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Ethics Education: Let the Adventure Begin!

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Abstract. The recent corporate climate in the United States has elicited a newfound emphasis on ethical behavior within organizations. While ethics education is considered to be the responsibility of many entities, organizations typically look to college educators for the ethical development of potential employees, causing academics to take a closer look at the components of current ethics education programs. The result has been a debate about the effectiveness of ethics courses. This paper proposes a novel approach to ethics education by aligning its goals and desired outcomes with the components and potential outcomes of adventure education techniques.

Keywords: ethics, experiential education, adventure education, business ethics, teaching ethics.

In the Parable of the Sadhu (McCoy 1983), four groups of people are brought together by a random ethical dilemma while traversing an 18,000-foot pass on the way to a Himalayan village. On the trek to the peak, one group of climbers discovers a naked, dying Indian holy man—a sadhu, lying on some ice. Individuals from each group take some part in aiding the man (carrying him down the mountain, giving him clothes, food and water, etc.), but the fierce travel conditions and immense mental and physical demands of the journey place limits on their willingness to sacrifice. The final group of climbers carried him to a rock about 500 feet from a shelter. None of the climbers know if the Sadhu lived or died.

1. Introduction

> Being ethical is just that, a matter of being. The problem before the businessman who aspires to be ethical is not that of doing, but that of becoming and being…. Our basic concern ought not to be with what business men do but with what they are.
>
> Paul Heyne (1968)

The past several years have seen the fall of several major corporations in the United States (e.g., Sunbeam, WorldCom, Enron), due in large part to poor ethical decisions made within them (Jennings 2004). In addition to warranting a newfound emphasis on ethical behavior within organizations, such instances have

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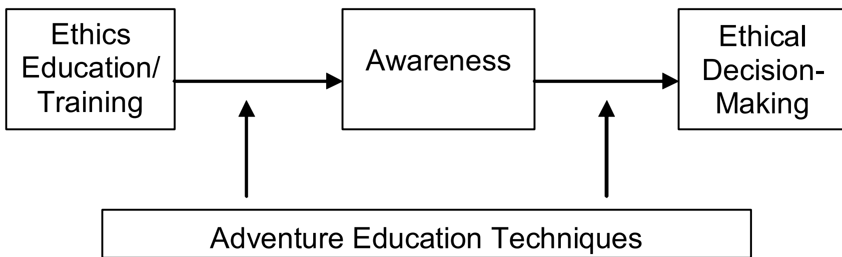
called into question the ethics training received by business students. The assumption that current ethics educational means are adequately preparing students for today's business environment is questionable (Duska 1991, Geary and Sims 1994, Smith and Oakley 1996, Wright 1995). Indeed, a former dean of the Yale business school proposed that schools could do much more to prepare students in ethical decision-making (Garten 2005). According to the Ethics Education Task Force (EETF) assembled by AACSB International, business schools will need to renew and revitalize their commitment to teaching ethical responsibility at both the corporate and individual levels in order to prepare leaders for the twenty-first century (AACSB 2004, Duska 1991). While some empirical studies suggest that ethical behavior measures are not significantly different between students who take ethics courses and those who do not, the general consensus does not seem to be that ethics education is a futile effort, but that the current way in which ethics is taught is not useful (Duska 1991, Geary and Sims 1994).

This paper responds to the recent emphasis on ethical behavior and answers the call put forth by ethics education experts by proposing a new pedagogical approach to ethics education, *experiential adventure education*. The objective is to align the components of experiential adventure education with the current needs of ethics education according to the proposed model (Fig. 1), with one primary factor at its core: moral awareness/recognition. It is the contention of this paper that using adventure education techniques to focus ethics education content on developing awareness in students will create a beneficial means to the desired ends.

Figure 1: Proposed model



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2. Ethical Decision Making and Ethical Behavior

> One overriding purpose of business ethics courses, then, is to have an impact on business decision making by introducing the ethical dimension to a manager's thinking. Otherwise, there would be no need to have ethical courses in professional departments—they could best be kept in departments of philosophy or religion.
>
> Buchholz (1982, page 2)

In general, business decisions are known to be complex, containing multiple dimensions and levels, and having broad, irrevocable impacts on the lives of thousands (Beu at al. 2003, Buchholz 1982, Caza et al. 2004). Internal decisions regarding policies and procedures and external decisions regarding public policy and other societal issues extend the organizational hand far beyond what the organizational eyes can see. As a result, ethical issues require their own unique set of decisions within organizations, which are distinct from and inclusive of economic and/or financial decisions (Buchholz 1982).

Business, which can be viewed as a type of society, is possible only within a certain social context of institutions, agreements, understandings, and shared values. The freedom to pursue business profits is limited by the values held within the society (i.e., fairness, equal opportunity, honesty, and truthfulness) (Beu et al. 2003). These general rules serve as loose guidelines for organizations. However, as the business environment continually and rapidly changes in terms of technology, demographics and business scope, the need for adaptation increases, along with the degrees of complexity and ambiguity. High levels of ambiguity can be problematic, as individuals desire some level of control over their environment (Caza et al. 2004). The nature of today's business environment has encouraged individuals to take matters into their own hands, leading them "to make up rules, construct interpretation systems, and decide for themselves what is real and appropriate" (Caza et al. 2004, page 170). As a result, most organizations have an established set of rules to help create some guidelines for behavior. Nonetheless, it is impossible to create a set of rules that would cover the numerous contingencies that arise. It is here—in these ethical grey areas—that the inevitable interpretive element enters the picture. Ethical rules are ultimately defined by how people apply them. The interpretive application of the rules plays itself out in ethical decision making.

Ethical decision making is the process by which individuals use information to make decisions based on their ideas of right and wrong (Bonevac 1996). Due to its complexity, the decision process is influenced by numerous factors. Two seminal models of the development of ethical decision making are Kohlberg's (1969) cognitive moral development model, which focuses primarily on individual development, and Jones's (1991) moral intensity model, which shifts the attention to situational elements. From these two contributions have stemmed

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works that combine their perspectives (Beu et al. 2003, Watley and May 2004) and directly link the influencing factors to behavioral outcomes.

2.1. Kohlberg's Cognitive Moral Development Model

Kohlberg's model of cognitive moral development (CMD) contains within it three major levels of moral development—pre-conventional, conventional, and principled. In this model, cognitive processes associated with moral development occur in conjunction with individual maturity and emotional development (Beu et al. 2003). According to Wright (1995), most adults have reached the conventional level (stages 3-4) of Kohlberg's model. Rest (1986) maintains that moral development is crucial in ethics education, because it stops when education stops. This contention has been somewhat supported by Penn and Collier (1985), who suggest that ethics education programs should be oriented to advance students to higher stages of moral development, and by Armstrong (1987), who found that college students demonstrated higher levels of moral development than adults in the accounting workforce. The educational implications of this assertion are twofold. First, initial educational experiences surrounding moral development should be designed to be powerful and lasting in order to produce enduring and continuing effects on moral development. Second, there is merit to requiring continuing moral education in organizations.

Using educational resources to foster cognitive moral development is fruitless without the critical link between this development and action/behavior. Researchers have been concerned with the questionable link between CMD and moral/ethical behavior, because there is much more involved in an ethical decision than one's level of moral development. According to Beu et al. (2003), there is empirical research to support this link (Kohlberg and Candee 1984, Malinowski and Smith 1985; Stratton et al. 1981, Trevino 1986). This, combined with the solid theoretical foundation of the CMD model, has created a suitable operationalization of ethical decision-making and behavior.

2.2. Jones's Moral Intensity Model

According to Jones's (1991) model of moral intensity, the ethical dilemma itself contains within it components that have the potential to impact ethical decision making and behavior. Jones linked six issue-contingent factors to Rest's (1986) ethical decision-making model to demonstrate the impact of the ethical situation on each phase of the decision-making process. The factors are magnitude of consequences, social consensus, proximity, probability, temporal immediacy, and concentration of effect. Jones argues that each of these dimensions may increase or decrease the intensity of a moral situation. For example, a situation in which

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the consequences are significant, result from a socially unacceptable action, and are likely to occur immediately and to affect a concentrated group of individuals who are emotionally close to the decision-maker, creates a higher level of moral intensity than one with the opposite characteristics. The impacts of moral intensity on ethical decision-making and intent/behavior have been empirically validated by a number of researchers (Beu et al. 2003, Flannery and May 2000, May and Pauli 2002, Watley and May 2004), making it an undeniable component of the ethical decision making process.

Because of its pervasiveness in ethical decision making and behavior, moral intensity cannot be ignored by ethics education. The emphasis in ethics education should be placed on developing the ability to discern elements of a situation that should be considered in an ethical decision. Moral intensity has direct application to the proposed model in that it deals directly with the element of awareness. People cannot make decisions based on moral intensity unless they are aware of the consequences and how they impact themselves and others.

3. Awareness

> The central contrast is between learning ethical deliberation by internalizing rules versus what I have elsewhere called "growing awareness". Learning to judge wisely about the ethical is a matter of learning how to attend. It is a matter of acquiring the capacities for awareness. These are the attentional skills possession of which throws the ethical into relief for the ethically competent and lack of which leaves the ethical novice in the dark.
>
> Michael Luntley (2003, page 332)

Thus far, it has been established that the focus of ethical decision making and behavior does not necessarily consist primarily of memorization of a set of rules or ethical principles. Rather, academics, students, and practitioners agree that ethics is about being aware of and applying rules as guidelines, discovering one's own personal morals and values, and making judgments that are consistent with these internal and external forces, while minimizing harm or maximizing benefit (Buchholz 1982, Duska 1991, Geary and Sims 1994, Sims 2002, Watley and May 2004).

In ethical dilemmas, decision makers are called to be aware of the forces involved in the dilemma, as well as the implications of the alternatives. While awareness of societal, industrial, and organizational morals, values, and rules is crucial, it cannot stand alone in the process of ethical decision making. As pointed out by Duska (1991), executives may know that certain actions are right or wrong, but this does not mean that they know about the ethical implications of their possible actions. As a primary proponent of creating consequential awareness, Luntley (2003) emphasizes the need to acquire capacities for

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awareness in order to exercise good moral judgment in today's increasingly complex and highly uncertain business environment. Such capacities are important when considering the impacts of Jones's moral intensity. As pointed out by Beu et al. (2003, page 103), "we need to train decision-makers to be more aware of the negative consequences, social costs, and spillover effects of ethical decisions, so that their decisions are based on a more complete picture."

Understanding the necessity of awareness in ethical decision making and behavior is vital when developing ethics education programs. It was established above that awareness of both external and internal ethical forces is instrumental in ethical decision making. Again, teaching students ethical principles may provide them with some criteria to guide decision making, but it does not make students more aware of the implications of their actions, which is necessary for solid ethical judgments. Luntley (2003) asserts that ethically competent individuals should be aware of general rules, but these rules are not what primarily lie behind ethical decision-making competence. Instead, wise judgment is the crucial component that initiates the possession and operation of attentional skills necessary for ethical decision making and behavior (Luntley 2003).

4. Business Ethics Education

> Employers are not just looking for competent managers, but also for those who know the importance of making ethical decisions…. Business schools are recognizing the importance of teaching ethics in order to empower future captains of business and industry to manage issues of corporate responsibility…
>
> Roy and Roy (2004)

Recent evidence of an epidemic of unethical behavior has brought ethics education to the forefront of many college curriculums. There is some debate, however, over who is responsible for the ethical well-being of business and society, as well as over the content and teaching methods of ethics courses. It is generally agreed that there is a need to improve business ethics education as a means of preventing further unethical "excesses" from occurring in the future (Simerson and Neal 1993).

As indicated above, the purpose of an ethics course is not to impart right answers, but to aid students in becoming more perceptive in detecting ethical dilemmas (Menzel 1997). Criticisms of ethics courses seem to fall into two main categories: content and pedagogy. These categories are nicely displayed in O'Boyle and Dawson's (1991) identification of three main problems with instructional methods used in teaching ethics: (1) teaching proceeds entirely on the intellectual level—students are not afforded the opportunity to deal with actual situations; (2) the use of case studies does not allow students to discern ethical problems at hand—there is no moral recognition to initiate the process of

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ethical decision making; and (3) students are not exposed to the complicated intertwining of issues and principles that frequently characterize ethical problems in general, nor do they experience the type and extent of the personal risks that taking and holding an ethical position sometimes entails—it is not always about the victimization of the weaker animal, nor is there always a concrete right and wrong.

The first area of concern in ethics education is *content*. The primary argument regarding content surrounds the issues of relevancy and realism (Sims 2002). Based on their empirical examination, Simerson and Neal (1993) suggest that ethics instructors should focus on aligning the content of ethics courses with the ethical challenges that are likely to confront business graduates. According to their findings, issues should reflect practicality, applicability, and intellectual rigor. Their suggestions for the content development of future ethics courses include: (1) education about ethical codes—development, implementation and application; (2) exposure to the types of ethical dilemmas (or unethical behaviors) they will encounter in the workplace—macro and micro (see (Simerson and Neal 1993); and (3) expansion beyond the classroom—instructors should think creatively about how to teach and apply ethics.

Duska (1991) agrees that current ethics courses may be useless, but asserts that the uselessness is not due to the unteachable nature of ethics. It is due to *pedagogy*—the way ethics courses are taught. Smith and Oakley (1996) echo this perspective, concluding that ethics curricula and pedagogy are missing their mark. Interestingly, the consensus seems to be that experiential techniques are theorized to be the most effective in teaching ethics education. Moral judgment is action oriented, therefore students should be charged with taking control of their own learning by participating in experiential learning exercises (Sims 2002). Business education today focuses on facts, skills, data, and a teacher-centered classroom, while most students have expressed a preference for an emphasis on emotional intelligence, sharing information, and a student-centered learning environment (Heames and Service 2003).

While limitations on the current ethics education environment are significant, they are not insurmountable. Researchers conclude that ethics can and should be taught in colleges and universities as a means of developing ethical human beings (Buchholz 1982, Hartman 2003, Wright 1995). As pointed out by Wright (1995), the capacity for principled moral judgment can and should be developed through a focused, systematic, and long-term educational effort. However, the current emphasis on mastery of facts in order to produce proper solutions to well-defined problems is too narrow in focus. In addition, the current pedagogy typically applied to ethical issue analysis is not well matched to the goals of ethics education, which include the application of ethical principles and development of the ability to make independent ethical judgments (Geary and Sims 1994). Synthesizing this with the preceding section on awareness, the following propositions are offered:

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Proposition 1: Ethics education that emphasizes appropriate content and utilizes appropriate pedagogical techniques is positively related to awareness development.

Proposition 2a: Ethics education that emphasizes awareness of internal and external ethical forces (including values, morals, rules, and norms) is positively related to ethical behavioral indicators (CMD and ethical intent).

Proposition 2b: Ethics education that emphasizes awareness of the consequences of various relevant actions (including various dimensions of moral intensity) is positively related to ethical behavioral indicators (CMD and ethical intent).

5. Experiential Learning and Ethics Education

> Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results.
>
> John Dewey

In general, learning has been defined as an activity directed toward acquiring particular skills and knowledge (Brookfield 1984). As pointed out by Nadkarni (2003), the primary conclusion from the adult learning literature is that the better the fit between student learning style and instructional style, the more positive the learning experience and the better the learning outcomes. As indicated by Knowles (1984), adult learners typically initiate their own learning, taking charge of both learning processes and outcomes. Thus, adult learners are better matched with a more learner-centered or self-directed style of learning. Experiential education, by its very nature, is a nice match for adult learners in this regard.

According to the Association for Experiential Education (AEE) (1995), experiential learning is a process through which individuals construct knowledge, acquire skills, and enhance values from direct experience. Although there are several experiential learning models, it is generally agreed that four phases comprise the experiential learning cycle—experiencing, reflecting, generalizing, and applying. All the stages are necessary for an instructor to facilitate an individual's learning. As in every cycle, the last and first phases are connected. Application is connected to experience in the sense that the application becomes part of an individual's background knowledge for the next experience (Luckner and Nadler 1997).

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5.1. Experiential Education in Management Education

Recently, the importance of "experience" as an instructor of management has been the focus of researchers. In a recent interview, Henry Mintzberg notes that it is important to learn from personal experiences rather than abstract experiences of someone else (McCarthy 2000). In subsequent work, Mintzberg and Gosling (2002) point out that managers need to learn more than faculty need to teach. They indicate that it is important to adapt to the learners at hand, emphasizing that the process of educating managers should reflect their practices. This emphasis has given rise to supporting works which are primarily prescriptive in nature (Mintzberg and Gosling 2002, Romme and Putzel 2003, Saunders 1997). Theoretical and empirical studies of experiential techniques employed in management classrooms have found merit in the approach (Nadkarni 2003, Reid and Johnston 1999). Shifting the focus to an experience-based approach to takes the potential for application a step further by placing experience in the role of educator. The experience provides a powerful built-in application of the ideas in the textbook, with countless inherent teachable moments at the disposal of peers and instructors alike.

5.2. Experiential Education in Ethics

In the wake of the recent fervor for ethics education and the debate over its effectiveness, a number of academics have proposed creative new methods for teaching ethics. A survey of existing and proposed goals for ethics education (e.g., Buchholz 1982, Menzel 1997, Menzel 1997b, Sims 2002, Smith and Oakley 1996), reveals many parallels between experiential learning theory and the needs of effective ethics education. This match, while not previously grounded in experiential learning theory, has been noted in the many suggestions for pedagogical improvement in ethics education made by professors in the field. As in management applications of experiential education, the majority of the literature is more theoretical (diagnostic and prescriptive) than empirical (examining the impact on outcomes).

Sims (2002) points out that experiential exercises serve as an effective training and teaching tool to prepare students to understand and cope with the many "ethical minefields" they are likely to encounter. While the literature reflects the value placed on experiential exercises, not many of the suggestions propose or encourage a complete experiential ethics curriculum. Rather, they propose some form of hybrid approach that blends the experiential and the traditional. While there is certainly not one "right" way to teach ethics, the recent focus on the deficiencies of ethics education has elicited critical thought from many academics. Experiential education philosophies and techniques have

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consistently been mentioned as appropriate for ethics instruction, because they generally lead to the desired outcomes.

5.3. Adventure Education

Adventure education combines all of the philosophies and components of experiential education and adds an adventure component. In general, it presents a physically challenging environment whose components are considered to be mechanisms for learning or change. One of the most comprehensive conceptualizations of adventure education is proposed by Baldwin et al. (2004). In their view, "one form of experiential education [is] characterized by: (a) the planned use of adventuresome activities, (b) a real-life activity or learning context, (c) goal-directed challenges that must be solved individually and in groups, (d) an outdoor or wilderness setting, (e) cooperative small group living and activity participation, (f) trained leaders/facilitators, and (g) specific, pre-planned educational or developmental goals." Adventure education and training has been successfully employed in various environments (i.e. therapeutic, leader, and team development) to accomplish such outcomes as global self-concept, physical competence, trust, social competence, cooperative behavior and decision making, and personal accomplishment/success (Bladwin et al. 2004).

To create an effective adventure learning environment, certain conditions must be met (Ewert 1989). The conditions associated with effective adventure learning programs directly correlate with a number of recommendations that have been made to improve ethics education.

1. *The emergence of shared meaning*. Shared meaning emerges from shared experience and evolves over time. The concept of shared meaning incorporates the social aspects of ethical decision making, while practically applying them to situations in which groups are faced with ethical dilemmas (Beu et al. 2003, Wright 1995). One of the benefits of using adventure education for the development of shared meaning is that it offers a balance of individual and group awareness and responsibility, mitigating some of the problems associated with groupthink mentalities.

2. *A spirit of cooperation*. In an adventure setting, cooperation promotes the overall well-being of group members and the attainment of desired outcomes. Cooperation is directly related to awareness, because it requires individuals to be aware of personal values, shared values, norms, rules, and the consequences of their actions (Duska 1991, Luntley 2003).

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3. *High level of engagement*. Engagement is fostered in adventure experiences as a result of the activity and excitement associated with real-life endeavors. Engagement leads to heightened attention and enjoyment. It incorporates both the content required for ethics education and the students' expressed desire for active, participative learning (Heames and Service 2003, Simerson and Neal 1993, Sims 2002). In addition, evidence has shown that experiential exercises help build engagement in the workplace through meaning and psychological safety (May et al. 2004).

4. *Dealing with dissonance or uncertainty*. Risk, fear, and dissonance play a significant role in learning new skills and applying old skills to new situations. Dissonance and uncertainty reflect the true characteristics of ethical dilemmas, while incorporating the element of risk that is involved in drawing one's own ethical lines (Caza et al. 2004, O'Boyle and Dawson 1991).

5.4. Adventure Education in Management

To date, relatively little discussion of adventure training and education has appeared in the management education literature. Practical applications of adventure techniques, however, have appeared in case study and theoretical formats. Daniels (1994) examined the impact of repetitive obstacle performance evaluations systems (ROPES) training, which is designed to promote group communication, trust, and cooperation to achieve a desired end. Results showed significant post-training increases in team development scores (Daniels 1994). McEnvoy et al. (1997) published a case study of an organization that used outdoor adventure training to bring a diverse group together as a team. Comparisons between experimental and control groups revealed significant differences in employee learning, self-esteem, and organizational commitment, which indicates a learning effect. Most recently, Meyer (2003) provided some empirical support for the notion that outdoor adventure training bridges the gap between management theory and practice. He proposed a model that integrates outdoor adventure training and the "four territories of experience" (Torbert 1999) to increase the transfer between learning and action.

Experiential adventure techniques employed for training purposes in organizations have been demonstrated as effective means of linking theory to practice and learning to action. Powerful experiences lead to equally powerful learning outcomes, while achieving the goals set forth by the employing organizations. If education is as closely tied to practice as educators would like it to be, it is logical to include some of these techniques in our classrooms to meet desired objectives. In addition, it is encouraging to know that adventure

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experiences provided during a college career may be reinforced by subsequent adventure experiences in organizations, making the educational medium more meaningful and enduring.

6. Adventure Education in Ethics Education

> Educating is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire.
>
> William Butler Yeats

The Parable of the Sadhu (McCoy 1983), the story used to introduce this article, is one of the earliest efforts to draw a parallel between adventure experiences and corporate ethics, and to demonstrate the potential effectiveness of adventure activities in ethics education. While several experiential methods have been recommended, so far none of those recommendations have specified adventure learning outcomes. Some of the general outcomes associated with participation in adventure experiences are self-esteem, trust, communication skills, self-awareness, confidence, and the ability to solve problems (Kaly and Heesacker 2003; Newtonet al. 2001). While each of these outcomes may be related to ethical behavior development, there is limited research specific to the relationship between adventure education and morals/ethics. Existing research has shown that this relationship is centered around two general categories of recreational outcomes: (1) cognitive development, including decision-making, values clarification, and innovative thinking; and (2) character development, including respect, trust empathy, and appreciation (Newton et al. 2001).

Newton et al. (2001) proposed a model that incorporates adventure education and moral action, making theoretical connections between the components of adventure education and a model of moral action. These authors focus on such components as awareness of personal values, empathy, cooperation, communication, adaptability to expressed norms, task/problem solving orientation, individualizing participation, and creating an equalitarian power structure to enhance moral development. In an empirical investigation of the impacts of adventure education experiences on individual development, the following outcomes were discerned: feelings of environmental responsibility, increased self-confidence, feelings of safety, better social behavior, and higher moral judgments (Palmberg and Kuru 2000). While the theoretical and empirical conclusions specific to ethical/moral development and adventure learning are limited, general findings surrounding the outcomes of adventure education consistently suggest that participants in adventure programs experience lasting changes (Hattie et al. 1997, Holman et al. 2003, Raiola 2003). The ethical byproducts of adventure experiences align closely with established desired outcomes of ethics education. Some examples follow.

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Outcome 1: Awareness of Personal Morals and Values

Adventure experiences place participants in a completely new environment to face new challenges and function under a new set of constraints (Geary and Sims 1994; Hartman 2003). The force of the combined novelties associated with such an experience drives persons inward to reexamine who they are and how they might fit into and function in this new circumstance. In these environments, individuals decide for themselves what to make of these experiences, which have forced them outside of their comfort zone and created meaning (Taniguchi and Freeman 2004). According to Hattie et al. (1997), the effects of adventure programs on one's self-concept are significantly greater than those typically found in traditional classroom-based programs. Results show that the greatest self-concept impacts include independence, confidence, self-efficacy, and self-understanding. Studies have also shown that outdoor adventure activities inherently provide the foundation necessary to become more knowledgeable about oneself and create the potential for reinvention of the self (Taniguchi and Freeman 2004). It is logical to conclude, based on these findings, that the knowledge of self that apparently comes with participation in adventure activities carries the potential to illuminate what one holds dear morally and ethically.

In the parable summarized at the beginning of this paper, we find four collections of individuals brought together by one helpless man in critical condition. The individuals are at various points in their journey, but all have time constraints. They must reach the peak before the sun melts the ice steps to the top. In addition, they are trying to manage the monumental mental and physical demands they are placing on their minds and bodies in order to accomplish their goal, some of them suffering from altitude sickness. When the first group encounters the Sadhu, naked and hypothermic, lying on a sheet of ice, the ethical dilemma is presented to each individual: Should I compromise the mission, or this man? While the story doesn't reveal the decision-making interaction of the group as a whole, we know that one man begrudgingly decided to bear the burden of initiating help for the Sadhu.

Outcome 2: Awareness of Social Aspects of Ethical Dilemmas

This outcome encompasses awareness of societal, industrial, organizational, and group norms and rules, others' values and expectations, and consciousness of others (Beu et al. 2003, Simerson and Neal 1993). Adventure education techniques involve groups of individuals. While the impacts on the self are significant, interaction with others adds an additional learning element. As a group comes together to participate in adventure activities, general rules become relevant for behavior in the environment where the activities are taking place (e.g. "leave no trace" ethics, trail etiquette, respectful and safe play behavior), and

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specific social rules and norms quickly emerge within the group. In the cycle of experiential education, both kinds of rules and norms can be generalized to the rules and norms that may be specifically encountered in the future by participants. Rhoades (1972) points out that the significance of the natural environment used in adventure experiences lies in certain responses elicited from participants, due to the manner in which adventure programs require them to interact with the environment. Responses relevant to the social dimension of ethical issues include cooperation, clear thinking and planning, and persistence. Results from Hattie et al. (1997) demonstrate that inherent elements such as challenge, risk factors, feedback, and mutual group support serve as powerful educators in an adventure experience. Finally, Taniguchi and Freeman (2004) found that participation in outdoor activities resulted in the development of personal relationships, which served as a point of reference for comparison and contrast. Based on these connections, it may be deduced that the social interaction facilitated in adventure activities will combine with the environment to create an awareness of the social elements of ethics.

When one man decided to carry the Sadhu down to the next nearest group for help, numerous social considerations arose. By leaving the group with which he was traveling, the assistant delayed the summit attempt for at least one other group member, potentially compromising success, increasing risk, and intensifying tension among group members. By dropping the man with another group, the social space of the dilemma was enlarged. The journey had now been delayed for at least two groups of people, and possibly discontinued for the receiving group and any other individuals making a summit attempt. The social space could be even further expanded if the Sadhu were ignored or intentionally left behind.

Outcome 3: Sensitivity to Aspects of Moral Intensity

Moral intensity, which deals directly with consequences of actions, is predicated on the assumption of awareness (Duska 1991, Luntley 2003, May and Pauli 2002). Adventure learning takes place in a setting rich with stimuli. When removed from their normal environments into an environment that is sensitive to many actions, participants are forced to live with the immediate consequences of their actions (Hattie et al. 1997). Rhoades' (1972) list of elicited responses to the natural environment, mentioned above, includes careful observation. As persons interact with a natural environment, they become more aware of how that environment is impacted by themselves and others. This, in conjunction with the awareness of norms introduced by adventure activity facilitators (e.g. "leave no trace" ethics), creates a global awareness of how individual decisions might make their mark(s) on various environments (Palmberg and Kuru 2000). Adventure activities focus on tasks that are accomplished by the entire collection of involved

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individuals. Individual and group decisions have real, recognizable impacts on task outcomes. The consequences of decisions made in adventure activities may be compared with those of analogous decisions made in an organization or industry, in order to reinforce sensitivity to moral intensity.

As the individuals who encountered the Sadhu considered the ethical dilemma, they knew immediate action was required. If someone did not help the man, he would die. On the other hand, anyone who chose to help the man faced a myriad of consequences. Regardless of the specific decision, a vast number of people would be immediately and permanently impacted—including people personally close to, merely acquainted with, and completely unknown to the decision-maker.

Outcome 4: Development of Skills for Moral Recognition and Judgment

Throughout an adventure experience—as individuals become more aware of themselves, others, and their environment(s)—recognition of moral issues is a byproduct of the learning experience. Recognition is the crucial first step in the ethical decision making process (Buchholz 1982, Luntley 2003, Wright 1995). Once people recognize a moral issue, they can take it in for evaluation. Rhoades (1972) also includes resourcefulness and adaptability on his list of responses to outdoor experiences. Such responses initiate the processes of evaluation and judgment. One may assume that becoming skilled in the first two steps of this process will lead to the behavioral outcomes of ethical intent and behavior. Some investigations of the impacts of adventure education programs (e.g. Goldenberg 2004) demonstrate that one outcome is moral courage, a necessary component of forming ethical intent and carrying out ethical behavior.

The author of the Parable of the Sadhu, Bowen McCoy, was a participant on the Himalayan trip described in the article. He was among the second group of individuals to encounter the Sadhu, and one who chose, after offering some assistance, to leave the man behind in order to reach the summit safely. His long-time friend and travel companion, an anthropologist named Stephen, stayed behind with the Sadhu and petitioned other individuals for additional help and resources to save the life of the Sadhu. When all parties refused, Stephen was left with a moral decision—risk his life to try and save the Sadhu by himself, or ensure his own safety by catching up to his travel partners.

Based on the above connections between desired ethics education outcomes and potential adventure education outcomes, the following propositions may be put forward:

Proposition 3a: Adventure education techniques moderate (strengthen) the relationship between ethics education and awareness.

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Proposition 3b: Adventure education techniques moderate (strengthen) the relationship between awareness and ethical behavior indicators (CMD & ethical intent).

Adventure experiences are known for the creation of meaningful learning that lasts far beyond that of many classroom techniques (Hattie et al. 1997). Matching ethics education outcomes with the potential for adventure education to accomplish them presents a viable and powerful approach to ethics instruction in educational environments where people are willing and able to employ it. Specific examples of activities can be found in the Appendix.

7. Strengths and Limitations

While adventure education is suitable and beneficial for ethics education, it does not come without challenges. The proposed model is based on solid theoretical and empirical findings surrounding ethics education is and rooted in well-established learning theory. If appropriately applied, adventure education techniques have the potential to produce many of the outcomes desired by ethics educators, including psychological (self-efficacy, self-awareness), sociological (communication, cooperation), and educational (creative problem solving, resourcefulness) benefits (Meyer 2003).

There are some practical limitations on implementing an adventure curriculum. Based on the results of Nadkarni (2003), a course utilizing solely experiential techniques should be designed for mature learners. Unless some kind of adapted hybrid were employed, the proposed model would be inappropriate (in fact, would backfire) for freshmen or other students with low learning maturity levels. Thus, the external validity of the model may be viewed as somewhat limited to upper level and graduate college students. Nadkarni's results may, however, be due to the wide range of learner maturity levels in an introductory level management course, which makes it difficult to adapt a program to meet all needs. Proponents of experiential education would argue that experiential techniques are appropriate for all levels of learners when properly applied. In Nadkarni's case, the participant role component of an effective experiential program was not satisfied, in that participants were not voluntary—which leads to the next limitation.

To be consistent with theory, a course with an experiential adventure approach should not be required, nor should this approach be used in all offered sections of a course. Students should be aware of their roles and responsibilities in the program prior to making a commitment to complete it. Often, the voluntary component of the participant role occurs naturally through a process of self-selection.

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Finally, there are inherent obstacles to be overcome by any adventure learning program. It is resource intensive, in that administering the program is expensive in terms of time, money and human resources. Success requires repetition and reinforcement, as experiential education should not be a "one-shot" experience and requires consistent follow-up (although contrary evidence is provided by Hattie et al. 1997). The program may be lacking in management support or a strong commitment from the "top". It may be susceptible to a "fun in the sun" attitude, when the crucial element of experiential learning is transferring knowledge from a powerful and pleasant—but potentially distracting—outdoor setting to the appropriate practical setting (Meyer 2003). On the other hand, the above definition of adventure education is broad enough not to require multi-day field experiences. As indicated by the "Win/Win" example in the Appendix, an ethics professor can design an adventure experience to be carried out and debriefed within a single class meeting and the physical confines of a classroom. This allows the experiences to be repeated intermittently throughout a semester as a means of repetition and follow-up.

8. Conclusion

> It is helpful to remember that to be ethical involves three activities: knowing the good, loving the good and doing the good. Any behavior, to be moral, must be deliberate and involve knowing. Otherwise it is simply reflex behavior.
>
> Ronald F. Duska (1991, page 338)

Experiential education is an approach to learning in which students are encouraged to explore questions they find relevant and meaningful, and teachers are encouraged to move into the role of coach and out of the role of interpreter of reality or purveyor of truth. Students and instructors are called to trust that valid and meaningful conclusions may be drawn from personal experiences, which result in learning that is more powerful than just relying on other people's conclusions about the world and the lives within it (Chapman et al. 1992). This paper proposes a new approach to the ailing ethics education environment by aligning both the current problems and desired outcomes of ethics education with the components and potential outcomes of adventure learning techniques. Certainly, a variety of teaching methods must be employed and tested before we conclude that pedagogy is the true culprit for the lack of results from ethics education. What we can deduce at the moment is that current means of teaching are not effective in the ways we would like them to be. While various approaches (many experiential in nature) have been proposed, few have been well grounded in learning theory. It is important to reemphasize that there is no one solution to any of the problems confronted in the realm of ethics education. It is therefore equally important to reinforce the call to educators who are passionate about the

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future of this discipline to continue to think creatively about approaches to ethics education that are firmly based on the principles of learning theory.

For many days and nights after the Himalayan summit, Stephen and Bowen debated the interaction between the hikers and the Sadhu. Stephen thought it was interesting that a collective sense of right and wrong never evolved within the group. Rather, everyone was willing to help until it became inconvenient. It seemed as though Stephen and Bowen hurled valid arguments at one another until they finally agreed to disagree. Nonetheless, Bowen was burdened by the fact that he had "hiked right through" an intense moral dilemma without giving much thought to the consequences of his actions. After this experience, his next moral dilemma will likely be much different.

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Appendix

Abbreviated Examples of Potential Adventure Experiences with Ethical Applications

Example 1: Win/Win—A Group Problem Solving/Initiative Activity

In this activity, participants are separated into groups and placed in front of empty hula-hoops surrounding a central hoop full of "treasure" (tennis balls, deck rings, rubber chickens, etc.). Groups are charged with getting *all of the treasure in their hoop*, while abiding by the following rules: (1) only one piece of treasure may be moved at a time; (2) the treasure may not be thrown, (3) groups may not guard their treasure in any way, and (4) once all of the treasure is gone from the center hoop, a group may begin taking treasure from their competition. The solution of the problem is that all of the groups come together (stacking their hoops on top of one another), resulting in everyone getting all of the treasure in their hoop. Inevitably one group (or one person within a group) is unwilling to cooperate and resorts to behaviors such as hiding treasure for purposes of guarding it (inside clothing or pockets, for example). The result is that the one unwilling group ends up compromising its own success as well as that of all of the other groups. Ethics comes into play in two important ways. First, does everyone abide by the rules? Second, what happens if a group (or some of its members) does not abide by the rules? Using an analogy to bring out the business ethics of the situation, the following correlates may be suggested: the groups are business units in an organization or organizations within an industry, and the treasure corresponds to resources within an organization or industry, or market share. Instructors are charged with paying close attention to the interactions between and within groups to maximize the lessons learned from the experience. Awareness may be fostered during the debriefing or reflection period during which consequences of individual and group actions are discussed.

Example 2: Backpacking Trip—A Multi-day Field Experience

Most trained backpacking trip leaders receive training in several key areas to ensure the overall well-being of participants, the environment, and the utilized equipment. The training is likely to include: "leave no trace" ethics, wilderness medical techniques, various technical issues (use of equipment, travel techniques), and group management (including the basics of trail etiquette and behavior, group dynamics). The leaders are then responsible for instructing participants in matters that will keep them emotionally and physically safe, while caring for the environment in which they are traveling. An area pertinent to ethics

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in this experience, for example, would be "leave no trace" ethics. It teaches participants to respect the environment in which they are traveling and discusses minimal impact strategies, such as staying on the trail to avoid damage to vegetation, packing out all that you pack in, proper handling of food items to avoid feeding animals (so as to avoid their dependence on outside food sources), and so forth. A specific example of this is "cutting switchbacks". Backpacking trails tend to depart only slightly from contour lines to minimize the grade. Trails commonly ascend a steep slope by zigzagging their way up, approximately following the contour in either direction. Any of the sharp turns at which the trail doubles back is a switchback. Taking shortcuts between two segments of the trail to avoid walking around the switchback is known as "cutting switchbacks". It causes erosion of the trail (so that others are not able to travel on it) and destruction of the vegetation, eventually leading to erosion of the area as a whole. Such a situation may be analogous to cutting corners at work, as when Ford took the Pinto to market despite its propensity to explode in rear-end collisions, or when Vioxx was released before further examination revealed that it is damaging to the heart.

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