



Outward Bound provides different adventures during its sessions. Left: one member attempts to cross Linville Gorge using Tyrolean crossing method. Above: Student rests during a winter session. Photos courtesy of North Carolina Outward Bound School.

more from Tampa, Fla., said "I did not have a fever either," I'm sick today so we wouldn't

and found the crew still were disgusted.

but her for, just to sit around if you don't have all the stuff at. I just don't believe it. Now, he said.

ed moving, the differences second were obvious. The first and followers, but his crew

forgotten to pack a rope and tire crew acted as if they all

limited the crew's activities. rock climbing expedition and ing. The rappelling, which a system of ropes, would be se of the cold.

and began learning the belaying e positive. All but one of the quickly.

or catching the student who tend to fall so the belayer

mountain to begin rappeling, ng the members became a made a mistake while he was tch himself, it was the catch him. Though each of ay and none had rappeled of the crew members had rs.

the equipment set up and n their ropes. No one took ne.

the first student began his rock nervously, then he slid de of the mountain shouting s and the rest of the crew

go, several of the students ie the various knots on my

saddle seat and pull my carabiner straight. My hands were shaking as I backed over the side of the ledge. I looked at my belayer, who had my life in his hands. He was a 16-year-old high school student from South Carolina and did not know the belaying techniques any better than I did. I certainly didn't trust myself to belay, so why should I trust him.

THE first step was easy. I stepped down, as though on a ladder, to a rather large ledge. Then, I stood there, gripping the rocks and thinking of how weak my hands were and inexperienced my belayer was. I did not trust the ropes, myself or my belayer.

Several crew members and the instructor leaned over the ledge shouting encouragement and instructions.

"Just lean back and trust the ropes," one of the crew members, an experienced man of two rappels, said.

"I don't think I can support myself. My hands are really weak," I yelled back. I began thinking of ways to climb back up the rock. I could handle the embarrassment of quitting—I would never see these people again.

"There isn't any pressure on your hands. Just lean back and try it."

Questioning my sanity, I leaned back and stepped off the ledge. There was no pressure at all, I loosened my grip on the rope and easily glided down to the bottom. I was relieved and the crew cheered me for my success.

The crew worked on the rappeling for another hour then headed over to do a short version of the rock climbing course. This crew had already done the rope work and caving and would go on two more backpacking expeditions and a three day solo before the end.

The next day they would begin a three day expedition to Grandfather Mountain, on which they would learn map skills, and compass use, as well as camping and backpacking skills. During this expedition the instructors would play a very minor role to prepare them for their final expedition during which the instructors would be absent.

In between the two expeditions the students would go on their solo. He can do anything he wishes. It is the only time during the course when the student is away from the crew.

"I'm really looking forward to the solo. I'm never alone here and I really need time by myself," Laura said.

According to the Outward Bound philosophy, it is the group experience and the growth of the individual within that experience, with all the physical stresses, that makes Outward Bound such a remarkable venture.

During that three-week course, the students learn a number of skills. But that's not what many say they remember best.

During those trying times, they say they get a sense of fulfillment and success when they finish the event they hated doing, and when their crew members finish.

"We're all out here together, you know," Vann said. And when that last guy makes it up to the top (of the mountain) we all know we've made it and it's great." **W**

Elizabeth Daniel is a staff writer for *The Daily Tar Heel*.

Editor's note

Elizabeth Daniel, a staff writer for *The Daily Tar Heel*, spent two days and one night with crews enrolled in a 23-day Outward Bound course from the North Carolina Outward Bound School located at Table Rock Mountain. She participated in caving, rappeling and, what she considers the most treacherous part of her experience, sleeping outdoors in zero degree weather.

Going down

Rappeling involves descending a cliff using a system of ropes. Crew members encourage each other during the experience.



Art by Marion Watson