

# GUYdelines

A few thoughts for outdoor lovers and leaders from

*WILD GUYde Adventures*, LLC

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**Warm-up and Engage:** Have you been in a relationship where there was distrust? What are some ways to describe that relationship? Have you been in a situation where trust was broken? What did that look like? Are you presently in a relationship where you would say trust is present? How was this built, and how is it maintained?

## No Trust – No Relationship

He is rigged up for his first rappel, leaning backwards out over the valley, and staring down at the ground and his buddies ninety feet below. It feels disorienting and unnatural, up so high, losing one's balance and sitting back into the harness, and now he is trying to decide if he really wants to go through with this.

She is holding the map and compass and trying to process my request that she navigate us through this dark and confining underground labyrinth to the next objective. She was casual, almost flippant, during the group navigation lesson, thinking maybe it wouldn't fall to her. But now she is on the spot. She has not used these tools before and tells me that she is "*no good at math*" (meaning, all things intimidatingly technical).

The two of them look nervously at each other, then back at the river, then down at the ground. We have just gone over the stroke sequence it will take to make it through this rapid, and now they are not talking, but each one is wondering if they as paddle-partners can actually do it. The only sound is the roar of the water behind us.

Here are three common outdoor adventure scenarios. But let me reframe each one now as essentially a crisis of trust:

***Our first-time rappeller:*** Does he trust this gear? 10 mm looks like a pretty skinny cord to hang one's life upon. Does he trust the tree we are anchored to, and does he trust me, that everything will work out as I have described?

***Our cave navigator:*** Does she trust her new knowledge and skills, and more than that, her intelligence to figure out perplexing problems in a scary and foreign environment? Does she trust her team enough to ask for help if she needs it, without feeling embarrassment?

***Our uncertain paddle team:*** Do they trust each other to perform when the pressure is on? Do they trust my

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Lester R. Zook, *WILD GUYde Adventures*

1047 Stuart St., Harrisonburg, VA 22802

(540) 433-1637 [lester@wildguyde.com](mailto:lester@wildguyde.com)

judgement of their skills when I told them that I think they are ready if they simply execute properly?

## No Trust – No Relationship

In one sense, every challenge we face, in the outdoors, or life in general, is a crisis of trust on some level. Any risk we take into something difficult or unknown challenges us to confront the fear and choose to believe in something. Trust and faith are always the counter to fear. This is true in outdoor adventure experiences, but here, I would like to generalize that this is also more broadly true in any situation we face in life. Just about anything we encounter can be framed as a crisis of trust. For this reason, I see trust as the foundation of just about anything meaningful. In this article, I want to focus primarily on relational trust, since this is a newsletter about leadership, and leadership is about teams and relationships.

I spent a good amount of time for three years attempting to support Bart, a 49-year-old guy from Maryland with alcoholism; my wife and I met him while she worked for the Salvation Army. Bart was intelligent, street-smart, and articulate, but alcohol coupled with (I think) an undiagnosed Attention Deficit Disorder had stolen away his small business, his wife and three sons, and his health. So, we worked on vocational retooling, and housing, and transportation, and I helped him move into and out of five different places during this time. When my truck needed a strut repaired, Bart looked underneath and declared, *“That’s not true – that mechanic is pulling one on you.”* When a landlord accused Bart of destroying property, he in turn accused her of deceptiveness with the security deposit. I gradually came to realize that Bart’s essential world view came down to this: *“Everyone you meet is out to screw you, and the only way that is not going to happen is if you SCREW THEM FIRST.”* So, after a while, it became clear that we were not going to be able to find him a place to live, or a job, or much of anything else of value or need, because he left a trail of wrecked relationships everywhere he went. And as I attempted to walk with him, I also made modest attempts to educate; by the end, I kind of boiled it down for him, especially when he started lying to me: *“Bart, no trust -- no relationship.”*

Now think about that up against any of the relationships in your life, whether in your family or within your work team. If there is not a foundation of trust, there really isn’t any basis upon which to build anything else, be that a marriage, a working relationship, or a corporate effort. In Stephen M. R. Covey’s remarkable book, The Speed of Trust, he refers to trust as *“the one thing that changes everything.”* Patrick Lencioni identifies the first and most basic of his five Dysfunctions of a Team as *Absence of Trust*.

## Building Trust

Trust is fundamentally when we believe that the motives and intentions of the other person toward us are good, caring, and genuine. Look at the contrast between when trust is present and when trust is absent.

### I Trust You

- You care about me
- You are not out to sabotage or exploit me.
- You say what you are really thinking.
- You reveal the truth about yourself.
- I can feel safe around you.
- You intend good for me – not harm.
- We can both win.
- I can be myself with you, without fear.

### I Don’t Trust You

- You don’t care for me.
- You will take advantage of me when you can for your own pleasure, success, or control.
- You have ulterior motives.
- What you say is not what you really think or mean.
- I must remain suspicious and on my guard about your motives and intentions.
- Your winning means that I must lose, so I must win, to make you lose.
- I must guard how much of myself I show around you, so I do not get hurt.

Motives are the barometer of trust in a relationship – the indicator of whether there is trust or not. When we start questioning the motives of another person or thinking that we know why they are doing something, we have begun to compromise the trust in the relationship. Accusing someone of ill motives towards us invades and violates the trust foundation and can permanently damage the relationship. When someone trusts us, and we violate that trust by hurting them (deceiving them, ridiculing them, abandoning them, not believing them), we have hurt them in a very vulnerable place, and they will find it difficult to trust us again. Let's say I am hiking on a trail, and I come upon a fellow propped up against a tree. His mountain bike is in a crumpled heap, and he is clutching his arm to his chest. If I reach for that arm to help him up, he is going to quickly and vehemently protest: “*NO, NO, NO!*” Medically, this is called “*guarding behavior.*” He does not want that arm to be jarred or hurt again. And when someone has had their trust broken, they will practice emotional guarding behavior, protecting that injury from further hurt, often by being unwilling to trust again.

On the other hand, when motives are pure and trust is intact, that trust can become the foundation first to work toward understanding, and eventually toward agreement and creating win-win. We can move quickly toward progress and solutions without putting undue energy into verifying that each other can be trusted. Covey says that multi-million-dollar deals have been settled with a handshake when there is trust present. But when there is mistrust and suspicion, everything bogs down and we must get the attorneys involved, and it takes a lot of time and energy protecting ourselves from being taken. Trust is not only easier; it is less expensive and faster!

I tried to teach my sons that one measure that a boy is becoming a man is when he is able to ask for what he needs without shame. This is also an elementary evidence of trust beginning to be developed on your team. People that can ask for help without shame eventually become people who are able to share help without condescension. When you see that kind of vulnerability and care being extended back and forth across the relationship, you are witnessing trust.

How do we build trust? Essentially, by we ourselves being worth someone's trust – *trustworthy*.

- Being genuine and honest about who we are, what we think, and what we really want.
- Being accepting of the faults and shortcomings of others, since we are open to sharing about our own.
- Following through on commitments made and honoring promise and agreements.
- Being gentle rather than brutal with people when they self-reveal (make themselves vulnerable).
- Practicing “*abundance mentality*” (everyone can win) instead of “*scarcity mentality*” (for me to win, you must lose; there isn't enough pie in the pan for both of us).
- Protecting their dignity – never saying things or joking their expense, or in a way that diminishes them.

In addition, in the workplace there are two faces of trust, and both are important. When we talk about demonstrating care, compassion, understanding, and personal concern, we are talking about demonstrating to others your **benevolence**. But on the job, people also will need to know if you are qualified and skilled enough to do the job. When I was a college athlete, I experienced three head coaching changes in four years. Later, when I became an athletic administrator, I understood when taking athletic teams through coaching change how traumatic this can be for young athletes with a dream. The first thing they need to know of a new coach is, “*Can you take me to where I want to go? Do you know what you are doing?*” Here, we are talking, not about your benevolence but about your **competence**. And both are important elements of trust in the professional setting. Like two wings of an airplane, you don't ask which one is more important for flying. The Nazi doctors who undertook barbaric experiments on Allied prisoners of war were highly competent but not at all benevolent. The old country doc who still does house calls but is twenty years behind the times in practice has a benevolent heart of gold, but probably lacks some competence. Both are essential ingredients to an intact trust foundation.

Let us return briefly to the issue of broken trust. When someone has had their trust fractured, it will be very difficult for them to trust again – its' not easy to put that toothpaste back in the tube. Two things to consider here: First, protestations about how *"I'll do better next time"* will fall on deaf (and disappointed) ears. The only thing that will penetrate here is genuine confession (*"I understand how badly that hurt you, and it was wrong of me"*) and then repentance – change of behavior. When raising our children, we never let them get off by saying simply, *"I'm sorry."* Remorse is being sorry you got caught. No, it had to be, *"I'm sorry, AND I won't do it again."* Repentance always involves altered performance for the future. And second, and building upon the first, deeds matter more than words. In the college student world of pain and romance, lots of guys think they are eloquent and persuasive, but I have always encouraged any young women that I could to *"look at what he DOES, not what he SAYS."* To borrow the phrasing of a Christian men's movement of several years ago, we don't need more Promise-Makers, we need Promise-Keepers.

In leading our teams, let's give time and creative attention early in the relationship building process to creating trust. Then we should actively and continually discern the level of trust (or mistrust) operating at any given time on the team. Address toxic issues with care but directness, and when diagnosing performance issues, always keep looking through the trust lens as a possible explanation for other bewildering dysfunctions. When problem-solving or solution generating as a group, entertain and encourage all kinds of debate at the "mechanical" level of the issue, but don't tolerate for a minute any comments, statements, or insinuations that penetrate down into the motive layer of the relationship. *"Tend to the trust level in your team (group, department, marriage) and everything else will have a chance to work."*

Are you coming to Virginia for a family vacation, church group trip, troop event, or escape weekend? Why not experience Virginia adventure with **WILD GUYde Adventures!** WCA offers guided beginner level outdoor adventures and competent instruction in activity fundamentals. We can take you **hiking, rock climbing and rappelling, caving, or canoeing.** We use various activity areas in the George Washington and Monongahela National Forests, along Virginia's Blue Ridge, and in the Potomac Highlands of West Virginia. Check out the 2020 trip options below, or call to talk about your own creative adventure idea!

(540-433-1637 or [lester@wildguyde.com](mailto:lester@wildguyde.com))

You may also visit [www.wildguyde.com](http://www.wildguyde.com)

### **CHOOSE YOUR ADVENTURE: 2020 Daytrips with **WILD GUYde Adventures,** Harrisonburg, VA**

**Top-Roping at Hidden Rocks, Virginia:** This is the rock climbing trip for the adventurous beginner – you don't have much experience, but you want a great outdoor day with your family or special friends. Thirty minutes west of Harrisonburg, we'll park just inside George Washington National Forest, gear up, and hike a scenic 20 minutes through rhododendron and hemlocks and across some mountain streams to a secluded sandstone cliff. There will be pink and white mountain laurel in June, and wild huckleberries in August. You'll be introduced to harnesses, knots, helmets, and the *belay system*; then we'll try some easy warm-up climbs to remind you that the kid inside you still likes to clamber on things. We can go on to some harder climbing that invites you to try new skills and movements. And we'll finish the day with a rappel – backing over the edge, with nothing between you and the ground below but 60 feet of air and a great view! Closer to Luray or Northern Virginia? We'll visit **Waterfall Mountain** in the Massanutten Range, or **Little Stony**

**Man** on the Blue Ridge for TALL climbing and spectacular Shenandoah Valley panoramas! Closer to Lexington or Roanoke? We'll visit **Goshen Pass** and climb above the gorgeous Maury River!

(Full day \$225 for 1-3 people; \$50 for each additional. ½ day \$150 for 1-3, and \$35 for each additional)



**Beginner Climbing at Seneca Rocks, WV:** After 90 minutes of curving mountain highway (okay, *country two-lane*), you'll gasp to see a spectacular blade of Tuscarora Sandstone, whose summit sits almost 1000 feet above its North Fork Valley floor. Seneca Rocks is a scenic place for the beginner or family to learn the rock climbing basics, top-roping and rappelling to an awesome West Virginia backdrop. Easy routes guarantee early success, but more challenging climbs also wait to test your skills. Seneca Rocks is an awesome place to climb, just beyond the sign: "*Here ends the realm of the hiker!*"

(Full day \$225 for 1-3 people; \$65 for each additional. ½ day \$200 for 1-3; \$50 each additional)

**Multi-Pitch at Seneca Rocks:** A little more experienced in climbing? Maybe you tried it at camp or the local rock gym? Ready for the next step? Join me for the multi-pitch experience, seconding the route as we lead-climb to the top of the fabled South Summit! This is the only technical summit in the U.S. east of the Mississippi. Seneca has routes at all ranges of difficulty, from starters like *Old Ladies Route* (5.2) to mid-range classics (*West Pole* 5.7) to old school hardman routes like *Crack of Dawn* and *Madmen Only* (5.10). Every one of them will give you a new appreciation for the expression "*high and vertical.*" Register your accomplishment and ruminations in the summit journal, wave to tourists way down in the valley, and then head down to *terra firma* via the three-pitch rappel. Finish the day with a splash in the North Fork River swimming hole at "Gravel Beach"; then pick up a cold drink and a West Virginia memento at Harpers General Store before sleeping the ride back to Virginia and "the Burg."

(Full-day: \$225 1<sup>st</sup> person; \$150 each addl.)

**Instructional Climbing:** This is a tutorial for those who have a little exposure to climbing, and want to gain eventual autonomy. Lots of instruction in current best practice and hands-on trying it for *you* in rigging top anchors, belaying skills and equipment alternatives, movement coaching, and rappelling and protection. There will be individualized attention and repetitive practice, as well as some exploration of the historical evolution of climbing equipment and protocol. You will finish the day with a lot more confidence in your basic skills. Bring a partner so you'll have someone to climb with later.

(\$175 1<sup>st</sup> person; \$125 each for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>)



**WILD GUYde Adventures** offers two other rock climbing options: a **Boy Scout Rock Climbing Merit Badge** tutorial for troops and leaders. We send a booklet to get troops started on their knots and First Aid requirements ahead of time, and then spend two days going through all the climbing, gear spec., and rappelling activity requirements (\$90 each). We also offer the **PCIA (Professional Climbing Instructor Association) Top Rope Climbing Instructor Certification** course and exam. This 3-day course (\$450) and 1 day exam (\$150) is for recreational climbers who want to add an instructor certification on their resume. It's also very useful for individuals guiding with club, camp, or university outing programs.

**Peaceful Paddling:** Canoe a ½ day stretch of the **South Fork River**. This Class I and II water is ideal for families with elementary school children – just long enough to be engaging without getting boring. As we wind through pastures in the Shenandoah Valley, you'll learn basic canoe strokes and maneuvering. Dangle your feet or plunk your head to cool off. And keep watching for blue herons, turtles on logs, and cows in the water!

(\$140 1-3 people; \$35 each additional)



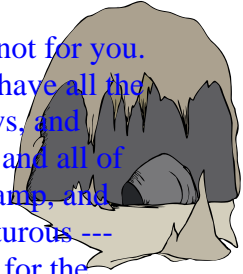
**Pick-up-the-Pace Paddling:** A fuller day of canoeing awaits further down the **South Fork**. This provides a little more excitement for teenagers, adventurous parents, & other paddle pilgrims! A casual start allows a review of canoe strokes and partner teamwork.



An amazing rope-swing breaks the quiet – you won't believe what comes out of your mouth when you let go (“*Geronimo!*?”) More paddling through runs and pools, always under the shadow of Massanutten Mountain. Lunch on the bank and then back into the boats. Finally, at Milepost 17, *Compton's Rapid* – a great shoot-through with some higher standing waves! Paddlers call it a “Fat II,” but stay wide of Pillow Rock! Below, there's a jumping rock for another cool-off before paddling the final mile to the take-out. Load the boats and start the drive home – happy, tired, and maybe a little sun-tanned! West Virginia travelers may want to visit the gorgeous “Trough” on the **South Branch of the Potomac**. High and remote mountain walls on each side of the river, and keep your eyes open for bald eagles!

**(\$175 1-3 people; \$45 each additional)**

**Half-Day Caving:** The underground sidewalk and the tourist cave light show are not for you. You want to see it the way it was before the electrician got there! Primitive caves have all the features of the subterranean world – *speleothems* (stalactites, flowstone, soda straws, and columns), *lots of real mud*, and sometimes even *bats* (but most of them are asleep, and all of them are harmless). Pull on your coveralls, clip on your helmet, adjust your headlamp, and down we go. There are squeezes if you want them, and belly crawls for the adventurous --- but there are also corridor ceilings higher than your house, and large cavern rooms for the claustrophobic. Learn cave travel safety, underground navigation, and some “total body movement.” Find out what the year-round underground temperature is, and then finally emerge back into sunlight with a new appreciation for what happens underneath Virginia when limestone and groundwater meet. The gleam of your smile might be the only thing shining through the mud on your face! Caving trips can be **Beginner Caving** (mostly horizontal movement – walking, stooping, or crawling) or **Intermediate Caving** (for folks fit enough to handle strenuous vertical moves, and more sustained physical effort). Various locations are available in both Virginia (20 minutes from Harrisonburg), and West Virginia (between Franklin and Elkins). *Caving trips are not advised for individuals who might be unfit, excessively overweight, or who live an extremely sedentary lifestyle, or for very young children.*



**(\$125 for 1-3 people; \$25 for each additional)**



**Design Your Own Adventure:** Numerous other options exist, including hiking and climbing guiding along **Virginia's Blue Ridge** or at the **NROCKS** (WV), group orienteering challenges in the National Forest, a climbing self-rescue clinic, outdoor fitness training, and flatwater paddling instruction for beginners and children. We can customize to meet the interests of your family, scout troop, or youth group. Call to talk about your needs.

**Things you oughta know:**

- **Lester R. Zook** is the **WILD GUYde**. He is a *Wilderness First Responder*, and is a certified member of the *American Mountain Guides Association (Single Pitch Instructor)*. He has been leading wilderness adventures and training camping leaders for 30 years, and loves to take people outdoors! **Ethan Zook** has been a camp counselor and adventure leader at numerous camps. He is a *Red Cross Lifeguard* and a *Virginia Paramedic*. **Aaron Zook** is a climber, caver, and paddler, a *Red Cross Lifeguard*, and has been through *Wilderness First Aid*. **Mary Tapolyai** is a *WFR*, and a *Leave No Trace Master Educator*. Together, we are a small family business that strives to provide exceptional service, and create value in the lives of our guests.
- More detail on activity possibilities is available by visiting [www.wildguyde.com](http://www.wildguyde.com). Call or e-mail to ask questions and to arrange dates, rates, and meeting points:



**(540) 433-1637 or lester@wildguyde.com**

- **WGA's** guiding season is 7 days a week March through October, and weekends in the winter. Call early to reserve; weekends in particular can fill quickly.

- **WILD GUYde** will provide all technical equipment (ropes, harnesses, helmets, etc.). A personal *things-to-bring list* (clothing, water, lunch, etc.) will be provided.
- We can also help with **lodging ideas**. We can recommend from *primitive* to *posh* – National Forest campgrounds, drive-up motels, and some delightful Bed and Breakfast inns!
- For groups of 10 or larger, we disregard the starter fee and simply bill the per-person rate.
- Payment is by cash or check, payable to WGA; unfortunately, credit cards cannot be accepted at this time. Gratuities are never expected, and always appreciated!
- Some activities have inherent risks – that’s the meaning of the word *adventure*. Participants will be asked to fill out a *Medical Form*, and sign a *Participant Agreement* acknowledging certain dangers. Some activities are physically strenuous, emotionally demanding, or require sustained cognitive attention to task and detail. We make every effort to create a great day, but **WGA** guides do reserve the prerogative to deny access/participation if, in our judgment, the client is not likely to be successful, or might pose undue hazard. Clients also may not be “under the influence” or “feeling the effects” of alcohol or recreational drugs at the time of the event.
- **WILD GUYde Adventures** incorporated in Virginia in 2004, and is fully insured. **WGA** is a permittee with the George Washington and Monongahela National Forests, and along Virginia’s Blue Ridge. **WGA** is an equal opportunity provider and employer. **WGA** practices environmental stewardship, and is a member of the *Access Fund*, the *National Speleological Society*, the *Virginia Tourism Corp.*, the *Christian Adventure Association*, the *Shenandoah Valley Travel Assoc.*, and the *Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce*.

### How was your trip with the **WILD GUYde**??!

Thanks again for guiding us – the trip was awesome! I’m a little sore and bruised today but it makes me happy because it reminds me of everything we did. The info was clear and the location appropriate. I also really enjoyed how you incorporated learning and team building elements into our trip. (Sarah, 2012)

We arrived back in Florida late Thursday night. We had a wonderful time on our adventure with you and we have all been raving to everyone about how great the trip was! Your professionalism and encouragement allowed us to continue on even when some of us were reluctant to try (me, of course)! The boys raved about the caving and the fact that it looked scary, but once you got through it, it wasn’t as difficult or scary as you thought it would be. Todd and I were both thrilled with the learning experience for the kids and feel that we have all grown as a result of facing our fears. Everyone talked about what a great guide you were for us! Overall, our adventure was a wonderful experience and the highlight of our trip to VA! (Christine, 2012)

Thank you so very much for a wonderful adventure rock climbing last week. It was wonderful to share the time with my daughter. We both really appreciated your teaching style and the knowledge you imparted. I found a whole bucket-full of sermon illustrations. The location was excellent. We appreciated the fact that we were alone on the climb (except for the beautiful hawk). The photos you took came out well, and we showed them to my wife who appreciated our joy, but was thankful that she chose a more Hobbitish way to spend the day (reading). (Pastor Chris, 2012)

Your customer service was outstanding. Despite my late contact, you found a way to get us in on an adventure. The experience was excellent. The kids had a blast but you were appropriately serious in your approach. Safety was a clear priority as it must be. The experience was well structured and presented a number of great challenges. (Mark, 2012)