



**OUTWARD BOUND  
HONG KONG™**

# IMPACT REPORT

2017





# TO SERVE, TO STRIVE, AND NOT TO YIELD.

Outward Bound was established in the tumultuous waters of the North Sea during World War II to provide young sailors with direct value forming experiences and skills necessary to survive if their ship was sunk. These dramatic beginnings in 1941 countered a direct and imminent response to the need to strengthen resilience and fortitude with youth facing difficult circumstances.

Since local foundation in 1970, Outward Bound courses have profoundly touched the lives of tens of thousands of people in Hong Kong and courses are devised to act as a catalyst to encourage change and help each individual to become more aware of their strengths and unexplored potential. Our courses are designed to be challenging, requiring participants to confront physical, emotional, intellectual and social situations which test them and unlock their previously untapped abilities. Through this growth participants are better able to make the most of their abilities when they return to work, school, family or any other environment.

This Impact Report, the first of its kind for Outward Bound Hong Kong, seeks to move beyond the euphoria of completing a course. It attempts to capture some of the underlying change and growth that occurs. It is common that participants retrace their steps 40 years after completing their course to revisit these pivotal points in their lives. This impact is something that can never be fully captured with words, images or numbers, but in this report we attempt to do just this. Indeed, Outward Bound Hong Kong has had a healthy and vibrant Alumni Association since 1971 and its members re-ignite their passion and desire through their clubhouse in Wu Kai Sha and regular events they arrange. For our instructors these are frequently the motivations that inspire them to continue to take to the cockpit of a kayak or the helm of a boat to help foster growth in our Hong Kong youth.



Nick Cotton  
Executive Director



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# INPUTS

Outward Bound Hong Kong's value chain has been built and strengthened through decades of growth. We strive to be 'best in class' for designing high impact programmes in Hong Kong. There are many inputs to create a high-quality course, including dedicated and qualified instructors who are the core of our learning, plus a range of facilities and residential dormitories at two separate locations, a ropes course that meets international standards, and extensive support systems to maintain groups on expeditions.

Our value chain extends to having a particular strength as a 'sea-school' with a fleet of sea kayaks and sailing vessels, as well as a serviced jetty and a wide range of powerboats to access groups on a journey.

Group size is limited to 12 for quality, and all groups carry multiple communication systems including a satellite tracking device. There are world-class risk management systems in place including a dedicated external safety committee of professionals and regular external audits of programming.

We are a member of Outward Bound International, the largest outdoor adventure education provider in the world. We are also the first accredited member of the Association for Experiential Education in Asia, complying with over 200 standards and ensuring robust external oversight and quality programming.

# INSTRUCTORS

*Outward Bound Hong Kong has an incredibly diverse and talented pool of instructors. In the previous five years, instructors have come from:*

Australia	Macau	South Africa
Bulgaria	Malaysia	Sweden
Canada	New Zealand	Taiwan
Germany	Philippines	USA
Hong Kong	Romania	Wales
India	Scotland	Zimbabwe
Ireland	Singapore	
Israel	Slovakia	





Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong:  
**offshore yacht**



Open decked  
ketch  
sailing boats



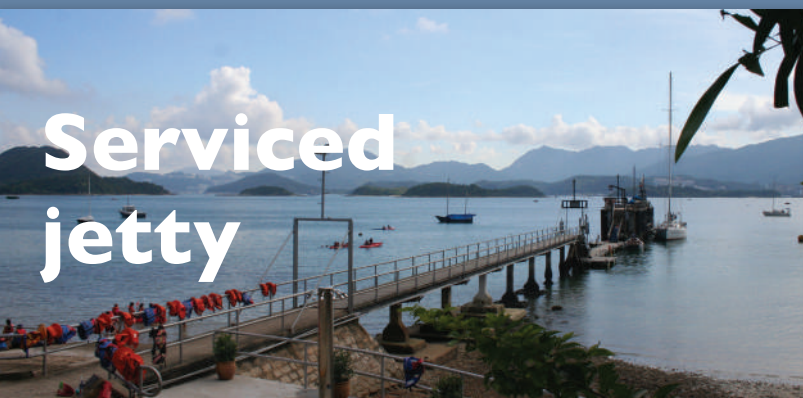
Speedboat  
ancillary fleet



Small group sizes of 12 for quality



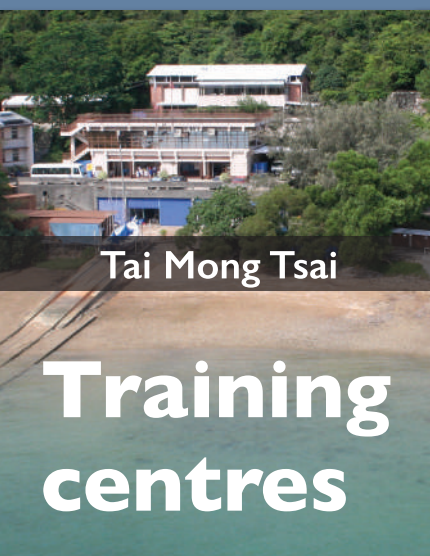
Challenge ropes  
**course**



**Serviced  
jetty**

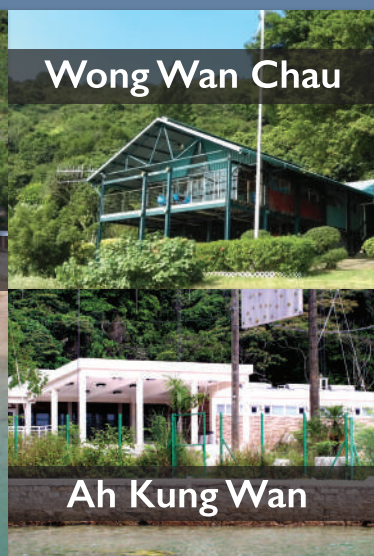


**Over  
250  
kayaks**



Tai Mong Tsai

**Training  
centres**



Wong Wan Chau

Ah Kung Wan



6-month extensive  
training programme  
for instructors

Quality Programming  
accredited by:



# OUTPUTS

A sneak peek at what OBHK achieved in 2016



**5605**

Total Number of Participants



**3174 : 2431**

Number of Participants by Gender (M:F)

# LENGTH OF COURSES

## Corporates

Days	Groups
1 —	42
2 —	24
3 —	16
5 —	20
7 ·	2

## Communities and Charities

Days	Groups
2 ·	1
4 ·	1
6 ·	1
7 —	10
18 —	15

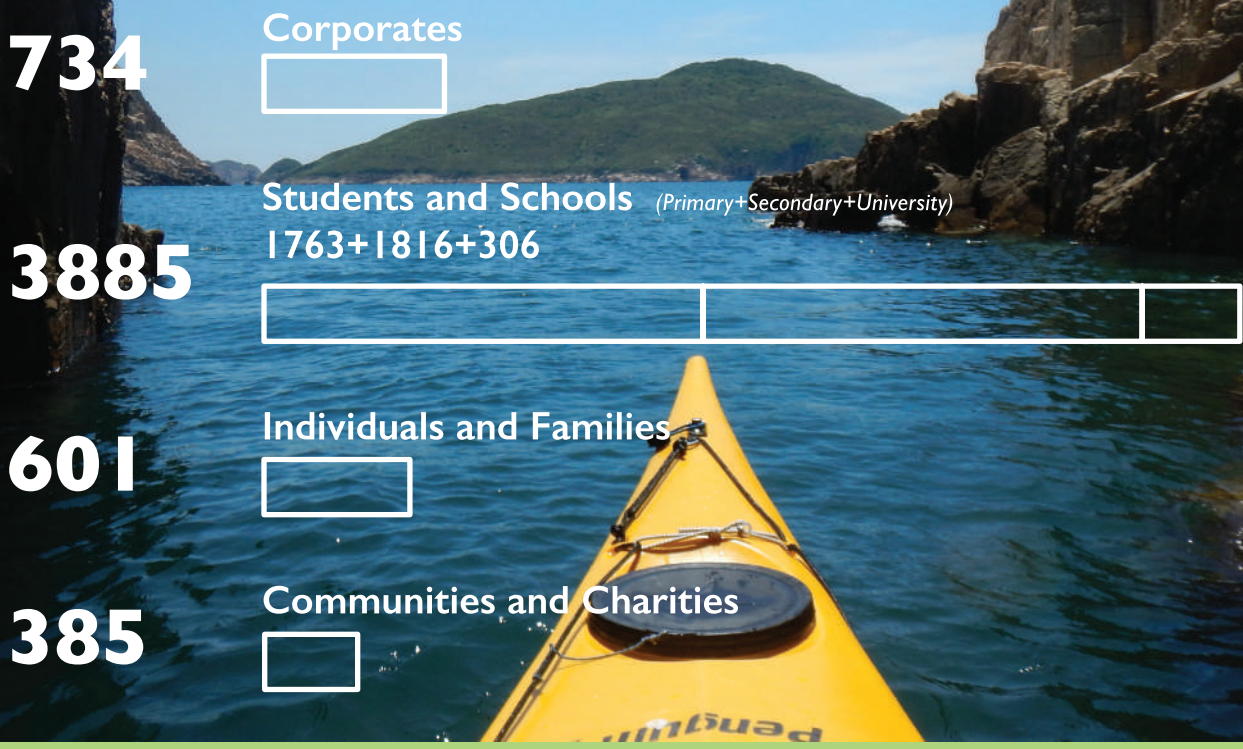
## Students and Schools

Days	Groups
1 —	10
2 —	9
3 —	26
4 —	22
5 —	253
7 —	11
12 ·	1

## Individuals and Families

Days	Groups
3 ·	4
5 —	29
8 —	26
11 ·	2

# NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS BY COURSE SEGMENT



# NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS



# OUTCOMES

For several years Outward Bound Hong Kong has been working with leading international educational consultants in outdoor adventure education to identify and communicate the effectiveness of courses. The robust Programme Evaluation system is a collaborative effort by these educational experts where pre and post questionnaires are used to measure and communicate change against the stated learning outcomes of courses at Outward Bound Hong Kong.

Growth and change can be represented in various ways; for ease of interpretation the following data is shown as a measure of 'effect size' or effectiveness. The data generated shows that Outward Bound courses in Hong Kong have positive impact on the participants, who are then better equipped to contribute to society in the future.

Course effectiveness of these courses are measured against the recognised international industry average for outdoor adventure education, which is marked on the charts in the following pages and is recognised to be an effect size of 0.34<sup>1</sup>. These international averages have been peer-reviewed and verified through studies on the impact of outdoor education courses, and it is against these measures that educational experts have benchmarked the Outward Bound Performance Measurement Process.


<sup>1</sup>Hattie, J., Marsh, H., Neill, J., & Richards, G. (1997). Adventure education and Outward Bound: out-of-class experiences that make a lasting difference. *Review of Educational Research*, Spring 1997, 67 (1), pp. 43-87.

## Net Promoter Score

Outward Bound Hong Kong actively measures service quality with teachers attending a course. We do this by comparing client expectations with their actual experiences at Outward Bound Hong Kong. This ensures our ongoing client feedback system strengthens our value-chain from first client contact through to deliverable outcomes at the end of a course.

Outward Bound Hong Kong also measures teachers' satisfaction via Net Promoter Score. This lets us check how our courses live up to clients' expectations. Net Promoter Score tells us how many people actively speak positively about the organisation.

**92% of the respondents actively recommend Outward Bound courses to fellow educators**



**‘Outward Bound changed my life. Seven years later I am still passionate for what the organisation stands for and would love to help out as a volunteer.’**

*C Cheung*





## Testimonials

'We would like to show our greatest appreciation to the professional team of the Outward Bound instructors as well as the course co-ordinator for their intensive care and meticulous planning throughout this programme. Their support and concern was the key to the success of our students when facing difficulties and challenges. I found the students full of self-confidence and more positive towards themselves after the training. We do hope that these changes could last well in the future.'

*Holy Carpenter Secondary School*

'The depth and balance of the challenges are appropriate to our students. The commitment and professional quality of the leaders is so commendable – excellent. Keep up the fantastic work that you do. Thank you so much.'

*Peak School*

'The environment is perfect, well-contained and safe for students allowing independence but also a feeling of security.'

Instructors have encouraged independence and instilled some important values in the students. The experience has been well beyond just being activity focused. It has developed the "whole" child.'

*Clearwater Bay School*

# EFFECTIVENESS OF OUTWARD BOUND COURSES FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS

This chart shows the effectiveness of our school and open enrolment courses for July 2015 – December 2016 based on 2449 questionnaires we collected during this period.

**Effect size:**

a measure of the strength of change,  
or impactfulness of the course,  
on course outcomes.

/ Small	0.20
/ Medium	0.50
/ Large	0.80





**0.62**  
Effect Size

### Compassion

The belief that one senses the needs of others and makes helping others a personal priority. It measures a person's empathy and ability to assist others to achieve desired outcomes and motivate those who are struggling.

**0.75**  
Effect Size

### Resilience

The perception of one's ability to effectively deal with challenges, and the capacity to persevere through difficulties; toughness, perseverance, sustained effort.

**0.76**  
Effect Size

### Self-Responsibility

The perception that one autonomously initiates action when a need exists. It measures the state of being responsible, answerable, or accountable for actions and consequences within one's power, control, or management.

**0.70**  
Effect Size

### Learning Climate

This is a measure of the experiential learning processes rather than a course outcome.

**0.34**

Common Industry Standard  
Effect Size



**+8.77%**

Increase in Compassion

**+12.33%**

Increase in Resilience

## Compassion

Compassion describes a person's empathy for others and their practical actions that assist other people to achieve desired outcomes and targets. Increases in compassion indicate a person is more likely to help others by providing both motivation and support.

At Outward Bound compassion is most frequently demonstrated by participants when showing care for others and helping those who are struggling, both physically and with words of encouragement and motivation. It extends to showing empathy for peers who may be either homesick or struggling with physical effort. Data shows very high gains have been made in compassion on our courses in 2015 - 2016.

It is thought that after an Outward Bound course, participants with an increase in compassion will extend this to regular life. The most obvious way this may occur is with 'the good Samaritan', or not always passing people in need but rather pausing to offer assistance. It may also be evident with a person's desire to engage in other acts of volunteerism by actively engaging with other community organisations to help build a stronger society.

## Resilience

Resilience is the capacity to persevere through difficulties and apply a sustained effort. Increases in resilience suggest a person is more likely to display strength of character and 'grit' when facing hardship and adversity.

At Outward Bound there are many controlled and monitored opportunities for developing resilience. For example, the simple act of engaging in an uninterrupted journey without the 'creature comforts' of home such as soft-mattresses, showers and air-conditioning is an excellent foundation for this. Furthermore, the ability to remain positive in the face of adversity from the difficulties of the Hong Kong weather is again a great platform for building resilience, as is the physicality of tasks like sea-kayaking for several days to move from location to location.

Resilience is among the most improved areas for participants of journey-based courses. It is expected that participants will be able to bring their experience and the improved attitude back to schools when confronted with challenges.



**+12.62%**

Increase in Self-responsibility

**+10.91%**

Increase in relationships with educators

## Self-Responsibility

Self-responsibility is the state of being responsible, answerable and accountable for actions and consequences within one's power and influence.

At Outward Bound opportunities for enhancing self-responsibility are intentionally created, and the data in the graph shows that participants rise to this challenge when it is presented. Examples at Outward Bound include making personal decisions and accepting responsibility for the success or failure of these. It extends to never stepping over a task that is undone, such as in a campsite or on a sailing boat, and includes the ability to maintain personal motivation levels and preparations without supervision.

It is thought that after their course participants are less likely to fall into apathetic response but rather will take a more proactive stance on tasks, such as developing and achieving a study regime or cleaning up.

## Learning Climate

Learning climate measures the process of experiential learning that takes place throughout the course rather than reporting on a course outcome.

In Hong Kong the use of experiential learning strategies is contrasted with mainstream educational systems and is not a universally accepted pedagogic approach to learning. As such reflecting on the learning potential of experiential methodologies helps inform potential clients on the benefits of this style of learning. Engaging in experiential education and growing and learning through exposure to this system may likewise help foster an ongoing desire in an individual to learn from future experiences and leads towards a desire for lifelong learning.

A 10% increase shows significant gains and this large change can likely be attributed to the significant differences between experiential learning that is student centred and the conventional methods prevalent in the local educational system.

# EFFECTIVENESS OF OUTWARD BOUND COURSES FOR CORPORATES

The chart on right shows the effectiveness of the regular OB Professional courses for July 2015 – December 2016.

**Effect size:**

a measure of the strength of change,	/ Small	0.20
or impactfulness of the course,	/ Medium	0.50
on course outcomes.	/ Large	0.80



**0.72**  
Effect Size

### Lateral Thinking

The desire to think outside the box and give voice to new ideas.

**0.82**  
Effect Size

### Resilience

The perception of one's ability to effectively deal with challenges, and the capacity to persevere through difficulties; toughness, sustained effort.

**0.75**  
Effect Size

### Teamwork

Cooperative or coordinated effort on the part of a group of persons acting together in the interests of a common cause.

**0.34**

Common Industry Standard  
Effect Size





+11.47%

Increase in Lateral Thinking

## Lateral Thinking

Lateral thinking describes a person's ability to think outside the box and give voice to new ideas. Lateral thinking is not a 'taught curriculum topic' on Outward Bound courses however participants from the business sector are routinely put into experiences where solutions are required as part of daily course progression. Indeed, the 'action-consequence' nature of programming demands rapid solutions to problems in changing environments at Outward Bound.

At Outward Bound lateral thinking is frequently practically demonstrated by participants who are engaged in complex and non-routine initiatives that call for new logic and alternative ways of thinking for successful resolution. Specific team building activities such as raft-building or business-oriented initiatives such as 'jungle-escape' draw out an individual's problem solving abilities via calling for lateral thinking and thus reveal their hidden potential.

When returning to the workplace managers should expect their employees to be more comfortable and willing to engage in non-routine initiatives and tasks, such as innovation and workplace entrepreneurship, as their staff will have had success at these as part of the Outward Bound course.



**+14.39%**

Increase in Resilience

**+12.33%**

Increase in Teamwork



## Resilience

Resilience is the capacity to persevere through difficulties and apply a sustained effort. Increases in resilience suggest a person is more likely to display strength of character and 'grit' when facing hardship and adversity.

At Outward Bound there are many controlled and monitored opportunities for developing resilience. For example, the simple act of engaging in an uninterrupted journey without the 'creature comforts' of home such as soft-mattresses, showers and air-conditioning is an excellent foundation for this. Furthermore, the ability to remain positive in the face of adversity from the difficulties of the Hong Kong weather is again a great platform for building resilience, as is the physicality of tasks like sea-kayaking for several days to move from location to location.

The data shows very large increases in resilience in participants of corporate courses. It is envisioned that participants will be able to transfer this increased resilience and adversity quotient back to their daily lives and in future when faced with hardships should have a higher capacity for persevering through these obstacles, even when the going gets tough.

## Teamwork

Teamwork describes the cooperative or coordinated effort on the part of a group of persons acting together in the interests of a common cause. Managers and Human Resource professionals frequently send their staff to Outward Bound corporate courses to grow the strength of their teams.

Outward Bound courses for corporates intentionally place groups of people into engaging experiences that require deliberate and collaborative effort to succeed, such as belaying on the ropes course, sailing or navigation. Theories of group development underpin the growth of teamwork on Outward Bound corporate courses, and experienced outdoor facilitators bring out the best in employees using applied knowledge and techniques.

On returning to the workplace managers can expect to see their staff showing higher levels of communication, tolerance, understanding and mutual cooperation as they endeavour to succeed in tasks such as project planning and implementation.



## Conclusion of Programme Evaluation

Effect size of learning outcomes for both school and corporate courses consistently appear in medium to large values (**0.62 – 0.82**), which are far better performing than the industry standard in outdoor education (0.34). This indicates our programmes have been very effective achieving these intended learning outcomes and is in line with our philosophy of being 'best in class'.

As a summary, very significant change is happening for participants on these courses and it is envisaged that they will be better equipped and prepared to transfer this new-found self-awareness back to their regular lives. Outward Bound cannot guarantee that a course will change a person's life, however this data certainly indicates that our courses help equip participants with valuable life-skills that are a key for success and a springboard for a more positive and productive future.

We feel that the quest to achieve one's potential is accelerated in an Outward Bound course. Whether it is the youth in the schools across the territory, or the executives and professionals in the corporations of Hong Kong, the search for new horizons and greater responsibilities are well met with enrolment in an Outward Bound course. For such people, Outward Bound offers the perfect outlet to develop and unlock human potential, in positive and supportive small group expeditions.

Outward Bound Hong Kong maintains a philosophy of continuous improvement and quality benchmarking, and through this approach we intend to remain at the forefront of outdoor education when designing and delivering high impact programmes in the coming decades.

# LONG TERM IMPACT

**In addition to numbers and figures, feedback from participants was also collected to capture the highlights of the courses, and these point to strong long-term impacts.**

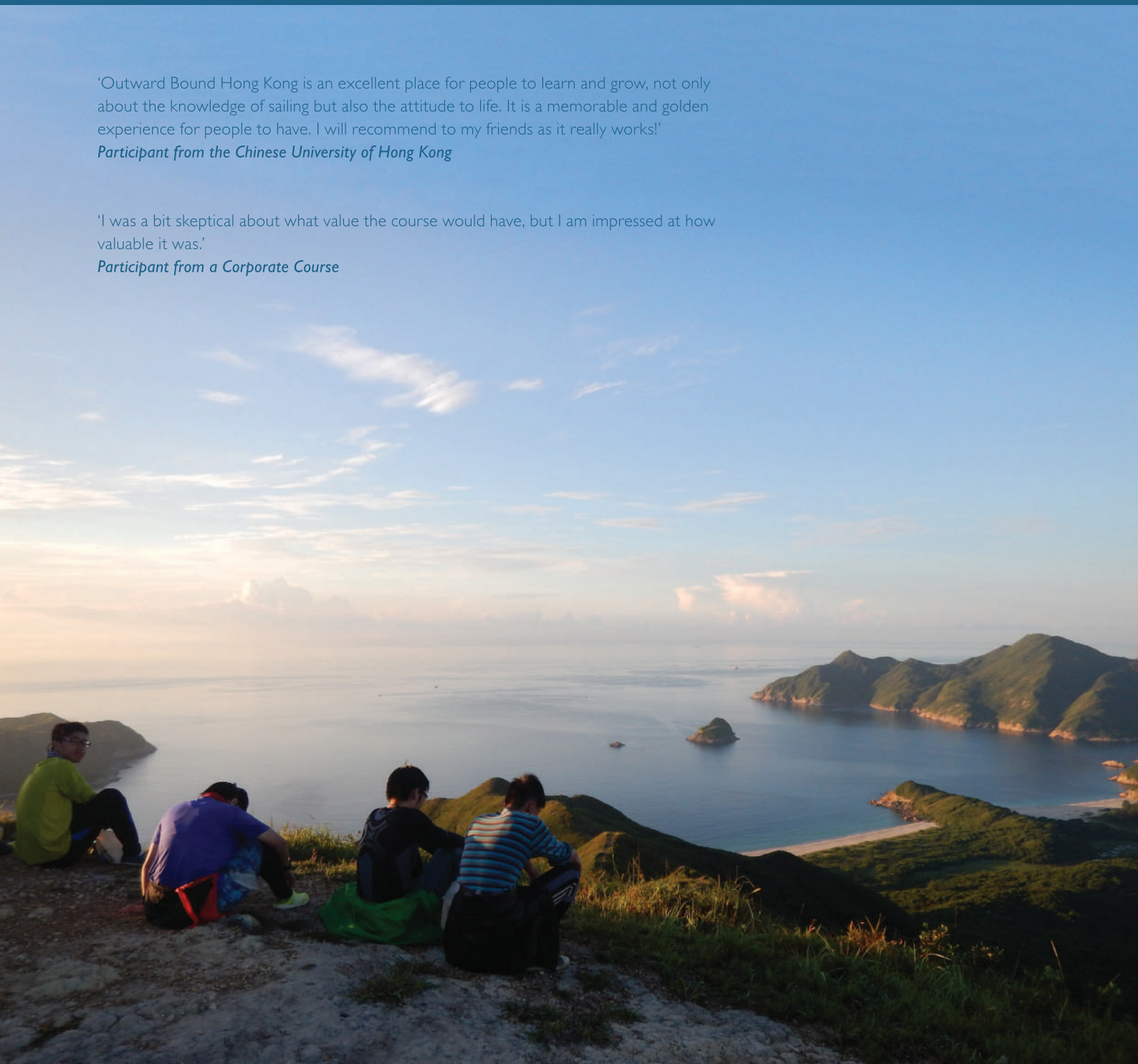
Condensing the benefits of a course into a number seems to ignore the layers of impact that a course can have - the personal stories, the friendships forged in a tent in a storm or the shared laughter of the group all seem to be lost in the quantification of the experience. Therefore, other than numbers and figures, feedback from participants was also collected to capture the highlights of the courses.

'Outward Bound Hong Kong is an excellent place for people to learn and grow, not only about the knowledge of sailing but also the attitude to life. It is a memorable and golden experience for people to have. I will recommend to my friends as it really works!'

*Participant from the Chinese University of Hong Kong*

'I was a bit skeptical about what value the course would have, but I am impressed at how valuable it was.'

*Participant from a Corporate Course*





'The course lasted less than a month but the effects, I hope, will be everlasting. I shall never forget that I was on the first Outward Bound course in Hong Kong and shall strive to keep up to the name of an "Outward Bounder". As far as character discovery and character building are concerned, I feel that the benefits of discovering weaknesses are of no less importance than those of discovering potential. It only leaves to see how weaknesses can be overcome in the course of events.

The course is an education in itself, quite different from what I learned in the ordinary classroom. Never in my life before had I ever felt so cold, so tired, so wet, so seasick or sweated so much than during those eventful days on the course, but if I were asked whether I would have gone on the course had I known beforehand that it would be such, I could only say: "YES".'

*Written by Howard Young How Wah in 1970 after his attendance at a 26-day Outward Bound course in Hong Kong. He was among our first participants and went on to become the General Manager at Cathay Pacific and the Representative for Tourism at LegCo from 1990s to 2000s. Young remains an enthusiastic supporter of OBHK, in which he served on the Executive Committee from 1986 to 2015 and is the Founding Chairman of Outward Bound Alumni Association (OBAA).*



**The Outward Bound Alumni Association (OBAA), perhaps more than any impressive numerical effect size, represents the long-term impact of an Outward Bound Course. A strong alumni association points to high impact programming.**

Since 1971 this group of 'Outward Bounders' have registered as a stand-alone charity held together by their appreciation of the Outward Bound experience and willingness to volunteer time to keep the spirit alive. Alumni meet up once a month to maintain their clubhouse and to share stories and experiences. This base is also used to facilitate activities together with regular sailing, hiking and kayaking trips for those that remain interested.

Additionally, the Association makes its mark on the local community by organising the Tolo Harbour Canoe Race, which has introductory and competitive categories in distances ranging from five to twenty-one km. The race has been running for forty-three years, which in itself is testament to the enthusiasm and determination of the members, but even more impressive is the competition who has appeared in every edition of the race!



## **OUTWARD BOUND HONG KONG™**

**I regard it as the foremost task of education to ensure the survival of these qualities into manhood and womanhood. An enterprising curiosity, an undefeatable spirit, tenacity in pursuit, the joy of movement, readiness for sensible self-denial, careful attention to detail, a faithful memory and a lively imagination, and above all compassion.**

*By Kurt Hahn, Educator and Founder of Outward Bound*



Outward Bound Hong Kong is dedicated to unlocking human potential and strengthening local communities, and this is only possible with the relentless support from individuals, corporations and organisations in the form of services, time, expertise and resources.

捐助機構  
Funded by:  香港賽馬會慈善信託基金  
The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust

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