MANAGING BEHAVIOR IN THE FIELD

START
OBJECTIVES

1. Learn about participants
2. Explore common human reactions to field expeditions
3. Learn strategies to promote good behavior & manage negative behavior
MOTIVATED AND INSPIRED

Earthwatch team participants care about the work happening in the field - and want to help.
This experience easily ranks among the most rewarding of my life.

Thanks to the team leader's energy and organizational skills, each day was well-scheduled so as to completely engage every participant and lend a solid sense of purpose to our activities.

I for one felt I was working rewardingly hard at work worth doing - capturing, measuring and banding the graceful Lesser Kestrel so that researchers might follow its migratory flights over time and determine which regions are most important for the survival of the species.

-- Emma, Adult Participant on Wildlife of the Mongolian Steppe
THE HUMAN ELEMENT
COMMON EMOTIONAL JOURNEY ON AN EXPEDITION

MOOD

Elation

Low point

Recovery

Acclimatization

Arrival

End of Project

TIME

FORMING

PERFORMING

NORMING

STORMING

Adapted from InterHealth & the Royal Geographic Society of London 2009
STRESS IN THE FIELD

- Physical state (jet lag, heat, fitness)
- New routine
- Unfamiliar environment
- Other group members
- Low self-confidence
- Inadequate coping skills
- Other underlying issues
Where the magic happens

Your Comfort Zone

Earthwatch Institute
HUMAN REACTIONS TO STRESS

**POSITIVE**
- Heightened focus
- Increased motivation
- Friendly competition
- Creative problem-solving
- Emergence of leadership
- Increased collaboration
- Increased effort

**NEGATIVE**
- Apprehension
- Anxiety
- Self-doubt
- Despair or hopelessness
- Irritability or anger
- Sleeplessness
- Withdrawal or isolation
FOSTERING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

- Be observant
- Address concerns
- Ask for support
- Use clear & thoughtful communication
- Communicate early & often
- Build personal connections
- Be aware of your own reactions
- Engage their curiosity
USE CLEAR & THOUGHTFUL COMMUNICATION

**DO**

- Listen & acknowledge
- Be consistent
- Follow-up
- Give feedback
Repeat important information throughout the team.
Successful expeditions depend on good teamwork and teamwork requires trust.
ENGAGE THEIR CURIOSITY

- Explain tasks in the context of the research goals
- Vary routines & rotate tasks
- Make the most of setbacks
- Introduce new tasks strategically
- Give participants ownership of their part in the project
- Utilize personal interests & skills
- Take & share photos
BE AWARE OF
YOUR OWN REACTIONS
BE OBSERVANT

Are participants:
- Tired?
- Hungry?
- Engaged?
- Happy?
- Participating?
- Withdrawn?
- Upset?
- Interacting well?
1. Address negative behavior early
2. Listen to the other person’s concern (confidentially if possible); they should feel acknowledged, understood & respected.
3. Summarize both perspectives to be sure you are communicating well
4. Prioritize the team’s safety & well-being
5. Explain what is needed from them; ask if they need anything from you
6. Agree to next steps & follow-up
ASK FOR SUPPORT

- Duty Officer (24-hours)
- Healix Medical & Travel Assistance (24-hours)
- Earthwatch Program Manager
THE FOLLOWING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED ON EARTHWATCH TEAMS:

- Bullying
- Illegal activity
- Harassment or any kind
- Fraternization between project staff & participants
- Abuse of alcohol or use of illegal drugs
- Breach of Earthwatch policy or disregard of project rules
- Behavior that interferes with the safety or productivity of any team member

If any of these are seen by or reported to you, CALL THE DUTY OFFICER IMMEDIATELY
IF ALL ELSE FAILS, 
CONSIDER REMOVAL

If a participant:

- Violates a law or policy
- Endangers him/herself or others
- Compromises the research or general performance of the team
Earthwatch participants will bring a range of personalities & experience into the field.

Stress & fear can often lead to challenging behavior.

Expect highs & lows in a group. It is normal!

Good communication is essential!

Expeditions are inherently stressful, but team leaders can help participants adapt.
During this module, you:

• Learned about Earthwatch participants
• Explored common emotional reactions to expeditions
• Learned practical strategies for managing behavior