association for experiential education

IS EE INTENTIONAL?

PROGRAM	Recreation (R)	Education (E)	Development (D)	Therapy (T)
Primary Intention (purpose or goals)	To change FEELING	To change THINKING	To change BEHAVING	To change RESISTING
Experiential Learning Cycle	ACTION & activities	+ REFLECTION & discussion	+ INTEGRATION & metaphors	+ CONTINUATION & support
Facilitation Techniques	None / not necessary	Fundamentals & Funneling	+ Frontloading & freezing	+ Fortifying & solution-focusing
Framing	Fantasy	Reality	Contextual	Isomorphic
Staff Qualifications	Competent leader	+ Skilled facilitator	+ Psych. training	+ Licensed Clinician
Diagnosis	Conversation	+ Surveys	+ Interviews	+ Observations
Design and Delivery Focus	Enjoyment, play, fun, skills learning	New/old concepts, awareness of need	Coping methods (grow function)	Trauma resolution (ease dysfunction)
Do/Debrief	100% / 0%	75% / 25%	50% / 50%	25% / 75%
Departure	Anchors	+ Evaluation	+ Action Planning	+ Special Projects
Follow-up	Re-union	Check-up	Booster	Ongoing

FOUR INTENTIONS

The table above differentiates among common types of EE programs based on their primary intention to help clients change. **Recreation** (R) programs change the way they feel. **Education** (E) programs change the way they think. **Development** (D) programs change the way they behave. **Therapy** (T) programs change the way they resist change.

PROGRAMMING

Once the intents of the EE program is clear, the leader/facilitator chooses which EE learning components to include. The program efficacy, and ability to meet its goals, depends on which part of experiential learning is emphasized and which facilitation techniques are employed.

As the program moves from R to T, becoming more complex, further EE learning components and facilitation techniques are necessary. **R** requires no facilitation, while **E** starts with basic discussion (fundamentals & funneling). **D** adds intermediate skills (frontloading & freezing), while **T** emphasizes more advanced techniques (fortifying & solution-focusing).

Similarly, activities are introduced or framed differently on the basis of program aim. Frames that tell fantasy (**R**), reality (**E**), contextual (**D**), and isomorphic (**T**) stories are used to shape the outcomes and learning to match specific goals. Further, these will influence the direction, depth or complexity of reflection and follow-up.

To facilitate and frame at these levels, staff must be appropriately prepared as competent outdoor leaders (**R**) and skilled facilitators (**E**). Psychology training (**D**) and a licensed mental health clinician (**T**) are the expected standard, when aiming to impact behavior and resistance.

Again, as programs move from R to T with increasing complexity, additional diagnostic methods are required. To discover clients' needs, employ conversation (**R**), conduct surveys (**E**), interview clients (**D**), and engage in observation (**T**). After the EE program, give anchor gifts and hold a re-union (**R**), add evaluation and check-up (**E**), or plan action for the future and offer a booster program (**D**). Add ongoing support and assign special projects to guide client's post-program daily life (**T**).

Morten Asfeldt & Simon Priest

aee.org

Morten Asfeldt
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
https://apps.ualberta.ca/directory/person/masfeldt
morten.asfeldt@ualberta.ca
780-679-1158

FURTHER RESOURCES

BOOKS

Beames, S. & Brown, M. (2016). *Adventurous learning: A pedagogy for a changing world*. Routledge.

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