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A Deweyian Framework for Youth Development in Experiential Education: Perspectives From Sail Training and Sailing Instruction

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In this piece, we put forth a Deweyian framework for youth development activities in outdoor and adventure education programs, and we show how such a framework may be exemplified by activities in sail training and sailing instruction. The paper begins with a discussion of the theoretical features of Deweyian educational experiences and makes connections between these ideas and positive youth development. We then, by reference to the educational activities aboard vessels large and small, provide concrete illustrations of these theoretical features. The goal of the paper is to propose a framework that educators in outdoor and adventure programs—and in youth development programs generally—can employ to bring Dewey's ideas to bear on program design and assessment.

Keywords: Dewey, Experience, Youth Development, Sailing

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John Dewey is commonly cited as a foundational figure in the field of experiential education. Yet the focus of his work was less on experiential education and more on educational experience. In pursuit of Deweyian learning, the question is not whether learning is or is not experiential; the question is whether the learning experience is of the right sort. Dewey wanted students to have experiences that were both fully involving in the present and promising in terms of the future; that is, he was concerned not only with learning in an immediate sense but also with the long-term results of that learning. Such ideas apply whether the educational site is a classroom or an outdoor, adventure-based setting.

In this piece, we examine Dewey's ideas on experience, connecting them to emerging ideas in youth development and to our own experiences as educators in sail-training and sailing-instruction programs. We begin with a description of the features of educational experiences from Dewey's perspective. Next, we translate this description into a framework that aims to show how these features look in practice. We then locate places of intersection between Dewey's ideas and major themes in positive youth development. Finally, by reference to the goals and activities of education aboard vessels large and small, we concretize our framework. Our goal is to provide a simple yet useful theoretical structure that outdoor and adventure educators—and youth development professionals generally—can employ in program design and assessment. It is our belief that by providing examples from our own experiences, we will enhance the clarity and the usefulness of this theoretical exploration. However, we also believe that the framework we put forth here can apply across contexts and is not specific to education under sail. In addition, we hope to foster further conversation about Dewey's work which, for all the attention it has received, has not had the influence it deserves either out of schools or in them.

Theoretical Framework: The Deweyian Educational Environment

Dewey's ideas about learning experiences began with his ideas about learning outside of school. Before the development of industrial society, Dewey maintained, much learning occurred by virtue of students' participation in the social and economic systems of home and community. Such participation was given meaning not only by its social nature but also by the direct applications of activity to useful, necessary, and purposeful pursuits (Dewey, 1899/1980, 1916/1966). Dewey claimed that schools should

not be different than society, and they should provide a more deliberately focused version of the learning experiences already present in the world. He thus proposed that the proper way to think about schooling was to place students into an environment of purposeful social activity, with the environment, as well as their activities in it, doing the educating (Dewey, 1916/1966, 1938/1997).

Dewey saw many benefits in using out-of-school learning as a model for in-school learning. Out-of-school learning is purposeful and inhabited by meaning, not only in its purposefulness but also in its social nature. Out-of-school activities are engaging because they have real-world applications and the learning that takes place expands what people can perceive and do in the world—just the result Deweyian learning can produce in schools (Pugh & Girod, 2007). Dewey was not merely calling for “hands-on” learning, but instead wanted the abstract knowledge and skills in schooling to be as rooted in life and in activity as the vibrant, socially situated knowledge-in-use of informal learning. Such engaging experiences were important for Dewey's conception of development because he theorized that only by fully experiencing the present can students be prepared to fully experience the future:

We always live at the time we live and not at some other time, and only by extracting at each present time the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same thing in the future. This is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything. (Dewey, 1916/1966, p. 30)

Dewey intended that the mechanism of learning, even in school, should still be that of the old social transmission model: Students do not learn from lessons, they learn from the entire situation in which they do their schoolwork. This represented an expansion of teaching, making the teacher responsible not only for the delivery of lessons but also for the entire environment of the classroom. In Dewey's (1916/1966) words:

The only way in which adults consciously control the kind of education in which the immature get is by controlling the environment in which they act, and hence think and feel. We never educate directly, but indirectly by means of the environment. (p. 23)

The insistence on the educative power of the entire environment both expands and highlights the role of the educator. Dewey's (1916/1966) emphasis on control is an important one here. For him, the question is not whether the environment is doing the educating but rather “whether we

permit chance environments to do the work, or whether we design environments for the purpose" (p. 23). In other words, educational activity is distinguished from informal learning by pedagogical intent. The point of the activity is to learn something, and the environment is explicitly designed in the service of that goal. Dewey wished to capture the meaningful nature of the informal but with the intentional planning and learning goals of the formal.

The realization that learning must be a matter of active participation in an intentionally designed social environment is the root of Deweyian education, but it is not the sum total of it. The creation of the learning environment must, Dewey (1938/1997) told us, be guided by "a new philosophy of experience" (p. 22). "Having an experience," as Dewey (1934/1980) put it, involves not merely doing something, but doing something in a particular way:

An experience has pattern and structure, because it is not just doing and undergoing in alternation, but consists of them in relationship. To put one's hand in a fire that consumes it is not necessarily to have an experience. The action and its consequence must be joined in perception. This relationship is what gives meaning; to grasp it is the objective of all intelligence. (p. 44)

As can be seen in this definition, the result of "an experience" is that a person understands the relationship between ends and means, between his or her actions and the consequences of those actions. Dewey (1938/1997) labeled the experiences characterized by such understanding as "educative" and those not characterized by such understanding as "mis-educative."

Such understanding is what Dewey (1938/1997) meant by "intelligence" when he claimed that "the formation of purposes and the organization of means to execute them are the work of intelligence" (p. 67). He went on to add:

Intelligent activity is distinguished from aimless activity by the fact that it involves selection of means—analysis—out of the variety of conditions that are present, and their arrangement—synthesis—to reach an intended aim or purpose. (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 84)

Intelligence thus developed is not merely a matter of knowledge but of awareness and judgment, of perceptive action characterized by both knowledge and openness. Intelligently directed activity is by definition activity with a purpose, activity in which students must work to choose and implement the means to reach purposeful ends. Such activity must thus be engaging to students so that they can put forth the effort required. At the

same time, it must not be fully specified because the students must bear the responsibility for bringing together the means to reach given ends (Dewey, 1916/1966, 1938/1997). All this is consistent with Dewey's desire to bring the features of informal learning into deliberately pedagogical settings.

One additional feature of Deweyian educative experiences, which runs contrary to claims that Dewey favored laissez-faire approaches to learning, is discipline. As Dewey uses it, the notion of discipline is one that is intrinsic to activity (Dewey, 1916/1966; Schleffler, 1974). Discipline works in two ways: as intellectual discipline and as social discipline. Intellectual discipline is the discipline demanded in carrying out a task carefully or, one might say, intelligently. Social discipline is the discipline of the team—that is, what each member must do to make a joint endeavor successful. Dewey (1938/1997) calls this "social control of individuals without the violation of freedom" (p. 54), by which he means that activity is disciplined not by resorting to external authority but by addressing the needs of the group. It is vital to see that Dewey's calls for interest and purpose in educational work are not calls for a lack of discipline, but rather they are for discipline rooted in the social and purposeful activity being carried out instead of in external authority structures (Dewey, 1899/1980, 1916/1966).

The final feature of the educative experience is that it must result in an open disposition to future learning opportunities (Dewey, 1938/1997). Openness is vital because the educative experience must, ultimately, lead to growth and to greater potential for other educative experiences as well as for intelligent action. Mis-educative experiences actually limit these potentials. For Dewey, growth—an increase in connection with the world—was the very goal of life and, thus, of education (Dewey, 1916/1966, 1934/1980, 1938/1997; Granger, 2000). In Dewey's (1938/1997) words:

Since growth is characteristic of life, education is all one with growing; it has no end beyond itself. The criterion of the value of school education is the extent in which it creates a desire for continued growth and supplies means for making the desire effective in fact. (p. 53)

Openness fits in well with the already stated features of intelligent activity. In order to make intelligent choices, to reach purposes, and to focus on what one is doing, one must be aware of ends and means and be open to change. Further learning, too, can only occur if openness is the end result. Experiences that develop flexibility and responsibility, where students are able and willing to act independent of guidance, are necessary to obtain open-ended results. Thus, the educative experience cannot be fully pre-specified, and the students must have an active part in it.

Bringing this all together, Dewey's concept of educative experience, when combined with his idea that schooling and learning should be a refined and connected version of life outside of school, can be organized into a framework that defines the nature of environment, activity, and experience. To foster educative experiences, activities must have the following features:

1. Activities must have the liveliness and purpose associated with informal learning.
2. The learning environment must be knowingly and intentionally shaped.
3. The activity must be undertaken with pedagogical purposes.
4. The activity must be "educative," meaning it must have (a) purpose, in the dual sense of engagement and meaning; (b) intelligent direction with student selection of means to meet ends; (c) discipline, intellectual and social, that is derived from the activity itself; and (d) an open-ended nature, leaving the student willing and able to go on.

Developmental Connections: Dewey's Educative Experience and Positive Youth Development

The activity framework described previously, which is centered on educative experiences, is inherently developmental in nature because Dewey focused not only on present experiences but also on future experiences. For this reason, and a few others, we believe that this framework holds great promise for application in youth development settings. In fact, this framework—and Dewey's thought taken more broadly—connects in a variety of interesting ways to youth development work and, in particular, to *positive youth development* (PYD). PYD is the term for a set of ideas which follow a general movement away from older public health or deficit models of youth development, which focus on youth problems and risk factors, and toward newer, positive models focusing on youth strength and potential.

Positive youth development can be characterized by reference to several key themes. PYD concentrates on all youth rather than only targeting youth who are at risk or similarly struggling, and it also calls for widespread participation of community members instead of focused participation for some youth and some community actors (Damon, 2004; Ferber, Gaines, & Goodman, 2005; Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem, & Ferber, 2003). Attention is given to the whole social and cultural environment as well as to individuals' interactions with it (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004). Eccles and Gootman (2002) describe

PYD as a move away from an emphasis on "problem-free" youth and toward an emphasis on "fully prepared" youth (pp. 2–3); that is, youth who are ready to move forward and become successful adults. Pittman et al. (2003) take the idea that "problem-free is not fully prepared" and add "fully prepared is not fully engaged" (p. 17). This focus on engagement places great weight on active roles for youth, even on leadership roles. It also provides a push for activity that is worth engaging in (i.e., meaningful and purposeful).

Although this brief introduction to positive youth development is far from comprehensive, it nonetheless shows some clear connections between themes in PYD and Dewey's educational ideas, starting with their shared focus on the whole environment. Dewey also stresses the need for purposeful social activity, basing his theories on a view of community that dovetails nicely with the emphasis on community and relationships in PYD. This same emphasis connects to the social nature of Dewey's version of discipline, which also highlights the importance of group-based meaning and value in activity. Additionally, Dewey's vision of meaningful activities carries with it an active role for students that mirrors the role for youth in PYD. His definition of intelligence emphasizes the application of skills across settings, and he claims that intelligence itself is a matter of, and is developed by, acting with awareness and flexibility in situations which are not fully determined. This means that youth must have responsibilities in the present that prepare them to meet whatever challenges they may encounter in the future, and they must have good reason to take on these responsibilities. To put this in terms drawn from positive youth development, Deweyian educative experiences keep students engaged and leave them prepared.

Perspectives: Sail Training and Sailing Instruction

Having specified the requirements of the Deweyian educational environment as we have interpreted it and having laid out connections between that environment and positive youth development, we will now turn to the sail-training and sailing-instruction environments with which we are familiar, using examples from these settings to illustrate how our framework might bear out in practice. We come from two different backgrounds in education and sailing: One of us has worked as an instructor in sailing-instruction programs for 14-foot Sunfish-class dinghies carrying one to three students, and the other has worked as a crewman and instructor on sail-training vessels (tall ships anywhere from 100 to 200 feet long) with crews ranging from 25 to 50 trainees and professional sailors. Although we draw from our experiences in sail training and sailing instruction in particular, it bears repeating that this framework is not meant to be specific to sail training and sailing instruction. As will be

further explained later, there are many types of outdoor, adventure, or experiential education activities that would fit our framework and could contribute to youth development in Deweyian fashion.

The small-boat sailing instruction used as the basis for analysis in this piece was a component of a YMCA coeducational summer residential camp that served campers between the ages of 8 and 16. The instruction took place on an inland lake in a shallow "sailing area," approximately 3.5 to 4 feet deep, and it proceeded from an onshore overview of sailing concepts and activities to a closely supervised initial sailing practice and then to a more advanced sailing practice, although still with staff monitoring. The large-vessel sail-training environment used as an example in this piece was the site of a three-month participant-observer study carried out by the first author, who was a member of the ship's crew. The vessel was a 130-foot-long 100-ton schooner carrying crews made up of a mix of nine professional sailors and approximately two dozen sail trainees, with the coeducational trainee groups ranging in age from fifth grade through high school and usually accompanied by several adult chaperones. The ship's summer sailing area was the U.S. Atlantic coast from New York City to Maine out to 60 miles offshore, and trips varied from 1 to 15 days in duration. Trips included instruction on setting sail, performing basic maneuvers, striking and furling sail, anchoring, standing watches, and variations of these themes. The students gradually learned a greater range of skills and assumed more responsible roles in the ship's operations. The goal, by the end of a trip, was to have the students acting on their own to fulfill as many crew roles as possible given their level of skill and the time available for instruction.

Application: Deweyian Pedagogy in Context

Turning to the task of describing the ways in which sail-training and sailing-instruction programs, as we have encountered them, exemplify the features of the Deweyian educational environment, we begin by repeating these features:

1. Activities must have the liveliness and purpose associated with informal learning.
2. The learning environment must be knowingly and intentionally shaped.
3. The activity must be undertaken with pedagogical purposes.
4. The activity must be "educative."

For the sake of convenience, we address each of these features separately, although we maintain that they form a coherent whole. Furthermore, as we work our way through these examples, we will discuss, in

general terms, the application of these features across activities and contexts so as to encourage readers to bring this framework to bear on their own settings, despite however different they may be from sail training and sailing instruction.

Activities Must Have the Liveliness and Purpose Associated With Informal Learning

We commence our illustration of Dewey's ideas through sail training and sailing instruction by addressing our first feature, the liveliness and purpose associated with informal learning. The grounding of knowledge in activity—uniting theory and practice—is found in both sail training and sailing instruction. There is a great deal of information presented to students in such programs—from nomenclature to sailing theory to the various skills and commands one must master—but all this is taught to be used. We will address the notion of purpose in greater detail as part of Dewey's concept of the educative, so for now it is sufficient to note that the earnest and immediate nature of the lessons in sail training and sailing instruction provide clear and tangible purpose by giving real meaning and consequences to lessons. Such features are not, of course, limited to sailing activities. Programs based on or including climbing, for example, require students to familiarize themselves with equipment, knots, and procedures. This may amount to a fair bit of information, yet every piece of it is taught in the context of the immediate and the necessary. The same could be said about a wide variety of activities with applied informational and theoretical components.

The Learning Environment Must Be Knowingly and Intentionally Shaped

Although sail training and sailing instruction are both hands-on programs, neither program gives students a vessel (small or large) and tells them to "have at it." Thus, neither of these is an instance of an environment working "by chance." Instead, the programs foster a knowingly and intentionally designed learning environment, and they exemplify the use of activity within shaped, but not entirely controlled, environments for educational purposes. The demands of sailing vessels, both small and large, are mediated by the instructors, who are familiar with the activity and understand the ways in which novice sailors can participate without being overwhelmed or endangered. Another important corollary to the intentional design of environment is the role of the skilled and knowledgeable teacher, and so it must be mentioned that instructors in these programs are themselves sailors and have the advantage of teaching what they themselves can do. In a reversal of the famous quip "Those who can, do; those who can't, teach," in programs such as these, those who teach must also be able to do.

This feature, too, can be found in a wide variety of outdoor, adventure, or experiential activities. No matter how challenging the course of

study—from a backcountry hiking trip to a run down a river to a ropes course—if instructors are present, there is the potential for an intentionally designed learning environment. Knowledgeable instructors who interpret the happenings in the activity and the features of the environment shape the experiences of the students. Lacking the perspective of the instructors, and left to their own devices, students might or might not perceive the relevant features of the environment, and they may indeed learn the “wrong” lessons. Instructors who act as mediators guide their students not by doing things for them but by doing things with them. This sets the stage for experiences of the “right” sort—those that will foster the lessons that are the aim of the activity.

The Activity Must Be Undertaken With Pedagogical Purposes

The third feature of the Deweyian environment, tightly tied to the second, is its pedagogical nature. This quality is manifest in sailing activities in a few ways. Both sailing instruction and sail training can be said to take place in environments that are pedagogical because the purpose of both types of programs is not merely to sail but to *teach* sailing. Such programs are thus not the same as those where students experiment with sailing on their own or as sailors on a working vessel learning to sail in the context of doing their jobs. The student is the focus, not just the doing of the activity itself. And when the educated student is the intended product of activity, the program is pedagogical in nature. Again, such a feature is clearly applicable to a wide variety of activities because any activity undertaken for purposes beyond itself, with lessons in mind, can be seen as pedagogical.

The Activity Must Be “Educative”

Lastly, we turn to Dewey’s idea of the educative experience, which requires purpose, intelligence, discipline, and openness. We begin with purpose, which we have already touched upon in relation to informal education but which we can expand upon here. Sail training and sailing instruction are purposeful in that they are both engaging and “real.” On the subject of engagement, both the camp and tall-ship settings are voluntary programs, and thus there is an element of choice and desire to participate that is not found in compulsory educational settings. Engagement is also supported by the direct and visible connection between the lessons and the activities at hand: Nothing the students were learning took place in a vacuum, but rather it all would be used in earnest, and soon. As for the larger purposes of such activities, they are—in sail training and sailing instruction—visible, relatively immediate, and real, with this last term delineating the fact that boats are actually sailed, and the test of learning is the working of a vessel out on the water. It must be added that the “real” nature of this activity adds to the already mentioned ideas of interest or

engagement because students who are themselves responsible for carrying out the activity of sailing are bound to be interested in it to some extent, if only for the sake of self-preservation.

The purposefulness of sail-training and sailing-instruction activities also leads to greater potential for intelligent activity in the Deweyian sense, and so we turn to the notion of intelligent direction. To the extent that activities in sail training and sailing instruction involve the selection of purposes, the employment of means to match chosen ends, and the modification of both to fit circumstances, such activities show promise in fostering intelligent action. Within broad guidelines, students and trainees must carry out tasks that are not laid out beforehand, and as they gain greater skill and confidence, they are allowed more freedom and responsibility. Sailing-instruction students sail their boats in a variety of conditions according to their own choices, and each wrestles with the activity of sailing in an unpredictable real-world setting. Although sail trainees perform their duties in a more restrictive and controlled environment, they are still given tasks that must be carried out in a number of ways and in a host of ever-changing conditions. In both settings, students receive practice in choosing appropriate means to meet desired ends, and then they work to match those means and ends. Each experience builds a richer knowledge of the activity at hand and thus more potential for intelligent activity in a Deweyian sense.

Turning next to the idea of discipline, we can see that in sail training and sailing instruction much of the “discipline” involved in learning the activity is indeed intrinsic to it. This connection between discipline and activity stems from the necessity of carrying out the activity in earnest and as part of a crew. Dinghy sailors, for example, cannot go sailing until the boat is properly rigged. Therefore, learning to rig a boat is essential to a sailor’s success. Similarly, tall-ship trainees will be unable to steer the ship without knowledge of the commands and the responses associated with helm duty, and they must also know what the wheel does and how to read the ship’s compass. When trainees and campers are instructed on the workings of their boats, their instructors are not demanding discipline based on status or threats of negative evaluation, but rather on the premise that without the information being presented, the students will not be able to accomplish the tasks essential to sailing. Additionally, pressure from the group acts to motivate the sailors in the same way participants on a team feel compelled to perform well—success or failure on the part of one affects all. Each of these sorts of discipline fits Dewey’s ideas because it is intrinsic to the activity and to the participation of a social group in it.

The final feature of educative environments is that experiences in them lead to openness to future educative experiences. This openness manifests itself in the flexible disposition that may be formed by the very

nature of the activity. Sailing their dinghies and working as tall-ship crewmen, campers and trainees are not testing their skills against set assignments or rubrics. They are testing them against the ever-changing and not entirely controlled activity of sailing. In trying out their skills and knowledge in a variety of ways, they develop flexible and applicable skills. Another piece of openness comes in the presence, in both of these sailing settings, of an element of risk and trust. Sailing-instruction students are set out in boats without instructors aboard, and some even sail alone. Sail-training students steer the ship, handle lines, help to navigate and work the ship's radios, and even issue commands and assist in supervising sail evolutions. Each program contains within it a growing set of decisions for students to make as well as real responsibilities. As noted in the section on intelligent activity, this flexible applicability leads to awareness—the ability to see a skill or activity as occurring in a number of ways—and to a continuation of learning well after the activity itself is completed.

Although we certainly believe that both sail training and sailing instruction have the potential to exemplify the educative experience, we also believe that any program or activity that demonstrates similar features may also fit with this aspect of the Deweyian framework. Purpose, which provides a frame in which learning makes sense by taking on relevance and meaning, is present in any activity where students will put their new skills and knowledge to use in the pursuit of real goals. The workings of a camp stove, for example, become far more interesting and relevant when hunger is a motivator. Intelligence is developed whenever students must act in realms not fully specified and must apply knowledge in a variety of ways to fit the demands of ever-changing situations. Every trip, every climb, every encounter with the world outside of classrooms provides opportunities for such flexible application and learning. Discipline, too, can be intrinsic to an activity when the activity demands it—for example, when practice in the proper adjustment of packs, harnesses, and other equipment is quickly, and sometimes painfully, shown to be important in ways that students can see for themselves. Social discipline can also manifest itself in many activities, providing that the success of each individual is tied to the meaningful success of the group. Finally, openness to future experiences can occur whenever students are given the opportunity, through careful and deliberate instruction, to test themselves and their new skills and knowledge against the world and to see results that lead them to look forward to more and better results in the future. All these generalized examples follow an important theme: Many activities have the potential to foster experiences and outcomes of the sort Dewey intended, provided they are carried out with attention to the details that can make such experiences educative.

Discussion: Limitations and Possibilities

This piece puts forth a Deweyian framework for activities in outdoor and adventure education programs, connects this framework explicitly to positive youth development, and shows how such a framework is applicable to, and may be exemplified by, activities in sail-training and sailing-instruction programs. This is not to say that Deweyian educative experiences are limited to these types of programs or that all sail-training or sailing-instruction programs would fit with Dewey's ideas. Any program, in or out of a classroom, has the potential to live up to Dewey's ideals. And any program, ashore or afloat, may, in design or implementation or both, take a form that lacks some or all the features we have identified as essential to Dewey's vision of educational experiences and to his version of youth development. Some programs might lean too far toward instruction and not far enough toward action, giving students theory disconnected from practice and creating a lack of vibrancy and purpose. Unguided programs might take forms closer to individual discovery than pedagogical endeavor. Other programs with less student responsibility and freedom of activity might eliminate opportunities for intelligent direction, and discipline may be separated from activity when instructors take too authoritarian of an approach. Finally, any activity may, without careful structuring, lead students into experiences that are negative or not fulfilling, thereby closing them off to future activity.

Still, the focus here, in the positive spirit, is not on identifying what might be lacking in various programs, but rather on identifying what sorts of features might be necessary to foster educative experiences along the lines of those proposed by Dewey. For Dewey, all education is experiential, but not all experiences are created equal. Along the same lines, it might be said that development is always occurring, but not always in ways we would choose. Failure to consider key features of the environment might mean the creation of a program that is no more purposeful, pedagogical, disciplined, meaningful, or open ended—in other words, no more developmentally beneficial and no more Deweyian—than any program in a “traditional” educational setting.

We believe that the first challenge for outdoor and adventure educators who wish to follow Dewey's path is to understand that Dewey's concept of experience was both specific and demanding, and that it is not necessarily fulfilled just through exciting and unusual activities in exotic settings. And there are many other challenges that build upon this understanding. Dewey's system requires a knowledgeable teacher or instructor. It requires the careful shaping of an environment that is both pedagogical and purposeful, one that allows interested students to be engaged in their work, to make choices, and to explore ends. It requires

authority structures that operate within the meaningful discipline of the activity. It requires attention to future activities and experiences. Indeed, to operate a program, or even an activity, that fits all Dewey's criteria and leads to the developmental outcomes he specifies is no simple task.

We view these challenges as well worth taking on, however, particularly in respect to the youth development opportunities that Dewey's framework offers. We believe that there is much more to Dewey's pedagogical ideas than many educators have seen, ourselves included. Over the course of his career, Dewey put forth a broad and coherent vision based in social relations and directed toward the full realization of individual and communal life. Although we could hardly present this full vision here, we have attempted to discern and to describe some of the essential features of a Deweyian educational environment. We hope this piece will serve not only as a useful guide to some of Dewey's ideas but also as a catalyst for discussion around the full range of ideas he expressed and their potential effects on a variety of educational settings and youth development activities.

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