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ABSTRACT

Changes in adolescents' self concept as a result of participation in a camping program were studied. Subjects were 57 males and females, aged 14-18, who spent 9 weeks with the Man and His Land program, travelling on eight camping expeditions. Three hypotheses were tested through pre-, mid-, and posttests: (1) Differences would be shown in pre- and posttest global self-concept and self-esteem measures; (2) Differences would be seen between global prettest and situationally specific midtests; and (3) A relationship would exist between pre- and posttest global self-concept and the situationally specific self concept measures gathered at the midtests. Global self-concept was assessed before and after the program through the Adjective Check List (ACL) and the Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS). Midtests were conducted, using the ACL at three points during the program, to measure self concept at specific program junctures. Significant improvement was found in the posttest scores of the TSCS. Analysis of the ACL showed that most of the scales shifted positively from pre- to posttest. Four patterns of adjective use were discerned, three of which reported positive results in the areas of goal direction and task oriented behaviors and attitudes. (FG)

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THE EFFECTS OF HIGH ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES ON ADOLESCENT SELF-CONCEPT: A COMPARISON OF SITUATIONALLY SPECIFIC SELF-CONCEPT MEASUREMENTS AND GLOBAL SELF-CONCEPT MEASUREMENTS

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A Paper Presented at the American Camping Association

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1982

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by Alan N. Wright

Introduction:

I'll begin this presentation by giving a brief overview of some components of self-concept theory upon which this research project was based.

[SHOW OVERHEAD #1]

One of the key notions of the social-psychological view of the self is that the self is seen as an object. It's as though we look in a mirror and say "that's me". If I were to stand apart from my body and look at that object out there called Al Wright I would no doubt have certain beliefs about that object called self. Those cognitions, ideas, or beliefs we have about ourselves are the self-concept.

At the bottom of the overhead we have a definition of self-concept which is taken from Sobieszek & Webster (1974, p.29). "The self is a dynamic entity consisting of a set of self-referent ideas which have been formulated from numerous past evaluations of the individual in different situations." (italics mine) Dynamic means that the self-concept is changeable not static. A set of self-referent ideas refers to the fact that we view ourselves as an object which we can define and evaluate. The beliefs about the self are formulated from specific experiences that become the building blocks of our self-concept. Specific situations provide the 'chunks of information' that we use to put together our view of ourselves.

[SHOW OVERHEAD #2]

When thinking about the self we can outline two broad dimensions or aspects of the self that are actually the responses to the two



hypothetical questions Donald is asking himself this morning. The first question, "What am I like? or Who am I?" is what I refer to as the <u>definitional self</u>. The definitional self is that collection of attributes or characteristics which the individual would use to <u>describe</u> himself. It is the descriptive component of the self and some writers are now trying to restrict the term <u>self-concept</u> to what we will be calling the definitional self.

The second question, "How do I feel about who I am?" is what I call the <u>feeling self</u>. The feeling self is the worth which an individual would give to his or her definitional self. It is the valuative component of the self and the terms <u>self-esteem</u> or <u>self-regard</u> are appropriate synonyms.

One additional set of terms that must be defined for our discussion this morning is global self versus specific self. Global self is the general or over-all set of ideas and feelings about the self. Specific self is the set of ideas and feelings about the self within a specific context or environment or role. For example, one could speak of the specific self in a high adventure activity, or specific self as parent, or athletic self, or the party-goer self and so forth.

Collection of Data:

Allow me to tell you what I did in the study and then go back to the expectations or hypotheses of the study.

[SHOW OVERHEAD #3]



The study population was comprised of 57 participants of Man and His Land Expeditions, western trips I and II. The Man and His Land program is a travel camp that spans nine weeks and includes eight separate special experiences called expeditions. The camp travels for the purpose of those camping expeditions rather that being one of the site seeing type of travel camps. The age range of the participants was from 14-18 with a mean age of 15.47 for males and 15.56 for females. Thirty-four males and 23 females were involved in the study. The subjects were predominately from upper-middle class or higher social status.

Five different administrations of the instruments were given as can be seen on the overhead. At the pretest a global view of self was assessed with both the Adjective Check List (ACL) and the Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS). The three different midtests recorded a specific view of self as measured by the ACL. The posttest again recorded a global view of self giving both the ACL and the TSCS to the subjects.

Instruments:

The Tennessee Self Concept Scale was used as a general over-all measure of self-esteem or feeling self. The overhead shows a part of the TSCS. The complete scale consists of 100 items. The TSCS was given [SHOW OVERHEAD # 4]

at the pretest and the posttest.

The Adjective Check List can be seen on the next overhead and [SHOW OVERHEAD # 5]

includes 300 adjectives which the participant can check if the



adjective is self-descriptive. The ACL was used at both the pretest and the posttest as a global measure of both definitional self and feeling self. The ACL was also used at the midtests to assess the specific self in a major peak ascent involving snow and ice travel, a technical rock climbing ascent, and a whitewater rafting trip.

In order to utilize the ACL for measuring both a global view of self and a specific self the directions for the instrument were changed at the midtests. The overhead shows the modification made in the instrument for the specific view of self.

[SHOW OVERHEAD # 6]

Hypotheses:

The preceding discussion has outlined the procedures of the study. Now let me quickly outline the hypotheses of the study. First of all, I thought there would be a difference in both the definitional self (self-concept) and the feeling self (self-esteem) between the global measures taken before and after the entire summer experience. Secondly, I expected to see some differences between the global view of self measured at the pretest and the specific view of self measured at the midtests of Mt. Rainier, the Tetons, and the Green River. Thirdly, I expected to see a relationship between the changes in the global view of self evident from a comparison of pretest and posttest and the specific view of self qathered at the midtests.



Analysis and Results:

What did the analysis of the data actually show in relationship to these three hypotheses. When we examine the overall changes from pretest to posttest we find the TSCS showing significant improvement. Table 1 shows that nine of the ten major scales of the TSCS showed significant changes at .05 or greater (using correlated t-tests).

[SHOW OVERHEAD # 7]

Total P is the most important single score on the counseling form of the test and it showed a mean increase from 342.65 to 351.90 which is significant at greater than .001.

Lest we get lost in the numbers, this graph reflects the change that took place. The means from the ten scales are plotted on the standardized profile sheet developed by the authors of the scale.

[SHOW OVERHEAD # 8]

To interpret the ACL the analysis of variance for correlated groups was used and of the 24 scales available from the ACL, 23 shifted positively from pretest to posttest (the other scale remained the same). Nine of those 23 scales were significant at the .05 level or greater. So one would conclude that there seemed to be a change in self-concept and self-esteem from pretest to posttest.

Now when we examine the data for a difference between the global self-concept seen at the pretest and the specific self-concept seen at the midtest the analysis at times becomes detailed and complex. So because of the time factor I won't report all the information but will provide an overview. (The full report of this material can be found in a thesis



done for graduate work at George Williams College, Downers Grove, Ill.)

If we examine what happens to the 23 scales from the ACL we find different patterns occur at the midtests. Four distinct categories emerge.

[SHOW OVERHEAD # 9]

The <u>Type I</u> scale pattern left me both confused and alarmed when I first saw it because it appears as if there is a dramatic negative movement at the midtests. And these included the scales of Total Adj. Checked, Favorable Adjective Checked, Intraception, Lability, Heterosexuality, Affliation (sustain personal friendships), Nuturance, Personal Adjustment, Succorance (solicit sympathy or emotional support), Aggression, and Change. What I discovered was that the drop in those 11 scales was a function of the scoring system of the ACL combined with the shift to describe a specific view of self.

What happens is that focusing to a specific view of self narrows or limits the number of adjectives that will be checked out of the possible 300. (E.g. pretest average person checked 100 adjectives and on the midtests the average person checked 60). Scales are derived from certain clusters of adjectives being checked. So what we find is that some scales no longer become appropriate to describe the 'high adventure self' and some scales remain resilent and therefore do describe the individual in the specific context of the high adventure activity.

The leading question is what is characteristic of the scales in patterns II, III, IV that would explain their maintaining an adequate response set. There must be certain adjectives which make up these scales (II, III, IV) which are significant for describing the specific view



of self related to those high adventure experiences.

As a footnote, what differentiates these three patterns is the self-report collected from the Green River Expedition. The Green River proved to be a very different experience in some ways when compared to Rainier and the Tetons and the instrument reflected that difference. Time prevents me from discussing the difference.

However, I would like to report on the commonality of the 'sscales in patterns II, III, IV. A close examination of the <u>definitions</u> for these three scale types was done. All scales from all three patterns can be related to the general construct of goal-directed / task-oriented behaviors and characteristics.

[SHOW OVERHEAD # 10]

Type II scales included Self-Control, Achievement, Endurance, and Order. The following phrases for each scale have been exerpted from Gough and Heilbrun's manual for the ACL (1965, pp.7-11). Self-Control: diligent, practical; a loyal worker. Achievement: hardworking; motives internal and goal centered. Endurance: self-controlled and responsible. Order: sincere and dependable; emphasis on neatness, organization, and planning.

This cluster of scales that showed a common pattern (Type II) are all strongly related to <u>taking responsibility</u>. A person scoring high on these scales would be the one to whom you would entrust a job and expect it to get done.

[SHOW OVERHEAD # 11]

Type IV scales included Dominance, Self-Confidence, and Counseling Readiness. Once again a close examination of the explanations for these



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scales yields the following ideas. <u>Dominance</u>: seeks to sustain leadership roles; forceful, strong-willed, persevering individual; confident. <u>Self-Confident</u>: poised and self-assured; a sense of dominance; persistent; an actionist; wants to get things done. <u>Counseling Readiness</u>: self- confident; poised, sure of himself and outgoing; seeks company of others; likes activity.

This cluster of scales might best be summarized by the word . self-confidence. An individual such as this would be sure of himself/ herself and probably willing to take charge and strive for the goal.

[SHOW OVERHEAD # 12]

Type III scales are Exhibition, Abasement, Deference, and Autonomy.

Again using the definitions provided by the authors we find the following information. Exhibition: draws attention to oneself; poised; and self assured; opportunistic. Abasement: optimistic; poised; productive and decisive; not fearing others; confident manner; alert and responsive to others. Deference: energetic, spontaneous, and independant; likes attention; likes to supervise and express his will. Autonomy: act independantly of others or of social values and expectations; independant; assertive; self-willed.

This group is perhaps best summarized by <u>assertiveness</u> and <u>initiative</u>. In contrast to groups II and IV, more of a social orientation is implied.

This individual would have a social confidence; not fearing others.

In summary, although it is indeed a very subjective process, an examination of the definitions related to this large group of scales seems to point to a common thread. The individual scoring higher on these scales



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would be a confident doer, a strongly inner-directed individual showing a strong sense of competence.

Another way to look at the specific self of the midtests was to tally the number of times a word was checked by the participants for a given experience. For example, the following three overheads show the percentage of participants who checked specific words (i.e. the most frequently checked words among all participants).

[SHOW OVERHEADS 13,14,15]

When you begin to compare the words most frequently checked you find a good deal of overlap and consistency between the experiences.

[SHOW OVERHEAD # 16]

Using a subjective evaluation process to look for common themes among the words most frequently checked one uncovers concepts such as having a goal centered task orientation, anxiety, and social interaction with a task bias.

The next overhead summarized the characteristics of the definitional self resulting from high adventure activities. There appears to be

[SHOW OVERHEAD # 17]

something different about the self described at the midtests and the self described in a global sense at the pretest.

The final hypothesis to be discussed is whether the self-concept seen at the midtests was evidenced in the global view of self at the posttest. The technique used to answer this question was to calculate a gain score for each individual from pretest to midtests on scales with patterns II, III, and IV. Then a gain score was calculated for each individual from pretest to posttest on these same scales. The gain scores were then



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correlated to see if those gains shown at the midtests would be the same kind of gain shown from pretest to posttest. The last overhead [SHOW OVERHEAD # 18]

shows those correlation coefficients. Most of them are clearly between the .40 and .70 strength level which is indicative of a "substantial or marked relationship". So a tentative conclusion is that the specific self may have influenced the global self at the posttest.

In conclusion, what does this empirical research say that would be important to the camp director. First of all it provides some data based rationales for using adventure programming with adolescents. Secondly, it highlights the importance of specific experiences in terms of creating a measurable set of self-referent ideas. This should challenge us to-take seriously the role of program planners because of the potential of providing a definite image of the camper's self as the result of a camping experience. Thirdly, this study would suggest that some high adventure activities may elicit self-referent ideas consistent with some traditionally accepted goals and values of many camping programs; namely the importance of being goal-oriented, self-confident, and accepting a task responsibly.



REFERENCE LIST

- Gough, Harrison G., and Alfred B. Heilbrun, Jr. The Adjective Check List Manual. Palo Alto, California: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1965.
- Sobieszek, Barbara, and Murray Webster, Jr. <u>Sources of Seff-Evaluation</u>:

 <u>A Formal Theory of Significant Other and Social Influence</u>. New York:
 John Wiley and Sons, 1974.



OVERHEADS

The following overheads were used in the presentation of this paper and are referenced in the body of the paper.



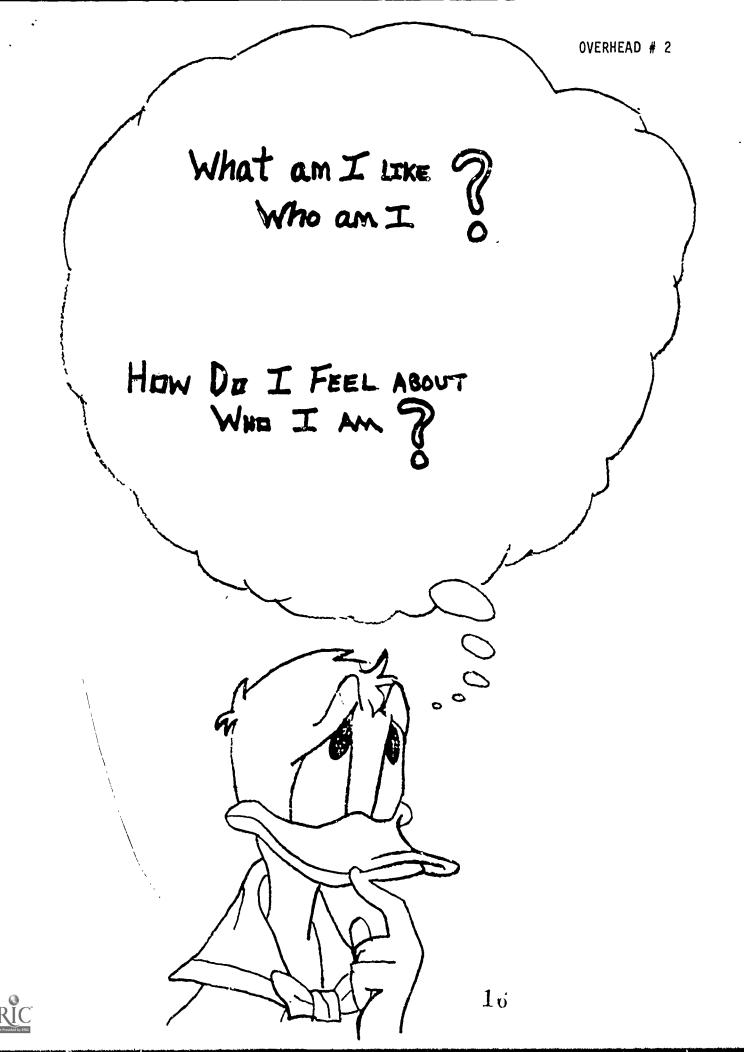
DEFINITION - THE SELF IS A DYNAMIC ENTITY CONSISTING OF A SET OF

SELF-REFERENT IDEAS WHICH HAVE BEEN FORMULATED FROM

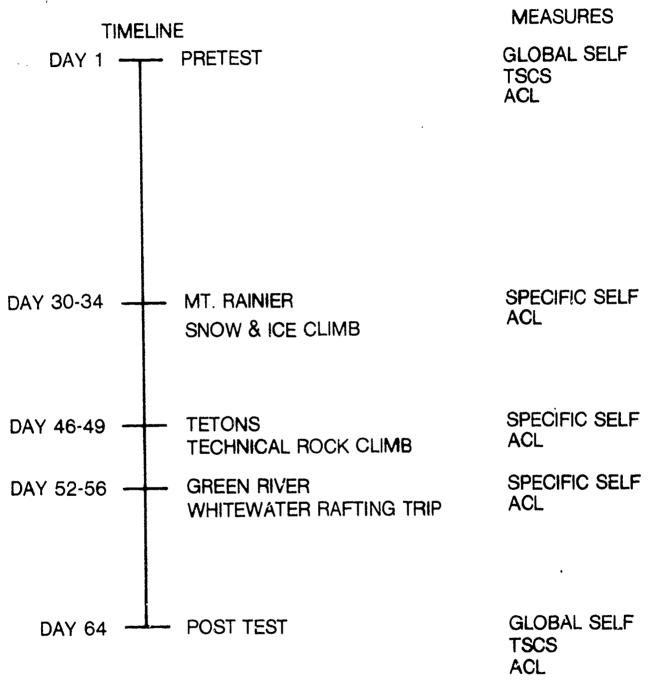
NUMEROUS PAST EVALUATIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN DIFFERENT

SETTINGS.





DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES



MAN AND HIS LAND EXPEDITIONS TRAVEL CAMP WESTERN TRIPS I & II 1978 N = 57



TENNESSEE SELF CONCEPT SCALE

		1	2	3	4	5	
Respon		Completely false	Mostly false	Partly false and partly true	Mostly true	Completely true	
	93. l g	et angry some	times				
	91. I d	lo not always	tell the tru	oth			*********
	77. l o	m not interest	ed in what	t other people (do		
	75. l a	m popular wit	h men				
	73. l a	m a friendly p	erson				
	59. My	friends have	no confide	ence in Ma			
						nd of trouble	
	5. I co	onsider myself	a sloppy p	erson			
	3. I ar	n an attractive	e person				
	I. I ha	ve a healthy b	oody				



THE ADJECTIVE CHECK LIST

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5 affectionate	35 	== 65 ☐ disorderly	friendly	infantile	naggang	progressive	ealf-pitying	stable	unconvention
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alert	37 complaining	67 distractible	□ fuery	ingenious	nervous 158	quarrelsome	solf-socking	stem	understanding
aloof	36 complicated	68 distristful	☐ generous	— 128 □ inhibited	noisy 159	189	selfish	stingy	unemotional
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STANDARD DIRECTIONS

DIRECTIONS: This booklet contains a list of adjectives. Please read them quickly and put an X in the box beside each one you would consider to be self-descriptive. Do not worry about duplications, contradictions, and so forth. Work quickly and do not spend too much time on any one adjective. Try to be frank, and check those adjectives which describe you as you really are, not as you would like to be.

(Global Self)

MODIFIED DIRECTIONS

DIRECTIONS: Think for a moment about your ascent of Mt. Rainier and how you felt about yourself. Read through the list of adjectives quickly and put an X in the boxes of those adjectives that would describe you in your experience of Mt. Rainier. Those adjectives that would not describe you as you reflect about your experience with Mt. Rainier should be left unchecked. Work quickly and do not spend too much time on any one adjective.

(Specific Self)

OVERHEAD #

TABLE 1 CORRELATED t-TEST FOR TENNESSEE SELF CONCEPT SCALE

S CAL E	PRET ME AN	EST SD	POST MEAN	TEST	DIFF	t-RATIO
NAME	ME AN	ას	MEAN		DIFF	L-RAITO
Total P	342.65	26.24	351.90	26.44	9.25	3.81***
Self-Criticism Score	38.05	6.23	38.53	6.12	0.47	0.69
Identity	122.97	8.92	125.98	8.50	3.02	3.11**
Self-Satisfaction	110.51	11.53	113.28	11.20	2.77	2.45*
Behavior	107.70	9.92	112.81	9.80	5.11	4.71***
Physical Self	67.91	7.60	69.49	7.11	1.58	2.36*
Moral-Ethical Self	69.30	7.11	70.19	7.66	0.90	1.22
Personal Self	66.53	6.41	69.25	6.51	2.72	3.77***
Family Self	71.86	8.08	74.25	7.17	2.39	3.64***
Social Self	65.91	6.57	68.90	6.39	2.98	3.97***
Total Variability	46.60	9.43	42.47	10.06	4.12	3.44**

For Df = 56

 $t_{.05} = 2.00$

 $t_{.01} = 2.66$ $t_{.001} = 3.46$

* > .05 significance

** > .01 signifiance

*** > .001 significance

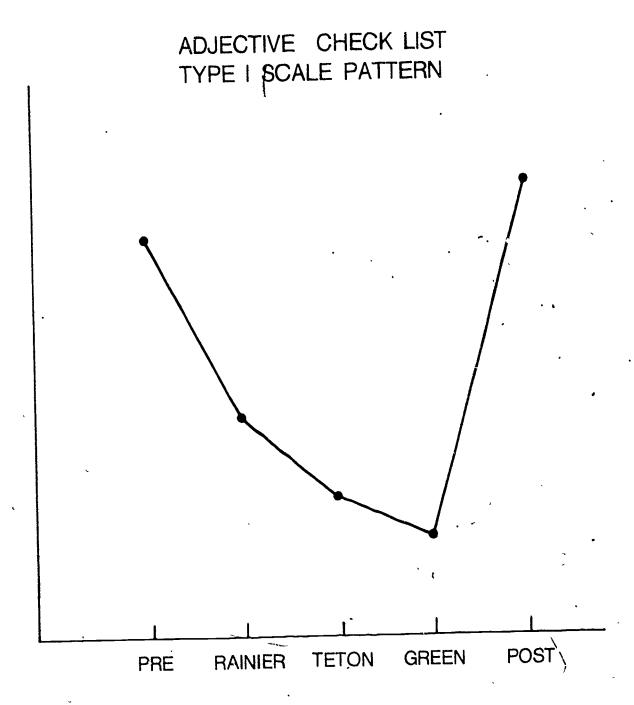


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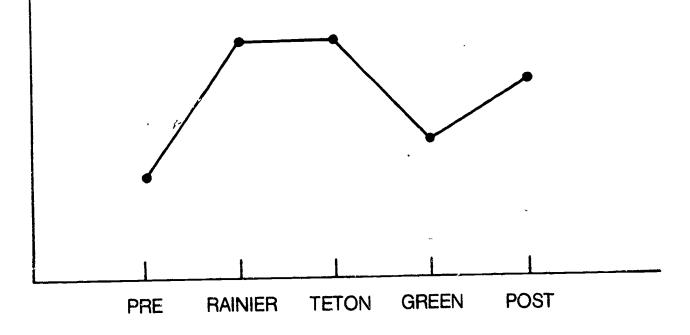
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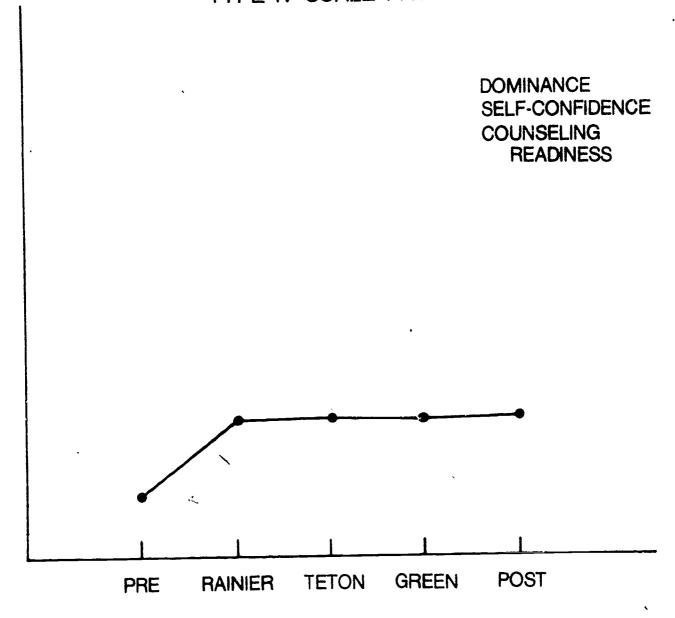
ADJECTIVE CHECK LIST TYPE II SCALE PATTERN

ORDER
ENDURANCE
ACHIEVEMENT
SELF-CONTROL
UNFAV. ADJ. CK'D.





ADJECTIVE CHECK LIST TYPE IV SCALE PATTERN





ADJECTIVE CHECK LIST TYPE III SCALE PATTERN

EXHIBITION ABASEMENT DEFERENCE AUTONOMY

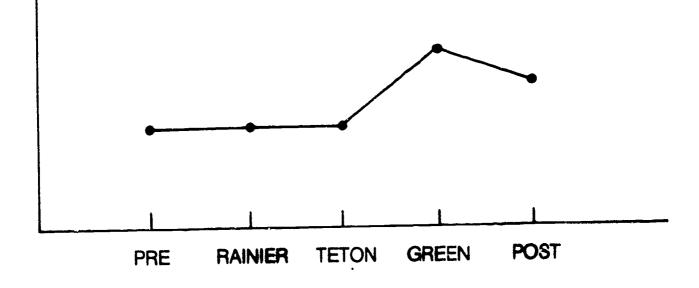




TABLE 9
.
WORDS CHECKED MOST FREQUENTLY AT RAINIER

WORDS	PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS CHECKING WORDS
ACTIVE, CAPABLE, COOPERATIVE, DETERMINED.	85-90%
ADVENTUROUS, ALERT, AMBITIOUS, ANXIOUS, CAUTIOUS, CONFIDENT.	80-85%
AGGRESSIVE, SERIOUS.	75-80%
ADAPTABLE, CLEAR-THINKING, CURIOUS, SELF-CONFIDENT.	70-75%
APPRECIATIVE, DEPENDABLE, HEALTHY, REALISTIC.	65-70%
ENERGETIC, ENTHUSIASTIC, MATURE, NERVOUS.	60-65%
AFFECTED, COURAGEOUS, INTERESTS-WIDE, SELF-CONTROLLED.	55-60%
DARING, EXCITABLE, FRIENDLY, NATURAL, OPTIMISTIC, PERSISTENT, RESPONSIBLE, SENSITIVE, TOUGH, TRUSTING.	50-55%
CHANGEABLE, EFFICIENT, HONEST, INDEPENDENT, ORGANIZED, PRACTICAL, REASONABLE, TENSE.	45-50%
ASSERTIVE, CALM, CHEERFUL, DEPENDANT, EMOTIONAL, HELPFUL, OUTGOING, RELIABLE, SELF-SEEKING, STABLE, STEADY.	40-45%



TABLE 10
WORDS CHECKED MOST FREQUENTLY AT TETONS

	OFD CENTACE OF DADTICIDANTS
WORDS	PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPARTS CHECKING WORDS
ALERT, CAUTIOUS	85-90%
ACTIVE, ADVENTUROUS, CAPABLE	
CLEAR-THINKING	75-80%
AGGRESSIVE, ANXIOUS	70-75%
AMBITIOUS, COOPERATIVE,	,
DETERMINED, NERVOUS	65-70%
ADAPTABLE, CONFIDENT, SERIOUS	60-65%
DARING, DEPENDABLE, ENERGETIC	55-60%
CURIOUS, ENTHUSIASTIC, HELPFUL,	
STRONG	50-55%
CALM, ORGANIZED, PATIENT, PRACTICAL,	
RESPONSIBLE, TRUSTING	45-50%
APPRECIATIVE, COURAGEOUS, FRIENDLY,	
HONEST, INDEPENDENT, OUTGOING,	
PERSISTENT, REALISTIC, RELIABLE,	
SELF-CONTROLLED, TENSE	40-45%

DB4/9



TABLE 11 WORDS CHECKED MOST FREQUENTLY AT GREEN

WORDS	PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS CHECKING WORDS
ADVENTUROUS	90-95%
ANXIOUS	85-90%
ACTIVE, ALERT	80-85%
AGGRESSIVE, DETERMINED	75-80%
COOPERATIVE	70-75%
ADAPTABLE, AMBITIOUS, DEPENDABLE,	
ENERGETIC, STRONG	65-70%
CAUTIOUS, CLEAR-THINKING,	
SELF-CONFIDENT	60-65%
CAPABLE, CONFIDENT, CURIOUS,	
ENTHUSIASTIC, EXCITABLE, HELPFUL, SERIOUS	55-60%
CONTENTED, DARING, IMPATIENT	50-55%
CHANGEABLE, EFFICIENT, FRIENDLY,	
HEALTHY, HONEST, HURRIED, INTERESTS-WIDE,	
OPTIMISTIC, REALISTIC, RELAXED, RELIABLE,	
RESPONSIBLE, TOUGH	45-50%
AFFECTED, BOSSY, CALM, COURAGEOUS, EMOTIONAL	•
INDEPENDENT, IRRITABLE, MOODY, OUTGOING,	
PERSISTENT, PLEASURE-SEEKING, REASONABLE,	
SELF-CONTROLLED, STEADY, TENSE	40-45%

TABLE 12 COMPARISONS OF TOP 20 ADJECTIVES CHECKED

RANGE	RAINIER	TETONS	GREEN
HIGH	* CAPABLE	\$ALERT	\$ADVENTUROUS
	\$DETERMINED	\$CAUTIOUS	\$ANXIOUS
	\$ACTIVE	\$ADVENTUROUS	\$ACTIVE
	\$COOPERATIVE	\$ACTIVE	\$ALERT ·
	\$ADVENTUROUS	*CAPABLE	\$AGGRESSIVE
	\$AMBITIOUS	\$CLEAR-THINKING	\$DETERMINED
	\$CAUTTOUS	\$ANXIOUS	\$COOPERATIVE
	\$ CONF I DE NT	\$AGGRESSIVE	\$ADAPTABLE
	\$ANXIOUS	\$DETERMINED	\$DEPENDABLE
	\$ALERT	NERVOUS	STRONG
	\$AGGRESSIVE	\$AMBITIOUS	\$AMBITIOUS
	*SERIOUS	\$COOPERATIVE	*ENERGETIC
	\$ADAPTABLE	★ \$ERIOUS	\$CAUTIOUS
	*SELF-CONFIDENT	\$ADAPTABLE	\$CLEAR-THINKING
	\$CURIOUS	\$CONFIDENT	*SELF-CONFIDENT
	\$CLEAR-THINKING	\$DEPENDABLE	*HELPFUL
	HEAL THY	*ENERGETIC	ENTHUSIASTIC
	APPRECIATIVE	DARING	\$CURIOUS
	\$DEPENDABLE	*HELPFUL	\$CONFIDENT
LOW	REALISTIC	\$CURIOUS	EXCITABLE

^{* =} Word found in two of the three groups \$ = Word found in all three groups



OVERHEAD # 17

DEFINITIONAL SELF IN HIGH ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

SCALE TYPE THEMES

TYPE II — TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

TYPE IV — SELF—CONFIDENCE

TYPE III — ASSERTIVENESS AND INITIATIVE

WORDS CHECKED THEMES

- GOAL CENTERED TASK ORIENTATION
- ANXIETY
- SOCIAL INTERACTION (TASK BIAS)



TABLE 13

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CHANGE SCORES SHOWN AT MIDTESTS AND CHANGE SCORES SHOWN AT POSTTEST FOR TYPE II, III, IV SCALES

	SCALE	MIDTESTS					
	NAME	Rainier	Tetons	Green			
Р	Unfavorable	0.23	0.47	0.27			
0	Self-Confidence	0.64	0.52	0.61			
s	Self-Control	0.62	0.49	0.63			
Т	Achievement	0.54	0.45	0.57			
T	Dominance	0.54	, 0.43	0.60			
Ε	 Endurance	0.64	0.61	0.53			
S	Order	0.61	0.47	0.53			
Т	Exhibition	0.65	0.59	0.71			
	Autonomy	0.55	0.70	0.73			
	Abasement	0.41	0.42	0.52			
	Deference	0.52	0.40	0.51			
	Counseling Readiness	0.66	0.53	0.64			

tak4/2

