

Outward Bound

Imagine having to wake up at 6am every morning to go for a 3km run, having to jump into the freezing sea and then hopping into a shower which is even colder than the sea. This was one of the things that was part of our daily routine at Outward Bound. I had the honour of being selected by Karamu High School to go to Outward Bound for 21 days in the South Island at Anakiwa, thanks to the scholarship from Cole Murray. Outward Bound is a course that's designed to push you to the limit during the activities which are all physically, mentally and emotionally challenging.

On the course I consistently pushed myself to the limit and got out of my comfort zone. Whether it was running, tramping in unmarked terrain, sailing with no wind, kayaking or being left in the bush by yourself for 2 and a half days with only 2 carrots, 2 biscuits, 3 apples and scroggin which wasn't the best. The amount of food we had wasn't my favourite aspect and what we got for two and a half days was like dinner for me, so this became a challenge of knowing when to eat since we weren't allowed watches on the solo. At some points it felt like I was going to have to eat worms like Bear Grylls. Tramping was one of the new things I did at Outward Bound. I mistakenly thought it was going to be easy, because walking isn't hard but it was something that truly pushed me to the limit, meaning sometimes I just wanted to give up, but I kept going. It was hard work, there was a day when we walked for 13hours, which was a big accomplishment but then, when we got back to the Outward Bound School, we found out that one of the groups had walked for 23hours, which was an even bigger accomplishment.

My aims and goals on Outward Bound were to develop my leadership skills and become more confident in public speaking. I was eager to challenge myself, so I made the most of these opportunities as they arose, whether it was leading the team in a tramping expedition in unmarked terrain or welcoming everyone at Outward Bound to breakfast or dinner. Doing a welcome speech to over 100 Outward Bounders was a scary challenge, but after I had done it for the first time I was proud of myself. From then on I started taking every opportunity I could to improve and now I can talk in front of school assemblies without fear.

One of my favourite moments happened during kayaking. The first time we saw a rapid everyone's face dropped with fear, the rapid wasn't even deep you could literally walk it, but the fact that we had to do it in a kayak, made us scared. The rapids got worse and worse during the day as did our fear when approaching them. But it wasn't just the scary part of kayaking that I enjoyed it was also that at the end we started giving each other nicknames because of our boat colours. My boat was green so I got the nickname 'Crap Apple', not because I wasn't good but because no one liked green apples. Another group member had an orange boat with the word 'tuna' on it so we called him 'Big Tuna'. Other nicknames were Slippery Banana, Green Hornet, Yellow Submarine, Blue Marlin, Little Blueberry and Red Dagger. We then started doing air force commands and my favourite went like this; "Crap Apple you are on a collision course with Big Tuna. I repeat, you are on a collision course with Big Tuna". This was what our group, Hillary 601 called banter.

Overall I would have to say that it was one of the most amazing things I have ever done in my life and I would encourage any of you who are interested to give it a go. Finally I would like to thank Cole Murray for the scholarship and Karamu High School for giving me this fantastic opportunity.

'Plus est en vous'
'There is more in you'

Bongani Situpa