

In this body of work, I will look to discuss and explain how the use of micro adventures can be seen as an enticing alternative to traditional large adventures in both a current and post pandemic world. With a focus on the benefits in which the concept of adventure can give us, this discussion will look towards the facts that UK societies are too absorbed by consumerism and that a lack of education in regards to our immediate local environments are stopping us from a realisation that we can find the benefits of adventure through the foundations that have ultimately created our personal identities. It is of my understanding that the paper presented by Mackenzie and Goodnow (2020) is both relevant to my argument yet at the same time just a cry for a new idea of adventure. In this piece of writing I would like to underline the fact that through education and inspiration from other innovative countries, we can come to the realization that there is more to adventure than just visiting a new place.

I firmly believe that there is an inherent need for the outdoors and adventure in each and every one of us. Whether this is through the medium of a high-risk mountain climb or a simple walk along an unknown local footpath, whatever the case, micro or macro it is clear that we are instinctively attracted to the benefits that both the out of doors and adventure provides us. As mentioned by Hardman (2020, p.6) we naturally find ourselves gravitating towards walks in the park, day trips to the zoo and that bench on top of the hill that overlooks a glorious sunset. Although we do not necessarily notice this organic attraction, it is part of our DNA and as explained by Wilson (1984), it is an example of our intrinsic connection to nature. It is this connection that has coined the term Biophilia, underlining the fact that as a human race we once lived in harmony amongst natural settings and that as a result we are forever in need of the presence of all things green and living. The benefits in which an immersion within the outdoors can give us are vast, not only as described by Grandpierre *et al* (2019) does it improve our subjective connectedness, wellbeing and life satisfaction to name but a few, but it can also allow us to develop a broader appreciation of our environment through a sense of ‘nature relatedness’ which in turn “has become increasingly useful in understanding environmentally sustainable behavior” (Zelenski & Nisbet, 2014, p.4). However, it is adventure that provides us with that little bit more. As mentioned by Boyes (2012), adventure can allow us to meet personal goals, social interaction and self-satisfaction through the participation in an activity that offers a degree of uncertainty. As well as this, an adventurous

activity can offer the chance to experience certain benefits that would not necessarily be deemed as appropriate in organised pedagogies such as “surprises, disruption of routine, activation of the sense of possibility, which can complement reality and can change it“ (Becker, 2007, pp.84-85). Adventure is an extremely personal thing to the individual, “adventure for one person, in a particular place, at a given time, may not be adventure for another, or for the same person in a different place or time” (Priest, 1999, p.160), however, as described by Mortlock (2004, p.18) it is adventure that can provide the individual with the opportunity to discover his or herself.

As we find ourselves living in the midst of a global pandemic, government restrictions have forced us to stay at home and stay local. This has deprived many people who long for that sense of adventure of the opportunities that were once seen as an easily accessible product in a pre pandemic world. However, unfortunately it has not stopped a small amount of the population and as explained by The Guardian (2020) resulted in many people including government officials to break the rules and seek out the thrill of adventure by leaving their local areas to visit national parks and other rural destinations in the UK. As mentioned by Mackenzie & Goodnow (2020), this noncompliance in government rules clearly addresses the fact that we have an inherent need for nature and adventure. However, in my opinion although I agree with that statement, I believe there are other factors such as consumerism, a lack of education and even creativity that are restricting individuals from opening their eyes to the beauty of their local environments. It is through creativity that Humphreys has used the medium of film to express his opinion on the idea that micro adventures close to home can give you that very same sense of adventure that an expensive and time consuming adventure would usually provide “It still captures the essence of big adventures, the challenge, the fun, the escapism, the learning experiences and the excitement” (Humphreys, 2014, p.14). Not only does a micro adventure provide similar benefits and outcomes that you would find in a regular adventure but it can also be seen as a highly universal, accessible and sustainable product for everyone. As mentioned by Mackenzie & Goodnow (2020), micro adventures incorporate the concept of locavism that as described by Hollenhorst *et al* (2014) involves minimal distance, a low carbon footprint and a next to nothing budget, something that in my eyes is the perfect approach to take in this pandemic world we are living in as many of us have met financial challenges and of course are restricted to travel. You could

even say the concept of micro adventures are being used without putting the label on them. Many organisations such as the Scout Network (2021) provide activities on their website that can be undertaken by fellow scouts and local communities such as mindfulness walks and foraging for litter as part of a local clean up. This evidence leads me to believe that micro adventures are not necessarily a new concept or idea that we can take forward in a post pandemic world but instead they are something that we should be incorporating into our lives regardless of the pandemic as they are something that everyone can take part in, afford and enjoy.

Roszak (2003, pp.250-251) speaks about the city as a place that corrupts the appetites of the people, it is a place in which the individual is consumed by the experiences of others, buying into the latest trends yet at the same time with no hesitation leaving a trail of waste with no ethical consideration for the earth. To me, this is a reflection of how many people treat their adventures, too often do we look at air brushed images taken by other adventurers of beautiful locations on social media to then only travel that great distance to that same location to take that same picture. As aesthetically pleasing as this may be to the individual, I believe it is a representation of how consumerism has absorbed our society and allowed us to forget what's personal and what's real. We no longer look at the place as an area to cherish and enjoy but see it as venue to take and disrespect. As explained by Wattchow & Brown (2011, pp. 51-76) our local environments and the place we call home is continuously at risk of losing its history, beauty and ecologies due to the phenomenon of modern times we currently live in. Of course we can't stay in one place all of the time but it is the place in which we call home that reveals our identity, something we should embrace, learn about and explore as it is a representation of ourselves. Some of the greatest explorers of the past made a name for themselves through adventuring close to home. Through the works of Nansen, the concept of Friluftsliv was created and has encouraged students, communities and individuals to develop a deeper connectedness to nature whilst "counteracting the ills of an increasingly industrialized society" (Gurholt, 2014, p.233). Gurholt (2014) goes on to explain that many students describe their fondest memories of adventures took place in local environments whilst at the same time Norwegian statistics show that 'four out of five Norwegians aged 16–79 hike locally on foot and on skis every year' Gurholt (2014, p.238). This leads me to believe and reiterate the evidence that micro adventures can be seen as a symbol of a

healthy community and that highly innovative countries such as Norway provide proof that through meaningful teachings and concepts the idea of local adventures are something to be embraced.

In summary of the argument I have put forward, I honestly believe that adventure is a highly subjective concept. Micro or macro it is evidently clear that we all need to experience a sense of adventure frequently in our lives. However the main point I would like to address is that micro adventures should not be seen as an alternative to a bigger adventure in the current world we live in or any world so to speak, but they should be embraced in a way that can allow us to feel a personal connection to the place we are in at that present time. It is clear that in the UK, many of us lack an education in regards to our sense of place and that beauty can be found on our doorsteps. In regards to adventure, “we must approach the problem of scale recognizing that the opposite of big is not small, but personal” (Roszak, 2003, p.306).

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