

# FAQ's:



Our new ***Therapeutic Adventures (TA) & IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)*** website is designed to be more user friendly. Should you have a question that is not addressed in the information we have provided, then please select the **Contact Us** button.



We will get back to you with a response to your question. Thank you.

## ***CHOICES***

**Choices** is a document that we have put together to address many of the questions you may have.

***Therapeutic Adventures (TA) and IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)*** offer a variety of different adaptive outdoor adventures and adaptive sports programs, projects and events.

**TA** offers private and group instruction and adaptive guide services, as well as therapeutic retreats, camps and trips.

**I~AS** offers private instruction, coaching for both recreational and competitive adaptive sports.

Below are some important considerations which we feel are important in selecting the right program to meet your needs.



First - Select the ***Therapeutic Adventures*** or ***IndependencePlus Adaptive Sports*** program that is right for you . . .

### **Scheduled: Programs, Projects, & Events**

You'll find a variety of Programs, Projects, & Events described throughout this website which correspond with our Calendar.

Keep in mind that all of our Programs, Projects, & Events are structured to meet the specific needs and objectives which have been identified by the individual, family, or group. Programs include: (Phase I-beginner, Phase II-intermediate, & Phase III-advanced)

We attempt to maintain a one-to-one student to instructor ratio. However, for some programs we may have two students per instructor. We utilize trained volunteer staff to improve the student/instructor ratio. For some programs depending upon the personal characteristics of each participant and dynamics of the group, we may limit the group size to a maximum number. This will enable us to better serve everyone. And, once you've registered for a scheduled program, we guarantee it will run, even if you are the sole registrant.

If you have had no previous experience, our Phase I programs are the perfect choice. If you have had some experience, review the program descriptions, then contact us directly and we'll be happy to discuss what's best for you.

Our staff will work with you to plan a series of programs -- moving through a progression that will help you advance from beginner to advanced levels of performance.

All programs are designed to take into account for your physical condition and level of fitness. If you are not particularly fit or, if you are extremely fit, you should consider scheduling your adventure through Private Instruction so we can fine tune the pace just for you.



## **Private Instruction/Adaptive Guiding & Private Adaptive Instruction/Coaching**

For the majority of our adaptive outdoor adventures programs, we are pleased to offer private adaptive instruction/adaptive guiding. This is our most flexible option and it allows you to benefit from our knowledge and experience in meeting your adaptive adventures objectives.

For the majority of our adaptive sports programs, we are pleased to offer private adaptive instruction/coaching. This is our most flexible option and it allows you to benefit from our knowledge and experience in meeting your adaptive sports objectives

\*\*If you are a particularly fast or slow learner, or if you want an instructor 'all to yourself', private instruction/adaptive guiding or private instruction/coaching is your best choice because we can adjust the pace to your particular needs.

If you require a custom designed course or a custom itinerary, tailored to your needs, private instruction/private guiding is the way to go.



***Now - Make It Happen!***

### **Schedules:**

Once you know when you desire to attend a course please notify us. Prior to notifying us, we suggest you keep an alternative date(s) in mind in case the course you chose is full. We will do our best to accommodate your scheduling requirements.

### **When To Register**

ASAP - our courses are popular and our schedule book fills quickly! Many dates are booked several months or more in advance. If you are restricted to a specific date(s) we recommend you register as soon as possible. Because we do, occasionally, receive cancellations it is always worth a call to see if there is space available.



## Selecting A Professional Program

**Q: What should I look for and consider when deciding where to sign up for instruction with an adaptive outdoor program?**

**A: Professionalism & Experience!**

Because of the inherent risks associated with participation in many adapted outdoor adventure activities and adaptive sports, it is essential that you learn from a qualified professional. Our staff of adaptive outdoor leaders, adaptive guides, and coaches have extensive knowledge and experience: working with individuals of all ages who have differing abilities (physical and developmental) disabilities, chronic medical impairments and other special health needs; leading individuals and groups in a wide variety of outdoor recreational and sports settings; and practicing the safety principles associated with adaptive outdoor adventures and adaptive sports programming.

**Q: What kinds of things will influence the quality of my adaptive outdoor adventure or adaptive sports experience?**

**A: We are convinced that the best way to learn is from a committed professional adaptive outdoor leader, adaptive guide, or adaptive coach.**

A professional who:

- assesses and understands your specific needs;
- helps you to identify realistic goals and expectations;
- prioritizes SAFETY;

- understands adaptive equipment needs and instructional adaptations;
- selects an environment suitable and appropriate for learning to take place;
- works within the scope of a well-organized coaching/ teaching progression;
- provides opportunities for practice and acquisition of new skills;
- provides evaluation, analysis, and a summary of performance with recommendations for the future.

### **Q: What are your thoughts on safety?**

#### **A: Simply put, our belief is Safety First!**

In all of our programs, safety is always the top priority. Safety is an attitude--it must be taught, developed and emphasized, and renewed.

Our staff strives to create an environment that promotes true safety through informed decision-making and realistic self-assessment. It is our job to prepare students by teaching important safety principles and techniques as well as to help them master certain sport specific skills before venturing out on their own.

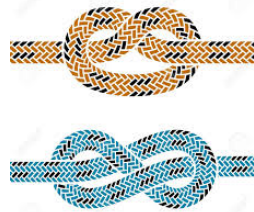
We do our best to make our students aware of the environmental hazards and inherent risks associated with participation in adaptive outdoor sports. While there are certain potential hazards that can never be completely eliminated due to the ever-changing forces of nature, it is our belief that all of our actions have consequences that are personal, social and environmental.

All ***Therapeutic Adventures (TA)*** and ***IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)*** programs will help you develop an understanding of the impact personal decisions have on yourself, others, and the environment where adaptive outdoor adventures and adaptive sports are offered. We believe that the foundation of safe adaptive outdoor activities (snow, water and wilderness) and adaptive sports is a strong sense of personal responsibility and sound judgment.

A qualified adaptive outdoor leader, adaptive guide, and adaptive sports coach is not only aware of, but works to develop the physical, cognitive, psycho-social, emotional & spiritual needs of his/her students. He/she must also take into account any specific medical needs and how they impact on participation in adaptive sports/adventures in different outdoor environments.

Because nothing is constant --particularly in the outdoors, our adaptive outdoor leaders/adaptive guides and our adaptive sports coaches are trained to check things, re-check them, and then check them all over again. Every safety system we use has a back-up! Our adaptive outdoor leaders/adaptive guides and our adaptive sports coaches have the self-discipline and knowledge that is required to make important decisions.

With the SAFETY FIRST attitude, our adaptive outdoor leaders create an environment where effective learning can take place. Our safety record, combined with client satisfaction and the number of students who have achieved functional independence supports this.



### **Teaching Ability**

Often called 'soft' or 'people' skills, teaching ability is of paramount importance to today's adaptive outdoor leaders. The ability to observe students' learning progress and provide new information in just the right amount and at just the right time is the essence of good teaching. A skilled adaptive outdoor leader, adaptive guide, or adaptive coach must sense when students are confused and when they are becoming disinterested; when they are scared and when they are confident; when they are when they are exhausted and when they are up for a challenge. In short, a good adaptive instructor must step into the learner's adaptive outdoor adventure or adaptive sport and feel what they are feeling. In a setting where intense physical and emotional experiences are commonplace, a skilled adaptive instructor must be able to relate to people from a wide variety of backgrounds, ages and experience levels.

This is a tall order and the art of teaching adaptive outdoor adventures and adaptive sports takes many years of experience.

***Therapeutic Adventures (TA) and IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)*** adaptive outdoor leaders, adaptive guides and adaptive sports coaches are chosen first, and foremost, for their adaptive teaching/guiding/coaching/abilities. They are able to communicate effectively with any student, at any time or place, to provide positive learning experiences.



## Technical Ability

**Therapeutic Adventures (TA)** and **IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)** adaptive outdoor leaders/adaptive guides and adaptive sports coaches must be experts at what they teach. Their movements should appear effortless, even on challenging terrain, and their usage of equipment should be second nature.

All of our adaptive outdoor leaders/adaptive guides and adaptive sports coaches are able to perform at a high level in any type of adaptive instruction they teach, however we don't look for people who are only satisfied with performance at the very highest levels. We've learned that the qualities frequently demonstrated by persons driven to perform at the top of a sport (obsession, impatience and a self-centered attitude) are completely at odds with the ones that allow effective teaching to take place. All of our adaptive outdoor leaders/adaptive guides and adaptive sports coaches can still remember what it was like to be a novice.



## Enthusiasm

The mountains are an open door to some of life's most powerful experiences. We can't imagine how anyone could not be enthusiastic about the opportunity to share such experiences with others. However, coupled with this enthusiasm, **Therapeutic Adventures (TA)** and **IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)** adaptive outdoor leaders/adaptive guides and adaptive sports coaches must possess a mature attitude and lots of patience. Qualified adaptive outdoor leaders/adaptive guides and adaptive sports coaches must remain especially supportive and enthusiastic when the going gets tough.

**Therapeutic Adventures (TA)** and **IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)** adaptive outdoor leaders/adaptive guides and adaptive sports coaches are all enthusiastic teachers and they are the best when their students are at their worst. All our staff loves the outdoors and is committed to the **Therapeutic Adventures - Creed**.



## Experience

There is no substitute for experience! It provides the opportunity for adaptive outdoor leaders to learn from situations when things go right as well as when things go wrong. All experienced adaptive outdoor leaders have had their share of 'epics' and our leaders are no exception. These unforeseen and sometimes scary situations force them to evaluate risks and make important decisions. The judgment skills formed, as a result, provide an experience base that students can rely upon.

In addition to experience with the activity they are teaching, qualified adaptive outdoor leaders must also possess knowledge of the adaptive outdoor resources in the areas where they teach. This allows them to pick and choose from a variety of adaptive outdoor instruction and guiding settings. When a favorite instruction area, or guiding area, is unavailable an experienced adaptive outdoor leader will usually have other options in mind.

What sets ***Therapeutic Adventures (TA)*** and ***IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)*** apart from other organizations is: (1) our staff of uniquely qualified dedicated professionals, (2) comprehensive services, and (3) unique opportunities for self discovery in a variety of outdoor environments - persons with special health needs benefit by learning new skills which enable them to lead a more active and healthier lifestyle.



## Staff

***Therapeutic Adventures (TA)*** and ***IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)*** is comprised of highly qualified individuals who bring with them collectively over 100 years of experience in adaptive outdoor programming, special education, psychology, counseling, physical and occupational therapy, adapted physical education and therapeutic recreation, rehabilitation engineering, environmental education, and other medical and service fields.



The success and overriding emphasis of all programs provided by ***Therapeutic Adventures (TA)*** and ***IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)*** is demonstrated through our staff's commitment and dedication to providing safe, quality instruction with proper supervision.



### **Training in Instructional Methods**

There is certainly no one 'right' way to teach any activity, but if each adaptive outdoor leader in a program uses a different method, the resulting inconsistencies will create confusion for students. Therefore, it is important that an adaptive outdoor leader learn, and adhere to, a program's teaching methods. These methods then provide the framework, within which, a truly skilled adaptive outdoor leader can address the needs of the individual student.

***Therapeutic Adventures (TA)*** and ***IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)*** training programs are among the most comprehensive in the business. They include a variety of in-depth, pre-season instructor clinics that review our methods and practices in detail, as well as on-the-job training. We won't put an adaptive outdoor leader into the field until we are confident they will maintain our reputation of providing only the highest quality instruction.



### **First Aid Training**

In an environment where there is potential risk of injury and immediate medical assistance is crucial, it is imperative that an adaptive outdoor leader/adaptive guide be able to provide effective first aid. Because of the increased potential for emergency situations, all qualified adaptive outdoor leaders endeavor to prevent the need for first aid, but should the need arise they must be prepared.

All of our adaptive outdoor leaders/adaptive guides and adaptive coaches possess first aid training at the First Responder (Advanced First Aid) level or above. Many of our instructors also volunteer with the National Ski Patrol. All are capable of rendering first-aid, should the need arise.



## Professionalism

Only a handful of individuals are able to, or for that matter, choose make their living as professional adaptive outdoor leaders/adaptive guides and adaptive sports coaches. While these individuals are committed to the profession and to improving their own teaching/guiding abilities, more importantly they are committed to providing greater access to adaptive outdoor activities and adaptive sports for persons with differing abilities. They are active in the field, working full-time or at least on a seasonal basis. Those who work only occasionally or who wander from program to program, working as itinerants are not professionals according to our definition.

Our instructors are all proud to be active, adaptive outdoor leaders and this pride is apparent in their attitudes and their work.

**Q: Why is Assessment so important?**

**A: All good teaching, and the ongoing decision making which accompanies it, begins and ends with sound assessment procedures.**

As a function of all programs, our *Therapeutic Adventures (TA)* and *IndependencePlus~Adaptive Sports (I~AS)* staff is trained to continuously evaluate the performance of each participant. The emphasis of instruction is dictated by the information gathered through observation, questioning, verbal and written inquiry, and a variety of physical assessment procedures as the participant interacts within a variety of ever-changing environmental conditions.