a stuck participant using a sequence of steps including:
   a. move toward a participant who is unable to regain an element or needs to be lowered on dynamic belay with a rescue bag via the quickest route;
   b. attach rescue equipment to the belay cable using a steel carabiner;
   c. calm the participant with words of comfort and reassurance;
   d. assist the participant to climb back onto the element (talking, tension, etrier, etc.);
   e. continue to communicate with a participant throughout the completion of the element.
8. Rescue a participant in an emergency situation using a sequence of steps including:
   a. move toward a participant who is unable to regain an element or needs to be lowered on dynamic belay with a rescue bag via the quickest route;
   b. assess the severity of the situation and request that a ground facilitator call 911 if needed;
   c. begin emergency take down procedures immediately including:
      - communicate intentions clearly to ground crew,
      - attach and lock carabiner with figure-eight device to belay cable,

- hook and lock the carabiner on the super figure eight to the participant's harness,
- remove shears and prussic loops from pocket of bag,
- make sure the ground is clear and drop the rescue bag,
- select a lowering method and communicate the chosen method to other facilitators,
- if available, a facilitator on the ground should manage the rescue belay,
- ensure that the rescue belay is on and that all possible slack is out of the rescue belay system,
- attempt to loosen and remove original belay system. If the initial belay system cannot be removed either from the harness or the belay cable, it will need to be cut with rescue shears,
- safely lower participant to ground on rescue belay rope.

9. Perform most rescues from the middle of the Zip Line by using a stepladder to access the participant.
10. Perform rescues at the far ends of the Zip Line by using the contents of one rescue bag to "lower" slowly down the Zip Line to prevent the rescuer from colliding with the participant, and a second rescue bag to perform a lower as described above.

Dynamic Course Elements

Four-Way Pamper Pole

Description

One to four participants climb a utility pole using staples to reach a platform at the top of the pole. Upon reaching the platform, participant(s) leap from the platform attempting to touch a large red ball that is suspended in the air. The Four-Way Pamper Pole uses the Z-belay technique. (See Special Element Belay Systems.)

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Ensure that participants use a full body harness or seat and chest harness combination.
2. Ensure that no more than two participants are climbing the pole at any time.
3. Remind participants to tag, not catch, red balls.
4. As the participant jumps, the belayers should take up as much slack as possible.
5. The element is dynamically belayed directly off of the anchors on each utility pole using a Z-belay.

Belay Team Responsibilities

1. Agree to maintain control of ropes and lower participant slowly.

Disco (a.k.a. 12 Steps)

Description

A series of 12 wooden discs are suspended from a cable with multiline. Participants swing from disc to disc to traverse the element. This element has a single belay cable.

Hourglass

Description

Two multiline ropes are tensioned between two poles to form an hourglass-shape with each multiline attached at foot height on one pole and shoulder height on the opposite pole. This element has a single belay cable.

Pipe Dream

Description

A foot cable and support cable six feet higher suspend five vertical sections of PVC, some solid and some spinning, which participants use to cross the span. This element has a double belay and can be done with either one or two participants.

Pirate's Crossing

Description

A series of two multiline loops, a cargo net, and two more multiline loops are suspended from a cable. The participant uses the multiline loops to reach and then cross the cargo net and then uses the second set of multiline loops to reach the opposite pole. This element has a single belay cable.

Plank Bridge

Description

Two foot cables strung between utility poles with 16 wooden planks. The participant traverses the element, using the wooden planks for support. This element has a double belay and can be done with either one or two participants.

Team Traverse

Description

A foot cable strung horizontally between two poles and through 10 box platforms. Two ropes run parallel and on either side of the cable through the boxes to reduce spinning of the platforms. The group on the ground can assist the traversing participants by controlling the two ropes that hang down from either side of each platform. This element has a double belay and can be done with either one or two participants.

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Ensure that hanging ropes are accessible to group.
2. At end of program, secure hanging ropes to a utility pole at a minimum height of 10-12 feet.

Tension Traverse (a.k.a. Ships Passing in the Night)

Description

A single foot cable with a long multiline hand line attached to each pole at shoulder height. This element has a double belay and can be done with either one participant, or two participants moving in opposite directions.

Vine Walk

Description

A single tension foot cable with a series of multiline ropes suspended from an overhead cable, positioned just beyond the average person's reach. The participant walks across the foot cable, using the various vines for aid. This element has a double belay and can be done with either one or two participants.

Static Course Elements

Burma Lunge

Description

A single foot cable between two utility poles with one multiline hand line attached four feet up one pole and descending to the foot cable for two thirds of the length of the element. There are also two multiline hand lines attached four feet up the opposite pole descending to the foot cable for two thirds of the length of the element in the other direction forming an hourglass-shape.

Burma Bridge

Description

The Burma Bridge connects the top and bottom levels of the static course. Two cables at chest height form hand lines with multiline hanging from them forming V-shaped steps.

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Warn participants of the possibility of sliding down the belay cable if they fall from the element.

Cat Walk

Description

A utility pole supported horizontally between two poles.

Commando Crawl

Description

A single piece of multiline strung between two poles that participants use to "crawl" across the element.

Flippy Planks

Description

Two foot cables are strung between poles with wooden planks hanging from one of the cables in alternating order. Participants create a bridge to walk on by flipping the planks to rest on the opposite cable as they traverse the element. Multiline is suspended from the two poles and hangs between the two foot cables. Upon completion of the activity, the participant pulls on the multiline to flip the planks off the other cable and returns them to a hanging position.

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Boards will slowly slide towards the middle of the element. Facilitators will need to occasionally return boards to an evenly spaced position.
2. Participants often use the multiline for support during the element and will have to be readjusted in order to be able to flip planks to original position.

Magic Carpet

Description

A 2.5'x 2.5' wooden platform slides on two cables with pulleys. Participants sit or stand on the platform and use multiline ropes connecting each pole to the platform to pull them across the element.

Smile Vines

Description

A foot cable between two utility poles with five multiline hand lines that fall in a U-shape attached to a cable above the foot cable.

Temple of Doom Bridge

Description

Two parallel foot cables strung horizontally with a series of wooden planks. In the middle of the bridge is a hanging multiline used to swing across a short distance with no planks.

Tired Two Line (a.k.a. Charlie Chaplin Walk)

Description

Two parallel foot cables strung between two poles.

Two-Line Bridge

Description

A foot cable strung between two utility poles with a multiline hand line approximately four feet above the cable.

Team Element Upper

Description

Two foot cables are strung diagonally between the two large platforms creating an hourglass-shape with a vertical PVC pipe at the intersection of the cables. The element has two belay cables between each pole allowing up to 8 people (2 per belay cable) to work together to move across the element.

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Inform participants of the need to keep their lobster claws loose at the beginning so that they are not pulled off near the middle of the cable.
2. Inform participants of potential to swing if they fall off the foot cable near the middle of the element.

3. Ensure that the participants don't cross their lobster claws with other participants.
4. Do not allow participants to interlock fingers during the activity.

Team Element Lower

Description

Two foot cables are strung between the two large platforms with PVC pipe segments suspended to provide support for participants. The pipes are tethered together and to the starting platform in such a way that they will need to be passed between members of the group. The element has two belay cables between each pole allowing up to 8 people (2 per belay cable) to work together to move across the element. The element can only be used starting at the entrance platform to the static course.

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Ensure that the participants don't cross their lobster claws with other participants.
2. Remind participants to pay attention as they pass the PVC pipes to prevent injury to unaware participants.

Special Elements

Tandem Zip Line

Description

Two zip line cables connect the top platforms between the Tango Tower and the Dynamic Course/Static Course. A participant zips on a designated zip wire pulley down the length of cable. When the participant slows to a complete stop, an A-frame ladder is brought under the participant so they can disconnect from the pulley and climb to the ground. Two participants may zip at the same time, using separate cables and must depart from the same platform. When groups are using both the Tango Tower and the Dynamic or Static Courses, special attention is required. The zip line may be used from one end only for the duration of a program.

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. One facilitator serves as the platform facilitator and monitors transfers to the zip tether and platform launches; a second facilitator coordinates the ground crew to clear the zip corridor and help participants exit off the zip line.
2. The platform facilitator attaches the designated two wheel pulley to the zip line cable. The tether is then attached to the pulley using a locking carabiner or rapid link. A keeper lanyard to prevent the pulley from running away should be attached to the cable on the

outside of the pulley. When setting up the zipline from the Tango Tower platform, parachute cord for the climbing wall below should be completely removed from the belay bars.

3. The participant is instructed to sit on the edge of the platform beneath the zip cable facing the zip corridor.
4. Participants are transferred from lobster claws or dynamic belay to the zip tether. The tether is attached to participant's harness attachment point with a locking carabiner. The platform facilitator must execute caution during this process, ensuring with a squeeze check that the zip tether is securely attached before the primary belay is removed.
5. Platform facilitator explains that participant may hold lanyard below knot and may not jump/swing or invert/hang upside down.
6. The platform facilitator communicates with the ground facilitator to ensure that the zip corridor remains clear of people and equipment. Platform facilitator asks: "All clear on zip corridor?" Ground facilitator responds when appropriate, "corridor clear." Platform facilitator announces: "Zipping." Ground facilitator responds: "Zip away." The facilitators may also coach participants to exchange commands when appropriate.
7. When the zip corridor is cleared, the facilitator releases the keeper lanyard and coaches participant to ease their way off the platform.
8. When the participant stops, ground crew brings A-frame ladder to them. Participant climbs the ladder to release tension and removes the tether from their harness.
9. Participant attaches the retrieval cord to the zip tether carabiner, and safely dismounts from the ladder with ladder spotters in position.
10. Ground facilitator clears ladder from the corridor and walks the pulley back towards the launching platform, swinging it back to the platform facilitator for the next participant to use.
11. Two participants may zip at the same time. The platform facilitator must focus on one participant at a time during transfers. Participants may not attempt to touch each other as this increases potential for injury. The ground facilitator ensures that both participants have stopped before allowing the ground crew to approach either participant.
12. The platform facilitator has access to two rescue bags. (See Zip Rescue procedures in Rescue section.)

Section Nine: Tango Tower

Belay benches

Belay benches are available as anchors for belayers on the Tango Tower. To use the belay bench as an anchor:

1. Attach the end of the dynamic belay line (opposite the climber) to the belayer's harness using a figure 8 on a bight with a carabiner;
2. Make a figure 8 on a bight on the belay rope approximately three feet from the belayer (belayer should adjust for appropriate length);
3. Clip this loop into the belay bench eyebolt with a locking carabiner, thus anchoring to the bench;
4. Load rope into belay device between bench and climber, and attach loaded belay device to belayer's harness with a locking carabiner.

Topping off

It may be necessary for participants to top off on the Tango Tower in order to access the Zip Line or to transfer to a rappel. The lead facilitator may also choose to have participants top off for processing. When topping off is an option for the Tango Tower, one facilitator should be belayed to the top of the tower and then transfer onto claws. Participants may then be transferred onto tethers and off of their dynamic belays by the facilitators on top of the tower. There must be one facilitator for every eight participants on the platform, and not more than four people on a cable. One facilitator should remain on the ground to manage emergency situations.

Tango Tower Elements

Centipede

Description

A vertically suspended utility pole with randomly placed climbing holds to be used as hand and foot holds. The goal is to climb up the pole using the climbing holds.

Climbing Walls

Description

The Tango Tower offers two climbing walls: an "overhang wall" that faces the zip corridor and a "slab wall" that faces away from the zip corridor. The activity may be used in conjunction with rappelling to enable participants to climb to and rappel from the tower platform. The artificial climbing walls may be used as part of an instructional sequence to prepare participants for rock climbing or may be used as an individual experience. **PPM Reminder: Land Based Activities: Climbing Activities: Top Rope Climbing**

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Attach climbing holds to the bottom 12 feet of the wall. Holds on the "overhang wall" are attached with the installed brackets. Holds on the "slab wall" are attached with hex bolts into pre-placed T-nuts.
2. Provide instruction in and practice for spotting wall access and falls that may occur during the first six to eight feet of climbing.
3. Remind participants to climb holds, not the cracks between planks or wall edges.
4. Remove all climbing holds from the bottom 12 feet of the wall at the end of the program.

Giant's Ladder

Description

A "ladder" with rungs of 4x4's is suspended from the top platform. Two participants climb the ladder using only the support of the 4x4's and the other participant. Use of the side cables for climbing is discouraged. Separate dynamic belays for each participant are used. Participants should use a full-body harness or seat-chest harness combination.

King Swing

Description

Two poles each have two platforms that are facing each other at two different heights. There is a rope hanging between the two poles. Participants climb to the first platform and swing across to the platform at equal height on the opposite pole. They then climb to the upper platform and again swing across to the final platform. Participants may then use the pole or the hanging rope to "top off." Participants may attempt this element solo or with a partner. Separate belay systems are used for each partner.

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Inform participants of potential to swing into platform. Note that center most belay bar location leaves a wide pendulum possibility for that climber. Reinforce challenge of and by choice.
2. Remind participants to watch that their belay ropes do not get crossed as they swing between platforms when working in tandem.
3. Warn participants not to let their belay ropes catch on the element platforms.

Vertebrae Ladder

Description

A series of vertically suspended utility pole sections have randomly placed staples to be used as hand and foot holds. The goal is to climb up the pole sections using the staples as hand and foot holds.

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Warn participants not to grab the cable or hardware between the utility pole sections as they are a pinching hazard.

Wilder Woozy

Description

Two utility poles progress outward from a common utility pole terminating approximately 12 feet apart and 35 feet from the starting pole. Two participants, one on each pole, move out along the diverging pole using each other for support until they can go no further. Each participant is belayed with a separate dynamic belay. Participants may use either the rope ladders or the utility poles to access the start of the Wilder Woozy. Participants should use a full-body harness or seat-chest harness combination.

Facilitator Responsibilities

1. Ensure that the participants don't cross their belay lines.
2. If using a seat-chest harness combination, ensure that belay lines remain in front of participants and inside of arms.
3. Do not allow participants to interlock fingers during the activity.
4. Manage the location of the belay rope in respect to the King Swing platforms to minimize swing and rope wear when participants fall.

X Ladder

Description

A length of criss-crossing multiline creates a series of ascending X's culminating in a cargo net. Participants climb the structure using only the support of the multiline X's and the cargo net. Participants may attempt the element solo or with a partner. Separate dynamic belays for each participant are used.