

## **Pre-trip Planning Guide #3**

### **Wear Layers**

Colorado mountain weather can change very quickly, from sunny and hot to raining, windy, and cold in a matter of a few minutes. The best way to prepare for this is by wearing several layers of clothing. Then as the weather changes, you can too. And with a little practice, you can stay comfortable in almost any situation you find yourself in. There are several layers of trip preparation that will also help you stay comfortable during your trip. One of the layers is preparing your body. A backpacking trip is more strenuous than most people's everyday life. If you start early and take the time to get into good physical condition your experience will be much more enjoyable. In the enclosed materials you will find more information on Physical Training and other layers you can add to help get ready for your journey.

- **Physical Training** -- March is the right time to start planning (and doing!) some physical exercise and training in preparation for being on the trail. As a group, talk about some ways that you can exercise together, make some decisions and get dates set on your calendar. Refer to the document attached to your email for some physical training suggestions.
  
- **Plan Something Fun** -- It is also important that your group spends time having fun together before their trip to Colorado. During a meeting, plan some fun events to help continue to build bonds, friendships and community amongst participants.
  
- **Design a T-Shirt!** -- As a group, start designing a t-shirt. Once you come up with a design and order them, have your group wear them for fund raising events, fun events you plan together or for your workout. Having the same t-shirt for everyone to wear can also make traveling to Colorado fun and a bit easier for you!

## **Group Meeting Outline**

1. Open with prayer – continue to pray as a group and give participants a chance to pray aloud for the group to get them used to it before their time on trail. Instead of asking for a volunteer, try asking someone prior to the start of the group, and then invite that person to pray when it is time.
2. Welcome and Group “Fist To Five”
  - a. Welcome everyone to the meeting. Share any pertinent updates since your last meeting, introduce any new participants that have decided to join your trip that were not there for the first meeting.
  - b. Help facilitate a sharing activity, a quick way to check in is “Fist to Five” in which people rate how they are doing from “0 or Fist” (not good) to “5” (great) using their hand, then share why they are at that level.
3. Lead your group in the provided Bible Study.
  - a. This is another opportunity for your group to come together and form bonds even before their Compass Points Trip.
  - b. It will also be important in getting your group used to talking about the Bible and their faith.
4. Plan your group’s physical training activities. Share some of the ideas provided on the Physical Preparation page provided to us and have some ideas of your own.
  - a. Try to get your entire group to understand and get invested in the importance of training before your Compass Points trip. (We cannot stress enough just how important physical training is)
  - b. It will be most successful if your group is excited about some of the training activities you plan, so try to have the entire group involved in planning and don’t feel tied down to the suggestions we’ve provided.
5. Help your group in planning a community-building activity (something fun) for your group to participate in during this month or next month.
  - a. Just like planning Physical Preparation, try to include many people’s ideas and pick dates that work for the most people.
6. Finalize the design of your t-shirt, if you chose to do one. See what ideas people came up with since your last meeting and then decide as a group which design you want to use or if you want to combine a few different ones! Get these ordered so you can start wearing them to Compass Points group events.
7. Close with a prayer.

## **Pre-Trip Bible Study – Preparing for the Mountaintop**

**Central Theme:** There is little required of us as Christians to get prepared for our interaction with the Lord, our mountaintop experience. Preparing for the rest of the trip takes a little more work.

**Bible Passage:** Mark 6:7-12

### **Objectives:**

- To understand why we need to prepare for our trip and what specific things will help make it the best possible experience for us.
- To determine what isn't required for interaction with the Lord.

**Opening Activity:** Ask each person in the group to read the passage on their own and ask them to note what they find interesting/enlightening/revealing about the passage. Answer these few questions:

- What did Jesus ask the disciples to bring with them?
- What did Jesus require of the disciples on their trip?
- What happened when the disciples went out?

**Group Discussion:** Come back together as a group and have one person read the passage aloud. As a group discuss the following questions.

- Why did Jesus limit what the disciples could take with them? What do you think this reveals about what Jesus is asking them to do?
- How does this passage help us prepare for your upcoming Compass Points trip?
- What do you normally pack for a trip? How does that differ from what you think you'll need for your Compass Points trip?
- How are you going to physically prepare for the trip? Why do you need to?
- What do you think makes a successful Compass Points trip?

### **Physical Prep, What to Bring and Wrap-Up:**

- For this trip, we ask that everyone physically prepare themselves in addition to mentally preparing themselves.
- Attached is a physical preparation document. Review this sheet together and encourage your group to help each other by holding everyone accountable. Look for ways to prepare as a group.
- Double check that everyone has the what-to-bring list. Remind them that the list is designed for a full week of activity and not everything will go "on trail" with you. For your personal comfort during the trip please bring everything on the list.

**Close Together in Prayer**

# Physical Preparation

Are you ready to sit on the rocks of a high mountain lake watching the last rays of sunshine slip past the horizon? How about scrambling the last few steps up to a mountain peak for an amazing 360 degree view of God's creation? Remember, it's the journey, not just the destination that's important and getting to that high mountain lake or a mountain peak takes a lot of hard work. We want your journey to be just as good as the destinations you will go to. Making a commitment, personally and as a group, to get in shape before the trip will help ensure that your Compass Points adventure is a great one. **Today** is not too early to start!

On your Compass Points journey you will be hiking at high altitude for long distances. Some days may be 8 or 10 miles long. While we strive to live simply and "travel light" on trail you will likely be carrying a backpack weighing 35 to 45 pounds. You may also be rafting, climbing on the High Ropes course, or doing service work. These activities all require good physical fitness to be enjoyed to the fullest.

Aerobic exercise and strength conditioning for 20-30 minutes every other day beginning several months before your trip should be a part of your preparation. Walking at a brisk pace and taking day hikes with your hiking boots will help prepare your legs, your lungs, and your feet for the backpacking journey. Also, increasing your abdominal and upper body strength will help you prepare for paddling on the river!

Here are a few suggestions for making your physical training a fun part of your journey:

- Make a commitment as a group to personally prepare for your trip.
- Schedule time to get together as a group to do some of the training.
- Find a friend to work out with and hold you accountable to staying on track.
- Keep a journal so that you can see your progress, or maybe even keep a chart of training as a group.
- How fast you can run or how far you go is not nearly as important as regular exercise. Start easy and gradually increase your activity.
- Find physical aerobic activities that you enjoy and do them often.
- We encourage you to use the training plan found on the following page to prepare yourself for your upcoming trip!

**Today Is Not Too Early To Start!**

# Physical Training Plan

We'll work with you to help you have an amazing week on trail. People of all fitness levels have participated in the past. A little work on your part can greatly help your enjoyment of the experience. It's never too late to start and we can't stress just how much it will improve your experience on the mountain. The plan below assumes early registration for a Compass Points Trip. If you can't start in February or March, don't worry about it, start today!

## February and March

- Visit your doctor and have your physical completed (a physical form, signed by your doctor and completed health history are required for all trip participants)
- Walk, jog in place, swim, or bike for 20 minutes or more at least three times per week. Gradually increase the length and intensity, as you feel able.
- Start walking or hiking in the boots that you plan on wearing for the trip.
- Play volleyball, soccer, basketball, or do other aerobic activities on days that you are not walking, jogging, or biking for at least 20 minutes.
- Consider trying a daily rotation of push-ups, crunches, and pull-ups. You might only be able to do one or two at the beginning but they will quickly become easier.

## April and May

- Get outside and enjoy spring!
- Increase your aerobic exercise to 45 minutes or more a day a few days a week.
- Fast walking, jogging, or hiking with a pack will help strengthen your leg muscles.
- Walking, climbing stairs, and hiking with a backpack are also excellent preparation.
- Simple body weight squats are a great way to strengthen your legs for the hike
- Continue doing push-ups, crunches, and pull-ups.
- Do a 3-5 mile day-hike with your hiking boots and a backpack once a month; this would be a great activity to do with others who are going on the trip.

## June and July

- Increase your aerobic exercise to an hour or more a day a couple of times a week with shorter periods on other days.
- Hike 3-5 miles with your hiking boots and backpack at one day a week
- Continue doing push-ups, pull-ups, and crunches on a daily basis.
- Do at least one hike of 5 or more miles with your boots and a backpack before the trip. Another great group building activity.

90% of Boy Scouts backpacking at Philmont Scout Reservation in 2005 said that they wished they had done more physical training before their trip...

**be the other 10%!**