



Developing a Growth Mindset via Facilitated Reflection during an Adventurous Journey

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Further Information

This poster and further information is available at <http://www.theibsc.org/>

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Introduction

The Odyssey is a tough, physical journey offered by Rathkeale College. Boys are challenged to endure hardship, the weather and their fellow students!

"Experiences, rather than short term memorisation, help students develop the skills and motivation that transform lives." *Wagner and Dintersmith (2015, p.2)*

How might facilitated reflection during an adventurous journey foster a growth mindset in Year 12 boys?

Research Context and Participants

Rathkeale College is a decile 9 State-Integrated Anglican day and boarding school for boys located in Masterton, New Zealand.

Seven days in December 2017 were spent travelling in competitive teams via foot, cycle, and boat throughout the lower North Island of New Zealand, accompanied by a staff member and provided with food.

Teams were responsible for their own cooking and camping as well as looking after team-mates during long, physically challenging days.

The Research Action

In this action research project, I hoped to find evidence of **mindset shifts** so that I could more clearly articulate why this type of outdoor education was so **valuable** for the boys, and by extension, for Rathkeale College.



Boys took time to **reflect** on daily activities, to examine how they felt and if they were experiencing changes in **Mindset**.

"It is interesting reflecting on how I thought the team was going to go before and after, as people I thought would be hard to work with and unreliable were actually the opposite."

"On the hill I think I pushed through a mental block or something because it seemed to get easier the harder I tried. I will apply this lesson in the future."

"To be completely honest, I felt like a real idiot. I didn't want to look bad in front of everyone."

"[My] greatest achievement was keeping up with the group even when I wanted to fall down and die!"

Data Collection and Analysis

Video reflections and reflective journals were used daily. **Digital photos** were used as reflective starting points, and pre-and post reflective comments were shared on **Facebook** and **Messenger**. **Field notes** were made during collaborative activities. Transcribed video data were collated with other written evidence, cross-coded and analysed.

Key Findings

Overcoming challenges - effort pays off

Adaptation from "I" to "We"

Communication makes a difference

Benefit of reflection in recognising personal change



Conclusions

The boys acknowledged what Dweck proposed for those who have the growth mindset: "they admire effort, for no matter what your ability is, effort is what ignites that ability and turns it into accomplishment" (2006, p.41). As the journey progressed, boys reflected more on the success of the team than on themselves. **"We have grown as a team," "[I am]...faster to think for the team rather than myself now than I was at the start."**

"Today was pretty successful with our team being very encouraging of each other."

These boys showed the development of a growth mindset by reflecting on and finding lessons in the success of others.

The boys found real value in reflection;

"I thought this reflection stuff would suck but it's actually pretty cool".

From learning that effort translates into accomplishment and finding inspiration from teamwork, the boys did not just talk about a growth mindset, they acted on it

"I am capable of a lot more than I thought. I can keep going and push through the pain"



Key Readings

- Dweck, C S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York. Random House.
- O'Brien, K., & Lomas, T. (2016). Developing a Growth Mindset through outdoor personal development: can an intervention underpinned by psychology increase the impact of an outdoor learning course for young people? *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*, 17(2), 133-147.
- Wagner, T., & Dintersmith, T. (2015) *Most likely to succeed: preparing our kids for the innovation era*. New York. Scribner.