

Experiential Learning Today

Experiential learning has spread across a broad range of educational practices. Although experiential learning does not necessarily involve a teacher, experiential education does. Experience *for* learning, and the experience *of* learning, are designed and/or interpreted by professional educators serving as guides, instructors, mentors, and coaches. They are educative experiences that engage the whole person and stimulate investigation and interaction among learners, learners and teachers, and learners and their environment. The field contains significant diversity, ranging from formal schooling, informal education, executive and organizational development, outdoor education, adventure education, environmental education, to wilderness therapy, to name just a few.

The terms *experience*, *education*, and *learning* not only embrace practical everyday issues, they open up a diverse and complex range of philosophical, ontological, epistemological, and methodological explanations (Hager, 1999). These terms also engender tautological concerns when combined, and it is in this vein that Boud, Cohen, & Walk (1993) drew on Dewey's thinking to state: