Title Research data for PhD Thesis on Advancing Environmental Literacy

Training for Instructors of Outdoor Adventure Activities

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Sensitive information that could identify the participant has been removed from the transcript. The participant’s name has been pseudonymized.

**Interview with Oscar**

Ella Sutton  
I've got a few questions to run through, I don't think it'll take too long, I'm imagining like half hour, 40 minutes but we'll just see how it goes.

0:0:27.970 --> 0:0:28.210  
Oscar  
Cool.

0:0:37.930 --> 0:0:43.230  
Ella Sutton  
So I’ll kick-off for the first one, which is what were the most memorable bits of the course for you?

0:0:45.770 --> 0:0:46.550  
Oscar  
The storytelling.

0:0:47.810 --> 0:0:48.520  
Ella Sutton  
Hmm, interesting.

0:0:48.550 --> 0:0:49.80  
Oscar

When we spoke about the storytelling and kind of, how we would kind of say you can have fiction or nonfictional stories to kind of have that different impact on different age groups and things like that and how to put them across to people to get them to start thinking in a certain way.

0:1:11.460 --> 0:1:15.960  
Ella Sutton  
Have you have you used that much in your practice that you wouldn't have done before or?

0:1:17.400 --> 0:1:20.30  
Oscar  
I think I used it a lot before. I used to do things like that, but probably not as much as I do now, and because I think it being on that course, it kind of made me realize that actually you can have a bigger impact by doing a story like, so I think I've added it more into my sessions now to have that bigger impact, yeah.

0:1:41.830 --> 0:1:42.300  
Ella Sutton  
Nice and have you seen any impact that that's had on your clients?

0:1:48.130 --> 0:1:52.360  
Oscar  
We've sat in groups- I found with the kids it hasn't had that much of an impact like they'll still, however, many times you tell them to turn the lights off and they leaving the buildings and why it's important to, they'll still leave them on, whereas the older groups, the corporate groups, I wasn't, I wasn't in putting in my initial briefing when they arrive, but I would drop it into the sessions and things like that and it you could see the impact that had through the week compared to the kids definitely.

0:2:20.420 --> 0:2:21.730  
Ella Sutton  
Cool, very nice. So in, in what ways have you used bits that you learned from the course in your job role generally?

0:2:31.460 --> 0:2:35.420  
Oscar  
I think it's just more that awareness of- It's been easier to talk about that sort of stuff and point people in the right directions about things like I've had a few instructors that have been much more interested in bushcraft things, so I've kind of but able to push them down- Looking at the environment and how the environment is used a bit more because I'm happy to talk about it because I understand more about it and I understand why we're talking about the different groups and different groups of people that are out there that do certain things and then point them in them directions.

0:3:18.430 --> 0:3:19.160  
Ella Sutton  
Yeah, really cool. It's nice you feel like, I guess having that like confidence to be able to be actually say, I do know more about this and I can talk about it a bit more.

0:3:27.780 --> 0:3:29.380  
Oscar  
Yeah, yeah, definitely.

0:3:30.630 --> 0:3:37.850  
Ella Sutton  
So do you find it mostly being in activities like bushcraft and things or have you been able to incorporate things elsewhere?

0:3:39.240 --> 0:3:49.910  
Oscar  
I definitely incorporate it in bushcraft more, but also when we go out on the hills and stuff like that and walking on the hills, talking to them more about the environment up there.

0:3:56.850 --> 0:3:58.460  
Ella Sutton  
Yeah, cool.

0:3:51.860 --> 0:4:10.530  
Oscar

From that course, I've worked out how to make it more relatable to them and with the storytelling side of it as well, it makes it a lot more relatable and referring to things that they would commonly do while you're outside and how it impacts the outside and they kind of click and go, “Oh, actually that that makes sense”. Yeah, more, more that stuff than when we're, like, on the climbing wall and things like that.

0:4:21.370 --> 0:4:22.270  
Ella Sutton  
OK. And why is that? Why do you think that is?

0:4:24.620 --> 0:4:40.490  
Oscar  
I think it's, yeah, your experiencing the environment whereas a climbing wall were kind of we're all man made structure and the session is climbing rather than going for a walk up the hill and looking at what's about and that sort of stuff, yeah.

0:4:41.720 --> 0:4:42.430  
Ella Sutton  
Yeah, that's fine. Do you run any of the like sort of faster paced activities if you're doing kayaking things say would you kayak down rivers or those kind of like typically faster paced activities?

0:4:55.880 --> 0:4:56.350  
Oscar  
Umm. I guess like in the past I can say I have. We don't run many of them, but I've definitely- Again, going into the storytelling side of stuff, I think that that's where I've taken your course from and really gone down the storytelling there and we find that the kids, when I'm talking about the stories and things, they're picking up the litter in the river. So, by the time we get back, we've got a band for all of rubbish and we're like ohh, how we getting this back? But that's without telling them to do it because I'm talking about it in inadvertently. They're picking up on things that they should be doing. But in terms of kind of others, in terms of other sessions, not so much. Umm, but definitely as part of my kayak club when we go out to rivers and stuff with, we're definitely- I think because I talk about it a bit more work that it kind of overlaps with the club and we're definitely a bit more responsible when we're like go paddling and doing shuttles and things like that as well.

0:6:10.10 --> 0:6:11.200  
Ella Sutton  
Yeah, that's cool to hear. There's definitely a lot to be said for clubs and doing it together and like, say when you're more confident in talking about it and altogether you've kind of become more aware and even like when it's just on your radar bit more, isn't it?

0:6:25.450 --> 0:6:25.670  
Oscar  
Yeah.

0:6:25.360 --> 0:6:31.810  
Ella Sutton  
And all of a sudden, like a group of friends, maybe can have a bit of a change of motivation of going or something.

0:6:32.950 --> 0:6:33.710  
Oscar  
Yeah, definitely.

0:6:35.260 --> 0:6:42.210  
Ella Sutton  
So you're talking about feeling like more confident in uh in talking about storytelling or bits of the environment, do you feel- how comfortable do you feel talking about nature in general terms to clients?

0:6:50.180 --> 0:6:58.390  
Oscar  
I'd say it depends on what environment I'm in, and it's definitely grown more than it was before and. I'd say when I'm working you kind of take on that different persona, don't you? As the instructor, so I'm definitely like much more happy talking to them about it. But it also depends on what type of group I have and how they interact with it to how much I push talking about nature and people at the club tend to be slightly older, so it's a lot easier to talk to them about nature and things like that. And but I definitely feel like I've definitely grown a bit more into talking about it more. Yeah.

0:7:37.560 --> 0:7:38.830  
Ella Sutton  
So did you say that there's a difference in communication to the different age groups that you're leading? Would that be right?

0:7:46.810 --> 0:7:47.620  
Oscar  
Yeah, definitely. Like talking to the year fours about it, you kind of have to take it right back to basics. Whereas when I have the corporate groups in, you can go into a bit more depth about it and a bit more of the history behind certain things and that sort of stuff, yeah.

0:8:2.390 --> 0:8:2.960  
Ella Sutton  
Nice. And then in terms of that kind of similar question, in terms of how comfortable do you feel talking about human impacts on the environment?

0:8:13.650 --> 0:8:26.620  
Oscar  
100% every time it always talking to them about how they can, how they can improve by doing little things, and how if everyone does them little things every it can cause a big thing. And yeah, always, yeah.

0:8:31.770 --> 0:8:33.790  
Ella Sutton  
And that communication- Has it been changed since the course, or have you always been very comfortable and confident talking about that?

0:8:42.150 --> 0:8:54.830  
Oscar  
I've always been pretty confident, but I think again, the storytelling always going back to the storytelling has changed a lot in how the different age groups and how I talked to them about that, yeah.

0:8:57.120 --> 0:8:58.60  
Ella Sutton  
Nice, really cool. How do people receive it generally?

0:9:2.770 --> 0:9:13.970  
Oscar  
Normally pretty good every like it's normally the younger teenagers from the rougher areas are the ones that don't really respond to it is what I found. I found everyone else's kind of.

0:9:20.810 --> 0:9:21.720  
Ella Sutton  
Any ideas why?

0:9:24.770 --> 0:9:27.10  
Oscar  
I think because they're probably- they're looked after a lot more. And I think they just don't have the respect other people would like. They don't get to experience being out in the fields and on the hills and things like that, so they don't respect them as much, whereas the kids that have from the local little villages and things respect the environment a lot more to understand what you're talking about and understand how they can make their impact.

0:10:0.180 --> 0:10:1.870  
Ella Sutton  
Hmm, that's so interesting. So, you’ve spoken about confidence and communication and things, in terms of the bigger picture of the things that you, the activities that you run, in what ways do you feel like those experiences will change the way that your clients kids or adults view nature and the environment?

0:10:27.460 --> 0:10:32.0  
Oscar  
Umm, I feel like doing like a walk onto the hills. It definitely has a lot more of an impact, especially when do you like the night walks and we talk about the light pollution and things like that because you've got. I work on the XXX Hills, right on the border of XXX and XXX. So you can quite see it clearly. See the rural and urban sides and it's very clear for them to see actually how much of an impact it makes. You can see stars and one side of hill, but you can't see the stars on the other side of the hill. And in terms of majority activities, not so much when we're on something like the on-site activities because they're not- they’re much more into the adrenaline side of the activities rather than the environmental side of the activities, yeah.

0:11:19.280 --> 0:11:28.910  
Ella Sutton  
So your groups that come, is it mostly they do a mixture of both activities or will they do- some might come just for an afternoon to go on the climbing wall?

0:11:30.420 --> 0:11:32.210  
Oscar  
Umm, a big mix. We get mostly residentials that are there for three days and we get some residentials like colleges and corporate that are five days and then we get day visits that are either there for the full day or they might do 1/2 day. So it's a, it's a proper mix of everything.

0:11:50.90 --> 0:11:57.230  
Ella Sutton  
And do you feel like, the impact that you have is different whether you have people for half a day or five days?

0:11:58.510 --> 0:12:14.0  
Oscar  
Definitely. The ones that we have five days go away, almost like they're completely different people, whereas if they're there for the half a day, you can't really interact and help them grow. They just kind of get to experience the couple of activities they're doing and then they go home again.

0:12:21.320 --> 0:12:23.630  
Ella Sutton  
And when you say they, they feel like different people; in what way?

0:12:27.880 --> 0:12:37.190  
Oscar  
In the way they kind of well, obviously you've got the they turn up to the center and they're quite nervous about what they're doing. So then by the end of the week, they're much more confident and we stay as they're instructor through the whole week. So, we don't chop and change the instructors either, so you get a much more personal relationship with them, which you know how you can then push them in certain ways. So, whether that's pushing them a bit further when they're doing something high, or whether you're again talking about the environment and things like that, you know how far you can push into that before they kind of start not reacting in a negative way but start going off. So, you kind of learn them limits more and you can push a bit more each time, yeah.

0:13:18.40 --> 0:13:18.260  
Ella Sutton  
Nice. In terms of CPD courses in general and what makes courses valuable to you?

0:13:39.970 --> 0:13:41.10  
Oscar  
Learning something.

0:13:43.0 --> 0:13:43.710  
Oscar

I wouldn't go on to a course like a CPD course on how to set up a 3 to 1 pulley system because I know how to do that, but if I'm going and learning something and I have then resources I can pull from that to carry on and improving my coaching or passing it on to other instructors, that's what makes it worthwhile for me.

0:14:9.880 --> 0:14:11.710  
Ella Sutton  
And do you feel like there was places- sorry- how could this course improve that value for you?

0:14:18.50 --> 0:14:19.40  
Oscar  
I think it was valuable. I think I said it to you when we did the course was the resources and I think having them resources to pull up and go Ohh yeah, well I know that you want to talk about this more, OK, this is where you want to go and find out a bit more about this information and having that kind of almost like that, like a poster or a leaflet or something about different aspects that I can pull up and go. You want this? There you go and pass it on or little fact sheet and that sort of thing of like, you know like in the mountain leader stuff you get the little flora and fauna cards, little things like that and where you can just kind of pull little things out. Little facts that having your lights turned on unnecessarily for this amount of time has this much impact that that sort of stuff.

0:15:9.730 --> 0:15:10.100  
Ella Sutton  
Yeah. Cool. That’s definitely still on my radar to produce. And when I do I will send it out to you and but yeah, that's definitely something that will come.

0:15:21.60 --> 0:15:21.590  
Oscar  
That's alright.

0:15:29.560 --> 0:15:36.570  
Ella Sutton  
So, obviously, you know, you were the first group to have the course and it's evolved a little bit since then, but not hugely. But one of the ways that it has gone is it's talked a bit more about the context of our environment within climate change. And so there's a few slides on it that talk sort of just a very basic introduction to climate change and people's carbon footprints. In terms of the climate change angle, do you talk about that within sessions or not particularly?

0:16:9.240 --> 0:16:9.890  
Oscar  
A bit. So we talk about how, like lights of fossil fuels and things like that, especially I do another session called rocks and fossils and we talk about and I do talk about my natural resources and then renewable energy and things like that as well and how fossils are made and where the oil comes from and that sort of stuff. And so, yeah, definitely talk a bit about it. I don't go into massive depth with that sort of stuff, but yeah, definitely do talk about it because that's all kids know about it, the environment and stuff is climate change, but they don't really understand what it is.

0:16:50.170 --> 0:16:50.680  
Ella Sutton  
Yeah. And like putting it into context, I guess that you said in terms of, you know, leaving your lights on for this amount of time equates to and putting it into something that's relatable for them.

0:17:0.310 --> 0:17:0.510  
Oscar  
Yeah.

0:17:0.60 --> 0:17:14.940  
Ella Sutton  
And so I can send over some slides at some stage when once the course is sort of in its semi-finished state, I'll send the slides over because there might be some extra bits that you might Oscarefit from.

0:17:14.500 --> 0:17:15.400  
Oscar  
Yeah, that would be amazing.

0:17:16.960 --> 0:17:24.400  
Ella Sutton  
What do you feel like your clients’ motivations are for taking part usually?

0:17:27.890 --> 0:17:28.430  
Oscar  
Team building. Most of the clients come because they want team Building for Schools. Most of the time it's to build up the communication, the team building resilience, that sort of stuff. I’d say the environment stuff is kind of second for them, but for me and especially a few of the instructors, we try and push that environmental stuff up a bit further up the agenda because you get kids come and going, “Oh, there's no phone signal in here”, and it's like no enjoy being outside! Yeah.

0:18:6.830 --> 0:18:7.280  
Ella Sutton  
Nice.

0:18:7.690 --> 0:18:27.900  
Ella Sutton  
And then just last one, in terms of communication in general, do you feel like you and the instructors that you work with have the resources that mean they can communicate about environmental subjects as best they can.

0:18:30.440 --> 0:18:31.490  
Oscar  
I don't think so. I think they there could be a lot more emphasis on the training on that side when we do the hill walks and stuff, that's when we only really do any training about the environment and we're talking about the facts of the quarrying on the hills and night walk. We talked about light pollution. We talked about what you can see, the stars, that sort of stuff, so. We do a bit when we go out, away from the center, but not really when we're in the center. That's more down to me- the course director seeing in the groups and in our initial briefings we're talking about with light, we're talking about taking our shoes off before going inside and that sort of stuff.

0:19:21.810 --> 0:19:22.300  
Ella Sutton  
Cool. That's all of my questions. Is there anything that you want to add and any feedback that you want to add about it?

0:19:32.420 --> 0:19:34.100  
Oscar

It's been a it was a good course. It's definitely built up my confidence about talking about it, how I talk about it as well to different age groups, and I look forward to seeing the other slides when it's done and the resources and stuff like that. And then that will help me help me push it more at my centre as well.

0:19:57.810 --> 0:19:58.260  
Ella Sutton  
Cool. Thanks so much Oscar.