

Solo Adventures – How to Stay Safe and Pull Off Independent Adventures

JENN JOHNSON: Welcome, everyone. Since we're all in here,

I'll go ahead and share the screen with

our lovely pictures. Thank you.

Thank you for being here. We really appreciate it.

We enjoy doing these presentations. When we're all stuck inside,

we can still talk about the outdoors,

which is really nice, and hopefully you get something out of this.

I think the basic format for Jeff and I is we're

going to present a lot of information tonight,

but if at any point you have a question, you have a comment,

you have a story to share even,

feel free to put it in the chat,

raise your hands, whatever it is,

and we can open it up.

We have a nice small group,

so we can have some more discussions if you're interested.

But I think to get us started,

we'll go ahead with just some introductions.

If you all would like to also share, we'd really appreciate it.

You can keep your camera off, that's not a problem at all.

But we'll just go around just so we have a basic understanding about

you as well as this topic and maybe any of your experience with it

so we know where the group is.

I can start since I'm already unmuted.

[LAUGHTER] My name is Jenn and my pronouns are she or hers.

I am currently a six-year,

I want to say final year PhD candidate in the School of the Environment,

getting my degree in environmental and natural resource sciences.

I'm here because, on the side,

I also like to serve as an adventure facilitator with the Outdoor Rec Center.

That's why I ended up in Pullman. I am

even in the virtual environment still in Pullman,

gotten outside a little bit.

But I think my favorite place I've traveled to,

it's always hard, I'm going to say the Grand Canyon.

I'm from Arizona and that just has a nice place in my heart,

so that's still my favorite,

and I apologize for my dog as she does this all the time.

Then have I ever done a solo trip?

Yes, I have.

I've only done a couple completely by myself.

They are usually only one or two days.

Then I've done a handful more where I have a dog with me and I feel a little

safer [LAUGHTER] and more productive with my pups.

So I have a little experience,

a couple in the back country, some of the front country,

but we can talk about those and share those a little bit later. Jeff, you want to go?

JEFF TRAN: Yeah. My name is Jeff.

I prefer he, him,

hey, they, pretty easy.

I'm studying computer science right now and I'm also an [? AF ?] [inaudible]

Right now, I'm currently located in Pullman.

My favorite place I've traveled to,

I have to say, is Glacier National Park.

There's something magical about mountains.

I never realized how awesome they were until I went there.

Then have I ever done a solo trip?

Yes, that was actually my first solo trip.

I bikepacked all the way up from, what is it called, the

Going-to-the-Sun Road, which is like probably the most scenic road in America.

It was one of the most surreal experience I've had.

JENN JOHNSON: I think with that, we can get going.

It seems like a little experience, or none,

which is totally fine,

and it seems like the first step for

getting onto a solo adventure is how you decide to try it,

because it is very different than going with a group of your friends or family,

so how do you take that leap.

One way that we like to think about it is using the idea of comfort zones.

You can see just a very simple diagram.

That center comfort zone is where it's like,

I do this all the time,

not a big deal, I enjoy it.

You might learn a new skill or two,

but there's not a lot of stress that goes with it.

Then that green one is what we call the stretch zone.

This is a little bit more learning,

might be somewhat new, trying a different aspect of something.

Then red zone is like,

"Oh, boy, this is beyond my comfort zone,

beyond my stress zone. I'm not sure I really enjoy doing this,

I'm not sure why I'm doing this,"

and there's a lot of stress that goes with it.

We like to try to get into

that stretch zone and that's hopefully where at least you're first,

second, or third solo adventure might fall.

One way to think about this is just with daily tasks.

Say, we're actually talking about this before everyone joined,

speaking in front of large crowds.

Where do you feel this might fall?

If possible, on Zoom,

if you've used this feature before for annotate,

you can see it at the top.

It's like a little pencil.

Let me know if you don't see it,

but you can click Annotate.

[? Maybe not at ?] the top, I moved my screen,

but where you're control panel is on Zoom. Yeah,

it's just like that. You can choose a stamp, you can draw,

but just with this idea of speaking in large crowds,

where does that fall for you?

You can click on the target itself.

[LAUGHTER] Jeff, red zone, totally understand.

Stretch, that tends to be stretch on the border of stretch and red.

That's something where there's little more stress to it maybe.

Let's try another one.

How about going to just a new place,

somewhere you've never been before? How do you feel about that?

Much more comfortable going to a new place, that's good.

Then moving a little bit more into solo adventures,

what about just traveling alone?

It might be somewhere you're familiar with,

but just traveling by yourself in general.

Still comfort to stretch, that's good.

What about overnight camping or backpacking?

What is our feeling about that?

Being outside, not necessary by yourself

but just outside at night, sleeping outside.

Pretty comfortable. Awesome.

Then let's do one more.

How about going on an extended outdoor trip,
say, four days or more?

Okay, and I understand that. This is where we lose showering and we lose
technology and we lose all of the comforts, but it's good to know.

This is the idea; when we're talking
about all the different aspects of going on a solo adventure,
just relate it to how far out of your comfort zone are you willing to go.

It is a process,
it's a learning experience going from just camping in your backyard,
trying out your equipment by yourself,
making sure you can use everything, to going on a backpacking trip by yourself.

It's a large scale. Just figure out what
are the steps you need to take to make yourself ready to do this.

Jeff, you want to talk about fun?

JEFF TRAN: Started talking, it was muted. Anyways, there are three types of fun.

The first type of fun is type 1,
and that is fun,

like the activity that you're doing, every step of the way is considered fun.

That's what we imagine what our adventures would be like.

This type is basically what happens when your playing comes together,
like the weather lines up for your hike,
it snows for your ski trip,

or you get that magical day on Mount Washington

where it's warm and sunny without a hint of wind.

For others, it can also be catching every wave,

cruising through a [inaudible]

powder days, splinter cracks,

and cold beers next to a warm campfire.

This is where you brag to your friends about and they're sad that they couldn't be there.

Then you have type 2, which is personally my favorite type,

and it's weird. It's a strange beast

because it really actually isn't fun at the moment.

It's more like suffering,

which can be cool in a context.

It's only after event and reflection that you come to realize that you actually had fun.

Like wading through chest-deep snow,

dirty and loose rocks,

sketchy approaches, and hikes that never seem to end.

Anything that offers an overriding sense of doom and

despair are clear indications that you're having a type 2 experience.

Type 3 ironically is not very fun at all.

The fun doesn't surface when it's happening and it doesn't appear later on reflection.

Rather, it's the type that makes most of us go back to type 1 and say,

"The heck with type 2". It's close to type 3, where

we often learn something from our suffering during type

2 that furthers our outdoor knowledge and experience.

Type 3 is what chases us away from activities together.

Personally, I haven't done any type 3 stuff.

I imagine that would be like mountaineering for your first time,
and then a blizzard hits.

That's pretty terrifying.

But I've done a number of type 2.

Actually, my first solo trip was a type two and it was biking that road.

I started it when it was heavy rain, and I did this

during the peak of COVID so there

was basically no one there, and that's why I wanted to do it.

As I was going up the mountain,

I just thought to myself, what if a bear attacks me? What if I die?

But then I rounded this corner and I saw this magnificent view,

and it all just went away.

But then it comes back over time and time, but

there are moments where you just have this sense of greatness that comes with it.

It's like you had to take the bad with the good.

You don't fully appreciate how great something

is until you can see how bad it could be.

[NOISE] I'm just going to open it up to you guys to tell us about what

you experienced with these different types of fun. Jenn, you want to start?

JENN JOHNSON: Yeah. I was just trying to think. I don't know if I've done any type 3 either.

I don't know if that just means I haven't taken myself far enough out of

my comfort zone or I'm always finding the bright silver lining of it,

but I can imagine. Again, being from Arizona,
I like heat, I like sun,
and if I'm asked to go
on like a week-long mountaineering trip at the top of Mount Rainier,
I don't know how fun I would find that even after reflection.
I think that'd be pretty miserable during and after.
But type 2, I'm with you.
I'm all about type 2.
I feel like anytime I try something new,
rock climbing, rappelling, snorkeling,
anything like that, it might be hard in the moment trying to learn the skills,
being frustrated, but I feel like after, it's like, "I need to do this again."
Anybody else? Anybody have a type 3 story?
They tend to be rare.

JEFF TRAN: Now, that I think about it, a type 3
for me would probably be the first time I learned to swim.
I actually did not touch the water for a good decade after those lessons.

[LAUGHTER] Yeah.

JENN JOHNSON: That's really bad. [LAUGHTER] Yes,
that would be an example of type 3, where even after, you're like,
I'm not doing that again.
To try to convince everyone to at least try this out,
there are a bunch of rewards that come with doing a solo adventure.
One is, for those who do have

some basic skills and knowledge that maybe you don't use a lot,
you don't go camping, you don't go backpacking, kayaking,
anything outdoors a lot,
it gives you a chance to really practice those skills
because you can't rely on someone else.

It is really up to you to be able to use navigation,
set up a tent, filter your water, whatever it is,
which, not going to lie, it gives you some confidence that,
hey, I can do everything by myself,
which is pretty awesome.

Also, it lets you discover your weaknesses.

That is very true. I've realized my first few trips,
I was not good cooking outside.
My food was never fully cooked.
That took some practice,
finally got there, but made me realize I need to practice that a little bit more.

Also maybe not as important in
the virtual environment where we're alone a lot more than normal,
but in theory, it does give you a chance for some solitude.

You get to hike at your own pace,
you get to set your own agenda, your own trip.

It really is up to you, and anything you want to try, you're able to.

Building off the first one, that independence, self-reliance,
it really is on you to make it from point A to point B and back,

and so helps with those skills as well.

More intentional and present with your thoughts.

You're not distracted by someone else or other people.

You're really thinking about whatever is in

your head, which can be good and bad, I don't know,

but it gives you a chance to really be present with yourself.

A big one for me,

and I will say this is true on my own experience;

you get to see a lot more wildlife because you're quiet.

You're by yourself. You're not scaring away the wildlife as much,

which we'll get into wildlife and the hazards that come with that.

It could be negative, but in general,

you get to see a lot more when you're by yourself usually, which is pretty awesome.

You're not talking to someone else. You're not looking at someone else.

Your eyes are really just scanning and you get to see some really cool things.

JEFF TRAN: Cool.

How is solo travel different?

Well, you are your own weakest link.

So if anything happens,

you're going to have to figure it out.

If you get [? gear ?] or it breaks

it's just there's things that you just have to do.

Situational awareness and prevention are paramount.

You want to be able to know what's going on because there's no one else to help you.

No one's going to have your back.

So being keen on the environment is paramount.

Because you are isolated,

you need to get as much knowledge about where you're going and what's happening.

That way, you can make the best decisions for yourself.

For example, this summer, I hiked a trail

over in [? Olympia ?] National Forest. I want to see a waterfall.

I was like, I'll just go to this waterfall, and

I ran this trail. Then along that run,

I noticed there's another trail called Mount Storm King.

This sounds like a cool trail, so I just

skipped it and I thought I'll just visit on the way back.

Then when I reached that waterfall that I wanted to see,

it was so dinky that I just like, "You know what?

I don't feel satisfied. I'm just going to go on another adventure."

That Mount Storm King trail was the hardest trail that I've ever done.

I didn't do any research,

but I was still able to finish it because I had prepared for extra things.

But yeah, the best thing you can get out of this

is to really know your equipment and what you can handle.

That way, if something happens, you'll be okay.

JENN JOHNSON: Yeah, I think that's a really good point,

also a good point of you need to plan ahead and prepare, which we'll get to.

But yeah, it is different.

If you want to go walk on some sand dunes,
that is in the Mojave National Park area in Nevada,
also by Las Vegas.

Now to get to the nuts and bolts, how to get started,
for those who have done maybe one, or kind of,
or haven't tried it,
there are a lot of ways to get going.

This is actually the data of a coworker of ours that was setting
up their tent in their living room to make sure they knew how to do it before a trip.

But one way in general
is just to start in your comfort zone.

Whether this is literally camping in your backyard so that if something goes wrong,
if you just don't feel like it,
something doesn't sit right, you can just go inside.

Go close by.

If you're in Pullman,
go camp at Kamiak or go on a hike at Kamiak by yourself.

That's just something simple, easy to do,
you can come right back,
but you get outside and try it by yourself.

Or just a familiar place.

For those who go on
daily camping trips or yearly camping trips with family to the same spot every year,
just try that by yourself.

You know what's there, you know what it's like,
you know what to expect,
and so you're already reducing some of those stressful unknowns.

Another thing is research ahead.

Like Jeff, do what you plan the first time you try a solo adventure.

You see a random trail,
probably not the best idea to go on that on your first trip out,
especially if you have new equipment you're trying out,
you're not quite as sure on your skills of navigation and such.

So research the destinations, research weather.

We'll talk about weather. Research the trails is a great way to do it.

Once you have that plan,
make sure you share it with someone.

[LAUGHTER] My mom always gets mad at me when I tell her,

"Hey, I went backpacking this weekend." She's like, "Who did you go with?"

I was like, "No one." That is not good.

Make sure someone knows where you are, when you're leaving,
when you're supposed to be back
in case anything does go wrong.

There are a bunch of resources.

Another thing to start with is start by going to a state park

or a national park

or a designated trail system that has rangers,

that has park service,

that has visitors center
where they can tell you a lot of
information before you get there and even when you get there.

Have there been any wildlife sightings?

What's the weather been like?

Have there been any issues on the trails?

They can give you a clear go ahead or let you
know of any changes that you didn't expect in your research.

Then lastly is take self-care seriously.

We'll talk about this as well,

but if something does go wrong,

if you get injured, if you get sick,

you are relying now on an injured or sick person to get you to help,

and so that self-care becomes really,

really important when you're by yourself.

Again, we'll give you some ideas on how to do that,

but something you might not consider as much when you're with a group,

you have someone else to rely on.

When it's just you, you have to make sure you are good to go.

Any questions on this?

I know they seem pretty general,

but just a good way to start your planning. Nice.

JEFF TRAN: Cool. The types of risks;

there are real risks versus perceived risks.

What are the most common risks hikers face? What do you guys think?

You can just type into the chat if you don't want to speak.

JENN JOHNSON: Or unmute. Yeah. Either one.

JEFF TRAN: Injury.

JENN JOHNSON: Plant, animal life.

JEFF TRAN: Yeah.

JENN JOHNSON: Getting lost. [LAUGHTER] Happened to me.

JEFF TRAN: Yeah. That is a very real fear.

Okay. Then what are other risks that you're concerned about that aren't so common?

JENN JOHNSON: Mountain lions, bears, that always comes up.

[LAUGHTER] It is legit.

It happens. It's rare, but it does happen.

JEFF TRAN: Yeah. It's pretty terrifying when you actually see one.

JENN JOHNSON: I've seen wolf now.

I saw a mountain lion for the first time a couple of months ago.

That was not a fun experience.

That might've been type 3.

I don't think I ever want to see a mountain lion again outside.

JEFF TRAN: Have you seen that video where that mountain lion was following that hiker?

JENN JOHNSON: Yes.

JEFF TRAN: Yeah.

SPEAKER 1: Yeah, I saw that. That was crazy.

JENN JOHNSON: Yeah. That went pretty viral. How long was that?

Seven minutes or something?

JEFF TRAN: It was long.

Every single time [inaudible] he slightly turned his back, it lunged at him.

It was watching precisely for an opportunity to do stuff.

SPEAKER 1: The way that it lunged at him was completely terrifying.

JEFF TRAN: It was fast.

JENN JOHNSON: Yeah. You don't mess with mountain lions.

[LAUGHTER]

JEFF TRAN: Great. Just some more perceived risks that we have are like

we're far more afraid of shark attacks or quicksand

than a vehicle accident or carcinogenic hot dogs.

In our minds, we build up these ideas that we've seen on TV or media and such,

and make them out to be really terrifying.

But in reality, the things that we're actually doing in our everyday lives

are more detrimental to our health than those notions that we've made up.

For example, according to Yellowstone National Park,

the probability of being killed by a bear in the park is only slightly higher

than the probability of being killed by

a falling tree in an avalanche or being struck by lightning.

So it's pretty rare it's going to happen,

but it's just something that you just need to be aware.

Because you know that it doesn't happen as often as you'd think it would,

that in itself is confidence-building.

You guys have any questions about that?

JENN JOHNSON: Yeah. My first backpacking trip, I was 10,
so 20 years of experience, and for the first time, I saw a mountain lion.

It's very, very rare. Same with bears.

I think in 20 years,

I've seen four bears.

In Glacier, you're likely to see them,

but they're very used to people,

I will say that as well, in national parks.

It's a fear to have,

but don't let it keep you from actually

trying something new and going out of your comfort zone.

JEFF TRAN: This may scare you

but that trip to Glacier,

I actually saw my first bear.

Actually, I saw four bears on that same trip;

three brown bears and a grizzly.

When I saw the brown bears, I

thought I was going to die because they had cubs and it was terrifying.

But I saw the cubs run and they're so cute,

they're like children, oh my God, it's adorable.

I thought I was going to die.

I literally backed up and waited for 30 minutes.

"What do I do?"

What I do? All right, I'm just going to go for it."

Closed my eyes and I just bypassed it,

and I was all right. Yeah. [OVERLAPPING]

JENN JOHNSON: Instead of just scaring you,

we'll talk about what to do with animals as well.

Again, people get outside all the time and it's very unlikely,

so there are ways to mitigate it.

But with that, the risks to all of these kind of hazards

that you can see on the screen

just are a little more important to think about beforehand and plan for

when you're alone.

I said one of the rewards is you get to see more wildlife,

but at the same time,

you get to see more wildlife,

which could be a problem,

and when you're alone,

you need to know how to deal with it.

Also, just know how to avoid encounters with some animals.

This might be, again,

research ahead of time, knowing where dens are,

knowing where migration routes are, whatever it is.

Planning ahead of time allows you to minimize some of those risks.

I will say with grizzly country, I've been to Glacier,

I was with a large group because I knew it was grizzly country,

so maybe not the best place to try a solo adventure or be alone,

but it just comes with the planning.

Again, you're just really reliant on your own skills, your own supplies.

If something does pop up,

a challenging moment, there's no one to really bounce ideas off.

You have to come up with a plan yourself.

When you're looking at a trail,

if you know you're going to be crossing a creek,

or a river,

that's a high-risk situation that you need to be prepared for.

If there's going to be snow travel or potential avalanche,

that's another high-risk situation you're going to have to

be prepared for, and challenging weather.

As you get started, as you get planning, as Jeff said earlier,

pick ideal conditions at least in those realms because you're trying something

completely new already and you want to feel safe in every other aspect.

Any questions on risks?

We're going to talk about mitigation next.

How to hopefully address some of these.

JEFF TRAN: The first thing you got to do

I think is [? like currently really strong?] - Is to play it safe.

If this is your first time doing it,

I wouldn't recommend going mountaineering.

Probably just take a hike

before you head up to the higher elevation levels.

Know your skills, make [? concerted ?] decisions in unfamiliar environments.

Another important thing is communication.

You have to let people know what's happening,
where you're going to go, and especially your itinerary.

That way, if something does occur,
you actually have somewhat of a fallback plan essentially.

We have a chat from Ann, saying,

"My husband worked for search and rescue, and I had to remind
him to tell me where

he was going so they could come out and find him if there was [inaudible]

Yeah, that's a great thing to do.

Let your significant other know where you are, family members.

Fantastic. Work on developing skills like using gear,
first aid, and navigation.

Before you go out, you know,
just make sure that you know how to utilize all your gear, especially first aid.

Know what's in your pack and how to use those items.

Your navigation is important.

If you bought a satellite phone,
be sure that you know how to accurately send
messages and let people know where you are,
or how to [? submit ?] the SOS button quickly
enough to get out of a bad situation if it were to occur.

Because if something bad happens,

you only have moments to make a decision that could change
the outcome of the situation. Be aware.

Be more aware. Hiking, a lot of people do with music.

But if you're doing it alone,

solo, it's probably best to not have music.

That way, you can hear the surroundings,

hear the approach of a mountain lion.

You don't want to be listening to like BeeGees and get attacked by the back.

Then avoid dawn and dusk.

You don't want to hike too late or too early.

That way you can see where you're going.

Preventing injuries is pretty key.

Preventing blisters, that way you don't hurt yourself further.

Staying hydrated and eating enough food so you're able to

sustain yourself and you don't injure yourself

because you're pushing your body too hard.

Being able to have the proper footwear really helps a lot.

Your feet are one of the most important for the job.

Anything that comes into contact with ground,

you should take the extra precautions to make sure that you're comfortable.

Wear the right hiking boots.

You don't want to wear a trail runner if you're going up a steep incline.

Then keep your pack weight down.

If you're going up for the first time or you're new to this,

you don't want to overextend yourself by having too much gear.

That could just be as bad as not having enough gear because you end up not realizing how far you can go and you misguide your destination times.

Then another important thing is just to feel safe.

If you're going to bear country,
make sure you got bear spray.

That way, if a bear does happen to pop up,
you have a mechanism to protect yourself,
and pepper spray or a dog.

If you're hiking alone,
you probably want to have some sort of
way just to feel safe because who doesn't want to feel safe?

Any questions for this slide?

JENN JOHNSON: I realize that Spot device, see in the top,
people might not know or have heard of these before.

I guess we're branding here,

that's a specific brand,

but it's similar to a satellite phone

and it's a way that, if you are by yourself and something does happen,

like the worst case scenario and you can't get out,

it's a way to send like a 911 call,

pretty much is what it is.

You just sign up through whatever device you buy,

and then when you have a trip,

you activate the device.

I think for most, you do have to pay for when it's activated.

I don't think it's that expensive.

Then if something happens,

all you do is press an SOS and it pings your GPS location no matter where you are.

I know a couple of friends who do have

them and do use them when they're solo backpacking

as a last resort of something,

of an emergency situation.

That's another way to feel a little more safe as you have

that ability. When your phone's not working,

whatever, you can still contact emergency services.

JEFF TRAN: Okay.

JENN JOHNSON: Nice. Just key components, and

we're going to build on this,

you have to ask yourself as you're planning a trip;

if I were alone and "blank" happens, how would I handle it?

Play out those situations to make sure you have the right gear,

to make sure you've planned for all potential changes,

and make sure you have a plan if something does happen.

[NOISE] As it says,

although you should already be doing these things and be prepared for problems,

when you're alone, it's really paramount

because no one is going to be able to help you in the moment.

Part of this is leave no trace.

This is maybe something you've heard of.

Either by show of hands or putting in the chat,

who has heard of "leave no trace" before?

I see a hand.

I see some shaking heads.

[LAUGHTER] Yeah, it's very detailed if you want to get into it,

and we'll go through the principles,

but leave no trace is a concept that was developed,

I want to say, in the '60s or '70s

when people really started getting

outside, and outdoor recreation became more and more popular.

People started to realize that it's popular,

and humans are leaving more and more of an impact on the environment.

You can go to Int.org to see all the materials, the educational materials,

they have readings, cool videos,

but their idea is to promote and inspire

responsible outdoor recreation through education, research, and partnerships.

There are these seven principles that go with LNT.

The idea is if you can do these seven things,

you're going to leave wherever you're visiting in the same state as you found it,

or better even if you start picking up litter.

Jeff, you want to do the first few?

JEFF TRAN: Yeah. The first one, probably

most important one, is plan ahead and prepare.

Let someone else know where you're going.

Let them also know what time you expect to get back.

Make a list of what you're going to do and

check it twice. Make sure you have everything.

After that, you want to learn how to travel and camp under durable surfaces.

That one is pretty cool in a sense that if you travel somewhere,

if you do less impact,

then other people can experience the same thing as well,

because this world is beautiful.

You don't want to be selfish and ruin it for other people.

Dispose of waste properly.

That's basically learning how to dig cat holes.

Whenever you cook, how to disperse water safely

such that it doesn't impact the environment and

the ecosystem that's around there and the wildlife that resides in that ecosystem.

Leave what you find. This one is pretty simple.

When you see a cool rock or a nice flower,

just leave it there. Enjoy it for the moment. That way, other people can enjoy it as well.

I've been very tempted to take some things,

but then I remind myself that,

hey, what would other people feel if this wasn't there?

This experience probably won't be cool if they didn't see

this really pretty flower that was at this [? bend ?]

I don't know. Jenn, you want to take over?

JENN JOHNSON: Yeah, and I realize we're going out of order on explanations.

I'm sorry, it's because we have these hand signs
to do all of these, which I can show you at the end.

Minimizing campfire impact is another one.

This is something on our trips with the Outdoor Recreation Center;
we tend to discourage campfires in general,
unless there's a designated fire pit.

But they can be important sometimes;
for heat sources, for cooking, whatever it is.

The idea for this one is just if you do have a campfire,
if you decide that's the right decision and it's safe,
you're minimizing any impact that it might have.

One, putting it out completely.

We've seen some problems in
recent months when people do not put out their fires completely.

But also, if you do make a fire,
disperse the ash, disperse the rocks,
whatever it is. Don't bring wood that might be
carrying invasive species or something else from other areas.

Use wood you can find in the area that's local.

That kind of thing comes with this principle.

Then respecting wildlife, we've had to talk about the pros and cons of them already,
but no matter what,

the idea is that is their home,

they live there, and so we want to respect that.

Part of this is making sure you're choosing

proper campsites that are away from maybe nesting areas or dens, whatever it is.

If you are overnight,

and you're cooking and everything,

make sure you're storing your food properly.

Yes, squirrels really like eating trail mix

but is not part of their diet and they should not be doing that.

So make sure you're storing everything.

Also, you're relying on those calories [LAUGHTER] for

your own needs, so important that way.

Jeff also mentioned avoiding dawn and dusk for visual purposes,

but those are also the times that wildlife tends to be out the most.

That might be a reason to avoid them as well,

to make sure that you're giving them their space when they're most active

either just by making noise,

whatever it is, or just avoiding those hiking times.

Last one is be courteous to other visitors.

I think I was talking to someone in Pullman

who works with the park service and they mentioned

that I think in the state of Washington,

they're seeing a 200 percent increase in outdoor recreation,

and I know. I've only got on a couple of hikes in the last few months

and it's been hot.

The idea is yay,

get outside, enjoy it,

appreciate it, but also, there's a lot of people trying to do the same,

so be really courteous of them.

Those are a lot. Any questions on these principles or LNT?

It's a pretty cool organization.

They do a lot of interesting work.

Nice. It is.

Hey, first aid kits.

JEFF TRAN: First aid kits are mandatory.

There are a number of ways you can go about getting one.

Probably the easiest way, you can just buy one from REI commercial kit

because they already premade for all things that you need.

They do vary in what they have,

but usually, the most basic one is good enough,

or you can just make your own if you want to save a little bit more,

or if you just are the type of person that wants to dial in

your weight to know exactly what you can do, that's cool too.

Depending on your experience and comfort,

you may want to carry extra stuff.

That way, you feel safe, but if not,

then carrying less, you could get away

with less if you know how to properly address certain situations.

You don't want to bring what you don't know how to use.

Before you embark on an adventure, make sure you know how to use every single item in the medical kit.

Otherwise, you're just carrying around extra weight.

Another way to get really good at this type of stuff is just to attend a wilderness first aid class.

These courses, they basically teach you how to survive out on your own.

They're very informative and they are extremely confidence-boosting. That's all I've got for first aid.

JENN JOHNSON: I would just add for this one, sometimes, it's just a simple Google search.

I'm not going to lie. That's how I created my own. It's like, hey, backpacking 101, what [LAUGHTER] do you need in your first aid kit.

Because some of the ones you do buy in packs, which have blister care, ibuprofen, band-aid, all of that stuff,

but when you're backpacking,

or you don't have access to clean water,

I had to buy and add iodine tablets to my first aid kit.

Depending on the activity; skiing, kayaking, backpacking, whatever it is, I would also just do a Google search of what should I bring in a first aid kit during this activity, and you're going to find awesome lists online.

JEFF TRAN: Yeah, and that takes it back to the first principle of LNT;

planning ahead and prepare.

JENN JOHNSON: Absolutely. I think now, I've just

taken pieces of multiple kits that I've gotten over the years to make one.

As you get more advanced, more experienced,

if you are doing long backpacking trips, you want to minimize weight. So

as Jeff said, don't bring stuff you're not going to need or you don't even know how to

use because that's just weight you don't want to be carrying around.

With that, also just thinking of problems with equipment in

general is also a way to plan what you're bringing.

It is good idea to have backups.

Let's say for a headlamp,

make sure you have extra batteries.

Bring a little bit of extra food.

If for some reason you're eating more than you thought you would,

or you're out for another day maybe a little bit longer than you thought you would,

that just may happen situation.

It's always good to have a little extra food.

We mentioned this multiple times, just have the skills.

I know a good example, like,

if you have a backpacking stove that breaks,

you need to know how to fix it because you're relying on maybe that for

boiling your water to be clean or for cooking your meals.

Know how to fix things if they do have issues.

Don't rely on technology.

For this, yes, I do use AllTrails and my phone for a lot of things sometimes,

but I also bring maps and a compass.

If things go wrong, I have a backup.

Then test everything out and practice it.

I will say there is some really cool gear out there.

Just make sure you know how to use it.

[LAUGHTER] Nice.

Few more slides and we'll open it up.

JEFF TRAN: Unexpected weather is something that you really do have to prepare for.

Having the basics is essential, and that includes rain jackets like an outer shell,

layers, fleece jackets, your base layers,

extra dry clothes, especially dry socks.

I always bring

one or two extra pair of socks just because sweaty feet, and

your feet, you have to take care of it no matter what. Sun protection.

You'll be surprised at how often you get sunburn.

I didn't realize that I got sunburn as

easily as I did because I avoided water for most of my life.

But I got sunburned,

and that's not something that you want.

Then being able to waterproof your gear is pretty good.

For me, when it comes to having extra layers,

I've invested in a lot of super lightweight gear.

So wherever I go,

I always have my base stuff. So basically,

if anything does occur, I'll be ready.

Then that's just a good thing to keep in mind for doing solo adventures.

Basically, if you have the equipment to handle the weather, like the proper layers,

you could be outside in zero-degree weather and still be

perfectly content yourself because you have all the things to keep you warm.

JENN JOHNSON: Yes, Britney, I agree. Wind can be really tricky too.

That's something that, coming from the desert.

I didn't really deal with as much,

but it can be as simple as just like a lightweight

wind jacket, that makes a lot of difference.

Part of this is just,

you want to enjoy the experience.

If you're just wet and soggy for days,

that reflection is going to be a little more negative

than we would like. We want you to think,

"We really enjoyed this experience.

We want to do it again." [OVERLAPPING]

JEFF TRAN: Yeah. You know having the right gear can change a type 2 to a type 3 type of fun.

JENN JOHNSON: Absolutely, it can.

I will also say if you're just starting out,

before you buy these awesome waterproof hiking boots that cost a lot of money,

buy a little can of waterproofing spray on your current boots.

Try it out and then go from there.

There are ways around

buying all the nicest things.

I usually just ask for stuff for Christmas. But eventually,
you'll build up a stock of gear if you get more and more into this.

JEFF TRAN: I appreciate that, Aaron. [LAUGHTER]

JENN JOHNSON: Jeff Tran quote of the day.

JEFF TRAN: You guys can use it. [LAUGHTER]

JENN JOHNSON: We've already mentioned this so I'm just going to go quick

but maps, this is where you don't rely on technology.

With that comes knowledge of how to use them.

If you bring this topographic map, know how to read it,

know about elevation, know about distance,

know about directions, and using a compass with it.

Know how to use it if your fancy GPS

or your phone or something else dies,

it's always a backup to have.

But also, GPS devices are awesome,

and if you want to use one,

I definitely recommend them.

Gaia has a really good one

and I already mentioned the Spot device.

You can't do a lot of actual GPS tracking like trail-using on it,

that's just the emergency ones,

but there are some really cool ones out there.

Any questions on this one? [OVERLAPPING]

JEFF TRAN: [? Just ?] [inaudible]

JENN JOHNSON: [LAUGHTER] It is awesome. Right? Jeff, did you have something?

JEFF TRAN: Yeah. For GPS devices,
they are pricey but they're worth it.

The sense of security that you have with having one of these things gives
you enough confidence to venture out a lot more than you normally wouldn't.
If you want to get something like that, if you wait a while, every now and then,
REI has really great deals on the GPS.

You could save \$200 on one of them
if you time your purchase right.

JENN JOHNSON: I would say any multi-day trip, GPS is great.

Just be careful with batteries on these.

They do require batteries and they can die out.

You can also just try the features,

I'm using apps like AllTrails where you can download the map ahead of time,
and as long as you have it downloaded,

even if you lose service,

you can still use it as a tracking just to see what you

like, what you don't before you buy a real GPS locator.

But multi-day trail is usually [inaudible] or even if you're just
going somewhere you don't really know very well or the maps aren't very good.

I went to Seven Devils a couple of months ago
and the online maps for that area are not great.

That's where the GPS came in handy

I lot because the trails weren't well-marked.

JEFF TRAN: Yeah.

JENN JOHNSON: Seven Devils. Yeah, it's very embarrassing.

[LAUGHTER] It's actually not too far from here.

It's only about three hours.

If you know where Riggins, Idaho is,

it's just up the mountains from that.

Amazing. I didn't see a mountain goat and I was very sad,

but they apparently are there.

Jeff, rest and navigation.

JEFF TRAN: A compass is something that you probably would want,

and a good reputable brand is Suunto and Brunton.

Then some skills that you want to know are setting a declination,

taking a bearing, and triangulation.

Those are some pretty important skills that you probably want to learn.

Most importantly, practice, practice, practice.

You don't want to buy all the stuff,

go outside, and then like,

"Oh yeah, I think I got this." and

then you're in the wilderness and you're lost and you're stressed, and you're like,

"Wait a minute. maybe I don't know this."

That's the worst feeling to come to, that you don't know.

In order to practice, you can take some courses.

REI has some great resources that you can go to and see.

I don't know if they're a free resource.

Just take courses. That way,

you're confident going out with no technology, just the bare bones.

JENN JOHNSON: Which can also be part of that type 2 fun.

Having to use a map and compass is just a whole another level of being outdoors.

JEFF TRAN: Yeah.

JENN JOHNSON: We've already mentioned this for the most part,

but just the importance of those animal encounters,

and this really just goes back to the planning of that.

Proper food storage, disposal,

making sure you know what's in the area, and being prepared, if you do encounter,

what's the best thing to do.

I know for bears,

it depends on the type of bear.

What you want to do most definitely is a slow,

quiet backing up, but it depends.,

so do a little research ahead of time.

Angry squirrels? I've encountered them. They can be very vicious.

Then here's just a list of key takeaways.

JEFF TRAN: Yeah.

You want to build your skills.

Your first adventure, probably

you don't want to go a five-day mountaineering trip.

Start [? somewhere ?] small and realize your potential, or realize your limits,
and then expand your potential.

Some of the things that you need to know how to do well are dialing your gear,
figuring out how far you can go,
and what type of terrain that you can cross easily,
and also figuring out your first aid system,
and what you know how to do and what you're prone to.

Some people are more susceptible to getting their ankle twisted
so an important skill for them to learn
is how to use Ace bandages to probably
wrap their ankles in case something like that happens.

Planning ahead repair is key,
being able to know what the weather is. That way,
you can appropriately get your layering system in;
your maps, local resources, and gear.

Communicate. Let people know where you're going because, at the very end of the day,
if something happens,
you actually have somebody out there that's
looking out for you even though they're not there.

The important self care;
being able to understand whether you're
in a dangerous situation and being able
to fix that before it gets worse, is a good thing to know.

Bring distractions. I'm going to skip that one. I'm

not sure what that is there.

Starting out small. Short day hikes,

building up your experience,

family picnics are pretty great, and car camping is another option too.

I love these national parks. They're amazing.

If you just drive your car,

you can just park in a parking lot

and you can have these great hikes that are equivalent to multi-day trips

all in the comfort of a few hours.

JENN JOHNSON: Actually, I think that picture might be Seven Devils.

I'm not positive. That's our co-worker, Hannah. Bring distractions.

I think that was on there for

if you're not used to being alone for days, or even

just you get to camp at 4:00 PM and you now

have six or seven hours, so you go to sleep.

That can be dissuading.

So bring a book, bring cards,

bring something to entertain yourself

outside because you don't have someone to turn and talk to you,

which is very different for a lot of people,

so just thinking in that.

JEFF TRAN: Just an answer for distractions; candy.

Bring something to look forward to at the end of the day.

[OVERLAPPING] I never realized how a Sour

Patch Kids tasted amazing when I'm tired.

[inaudible] Yeah.