COMPASSIONATE RISK-TAKING
FOR A
POSITIVE FUTURE

2019 WRMC
“Today, we may be living in the most peaceable era of our species existence”

Steven Pinker, The Better Angels of Our Nature
“We believe that appropriate risk-taking is a doorway to trust in ourselves and others”

FROM KROKA EXPEDITIONS NORTH STAR STATEMENT
I’ve been guiding for 37 years
While raising four boys on expedition
And through hand-made life on a farm and homestead
I have seen a few things deviating from a plan.
And have little tolerance for reckless risk.
And even less tolerance for risk avoidance and fear-based decision making
My mentor taught me that:

“There are always ten reasons for not doing something and there is only one reason to do it - so go and do it!”
ONCE UPON A TIME THE TRANSITION FROM HUNTER-GATHERER TO AGRARIAN SOCIETY TRANSFORMED WHAT IT MEANT TO BE HUMAN

TODAY, THE TRANSITION FROM LIVING IN THE NATURAL PHYSICAL WORLD TO LIVING IN THE MANUFACTURED VIRTUAL WORLD WILL AGAIN TRANSFORM WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN

WE ARE LIVING THROUGH THIS TRANSITION WITHIN THE SPACE OF JUST A FEW GENERATIONS
HOW MUCH TIME DOES AN AVERAGE CHILD SPEND DAILY:

- PLAYING OUTDOORS
- WALKING TO AND FROM DESTINATIONS
- HELPING WITH PHYSICAL CHORES
- SERVING OTHERS
“Kids ages 8-18 spend, on average, a whopping 7.5 hours in front of a screen for entertainment each day, 4.5 of which are spent watching TV.“
(Kaiser Family Foundation, March 13, 2017)

“On average, children aged 10 to 16 now spend only 12.6 minutes a day on vigorous outdoor activity compared with 10.4 waking hours being relatively motionless.” (Seattle Children’s Research Institute appearing in the Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine)
THE MODERN APPROACH TO LIFE:

EASE
COMFORT
CONVENIENCE
CONFORMITY
INDIVIDUALISM
SAFETY FIRST

A RISK-TAKING APPROACH TO LIFE:

CHALLENGING
UNCOMFORTABLE
INCONVENIENT
NON-CONFORMING
ALTRUISM
BEING ALIVE FIRST
Healthy Risk-Taking develops healthy and compassionate human beings who are critically needed in the world today.
HEALTHY RISKS

- PROACTIVE
- AUTHENTIC
- CONSTRUCTIVE
- ACTIVE

UNHEALTHY RISKS

- REACTIVE
- CONTRIVED
- DESTRUCTIVE
- PASSIVE

outdoor edge activities
direct political action
authentic personal sharing
drugs
driving under influence
internet
THE NATURAL WORLD PROVIDES AN IDEAL PORTAL FOR HEALTHY RISK TAKING
HOW DO HEALTHY RISKS INFORM HEALTHY HUMAN DEVELOPMENT?
• Strengthens willpower and initiative
• Builds self esteem from life experience rather than appearances or material possessions
• Develops wisdom and self-knowledge for sound judgement
• Cultivates observational skills
Highlights preciousness of life through near-miss experiences
• Diminishes false confidence
teenage driving
(in 2016 2,820 teenagers ages 16 - 19 died in car accidents)

gun ownership
In 2015, 2,824 children (age 0 to 19 years) died by gunshot and an additional 13,723 were injured.
THE WORLD THAT MOST OF US LIVE IN IS SAFER THAN EVER BEFORE IN HUMAN HISTORY:

- Freedom from war
- Professional law enforcement and emergency response services
- Modern medical technology and procedures
- Antibiotics and vaccination against diseases
- Consumer protection and product safety
- A safely designed environment (guardrails, handrails, ramps, signs)
- Safety awareness (lifeguards, seatbelts, helmets, designated drivers)
Average number of battle deaths per conflict since 1946, by type

Only conflicts in which at least one party was the government of a state and which generated more than 25 battle-related deaths are included. Deaths due to disease or famine caused by conflict are excluded. Extra-judicial killings in custody are also excluded.

Source: UCDP/PRIO
Note: The war categories paraphrase UCDP/PRIO's technical definitions of 'Extrasystemic', 'Internal', 'Internationalised internal' and 'Interstate' respectively. In a small number of cases where wars were ascribed more than one type, deaths have been apportioned evenly to each type.
LEADING TO THE HIGHEST-EVER LIFE EXPECTANCY FOR HUMANS:

![Graph showing Life Expectancy at Birth by Region, 1950-2050. Source: UN World Population Prospects, 2008.](chart.png)
YET WE ARE MORE FEARFUL AND DISCONNECTED THAN EVER:

- Constant use of cell phones & GPS devices
- Need to drive large heavy vehicles (trucks & SUV)
- Unwilling to encounter strangers
- Desire to defend homes with gated communities, alarm systems, and personal firearms.
- Need to be highly insured for all aspects of life
- Reductionist approach to risk management
PERCEPTION OF RISK

FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN

ONE DEADLY SHARK ATTACK ON CAPE COD CLOSED BEACHES FOR WEEKS, BUT HIGHWAYS REMAIN OPEN AFTER 180 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED WITHIN THE SAME YEAR
WE ENJOY OUR POSITION ON TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN AND DON’T LIKE TO GET EATEN!
COLLECTIVELY WE ARE TAKING UNPRECEDENTED UNHEALTHY RISKS

• decreasing biodiversity
• depleting natural resources
• changing climate
THE WORLD NEEDS PEOPLE WHO:

can compassionately see the needs of others

can take calm and deliberate action in times of distress

can take initiative and follow-through to accomplish what needs to be done

can live peacefully and sustainably without an excess of materials and energy
RISK EMBRACING INSTITUTIONAL HABITS

- Practicing Heart-felt holiday rituals
- Designing an “Inconvenient” campus
- Including elders and people with disabilities
- Cultivating Encounter mindset
- Encouraging cooperative driving habits and unplugged navigation
- Training for development of intuition and common sense
- Mentoring skilled generalists
- Developing rhythms and rituals
- Jumping in the cold water
- Modeling manual labor and rigorous exercise
- Sharing device-free meals
- Embracing scarcity and discomfort
RISK- EMBRACING ADMIN PRACTICES

60/40% RETURNING STUDENTS RATIO ON EXPEDITIONS

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS BASED ON TRUST

CREATIVE PROTOCOLS FOR HIGH-RISK ACTIVITIES

FLEXIBLE EXPEDITION PLANS TO ALLOW FOR SERENDIPITOUS ENCOUNTERS AND TIME TO WAIT OUT THE STORM

ELIMINATE USE OF ELECTRONICS IN THE FIELD
Family orientation

Parenting workshops

Family adventures

Parent weekends

Parent involvement

Community work days
Start of 2019 Kroka Annual Staff Adventure race

TAKE AWAY
Some of the best bike rides
End up with a swim
So, don’t forget your rope next time you go climbing.
And always stay hydrated!
THE END!
KROKA EXPERIDITIONS
Where Consciousness Meets Wilderness

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