



**IDEAS FOR SCOUT LEADERS**

**SCOUTING IN PRACTICE**



World Organization  
of the Scout Movement  
Organisation Mondiale  
du Mouvement Scout

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# STRATEGY

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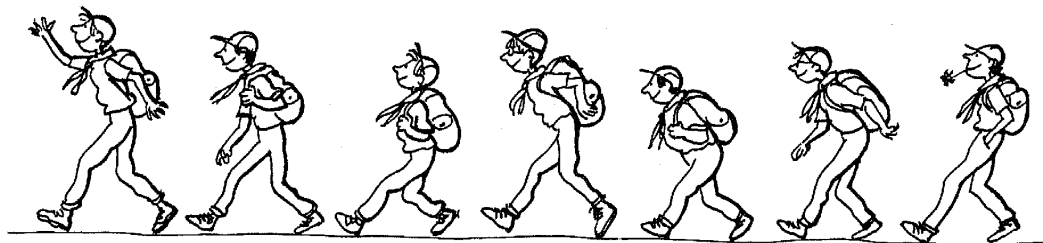
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# FOREWORD

This publication is for all Scout leaders worldwide. It aims to highlight the essence of Scouting for everyone involved in using the Scout Method as a means of contributing to the development of children and adolescents.

It is intended to be of direct use to leaders, wherever they may be, in their day-to-day activities with young people by providing them with the essential elements that they need to know in order to practise Scouting. These elements form the core that needs to be common to Scouting in all parts of the world and in all cultures.

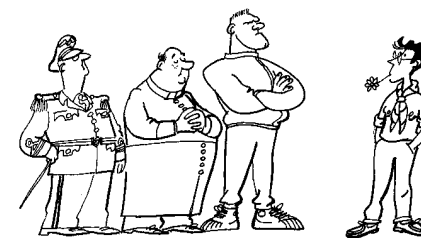
Evidently, at national level, these elements have to be adapted to the country's culture, socio-economic conditions, etc., in order to meet young people's needs effectively. Likewise, at local level, each leader has to adapt these elements to the character-

istics of the young people in his or her group, in accordance with how they have been interpreted at national level.

In order to be able to adapt something, however, one must first fully understand what that something is. It is thus these universal elements - the core without which what is practised is not Scouting - that are presented in this publication.

Where examples are used, they are only illustrations. They are not universal and cannot claim to be representative of the extreme variety of situations to be found within our world movement.

We hope that this booklet will be of use to all Scout leaders who want to practise quality Scouting, close to young people and adapted to today's world. We also hope that they will derive a lot of enjoyment in the process.



*The Scoutmaster has to be neither schoolmaster nor commanding officer, nor pastor, nor instructor. He has got to put himself on the level of the older brother, that is, to see things from the boy's point of view, and to lead and guide, and give enthusiasm in the right direction.*

*B-P*

## PORTRAIT OF A SCOUT LEADER



Michael is thirty-five. He is a computer specialist who works in a shop which sells computers and consumer software and provides after-sales service. He is also the leader of a Scout troop of twenty-five boys and girls aged between fourteen and seventeen. He runs the troop with the help of two assistants, both slightly younger than himself.

Like many others, he became involved in education through active experience, by raising his own children, now aged eight and ten. He is in no way a professional “educator”, but simply someone with a concern for young people and their future and who has decided to do something.

He was once a Scout himself. Based on his own experience, he felt that Scouting could teach young people to cope with life, and decided to become a Scout

leader. He is not trying to relive what he himself experienced twenty years ago as he realizes that things change. Even so, he feels something special when he is with his Scouts.

When he thinks of his own children, of what they do and of what could happen to them, he feels directly responsible, directly involved. If something went wrong, it would be his fault and he would feel guilty. He therefore has to be careful not to take any risks.

He also feels responsible for his Scouts, but not in the same way, and he does not have the same fears. Of course, he is dealing with young people, but they are not dependent on him. The relationship is different because he finds it easier to stand back. Basically, he does not expect them to succeed where he did not, he simply expects them to fulfil themselves.

Everyone knows that it is easier to deal with other people's children than with one's own. Scout leaders know this too, and Michael is no exception. This is perhaps why he can have a different kind of relationship with them. In specialist circles, this would be called an "educational relationship". For Michael, though, it is simply about the way he is with the young people.

If one were to analyse the educational relationship, it would appear quite complex - and it is. Michael, however, does not spend all his time thinking how to make the relationship "educational", as basically it comes quite naturally. In fact, it stems from the simple idea that education (i.e. the development of a person), is a process - in other words, a phenomenon marked by gradual changes, as opposed to something that occurs instantaneously.

According to the experts, this process comprises four phases:

First, there is awareness. For example, I can (I am permitted to or am physically able to) walk, run or climb.

This awareness thus transforms a potential (I can) into a capacity, i.e. into something possible. I then try and thus experience walking, running, climbing, or whatever.

I then draw conclusions from that experience: it is easy, difficult; it requires an effort, training; it involves risk.

On the basis of these conclusions, I decide either to abandon the whole thing or to develop this capacity (i.e. I practice and train; I improve my skills and performance). If I choose to develop this capacity, then it will become part of my life experience.

While this may all seem complicated, it is in fact a natural process, a path that we have all taken many times. As a Scout leader, Michael simply accompanies the young people under his responsibility along this path. He would certainly not put it quite like this, but he does in fact create the conditions for this process of awareness, experience, analysis, improvement and integration to take place. In order to help young people, he has a method at his disposal, the Scout Method.

Michael realizes that the development of the person should lead to the emergence of someone who is autonomous (i.e. able to make his own decisions), as well as supportive (who takes the interests of others into consideration when making choices or decisions).

Michael also knows that Scouting proposes a certain number



of educational objectives which are adapted to the various age ranges. Michael understands those objectives, and his role as a Scout leader is to motivate and guide the young people towards achieving them. However, he knows that for this to happen, each young person has to accept the objectives, find his own ways of trying to reach them and his own way of expressing them. The details vary from one person to the next. What counts is the general guidance. Whenever Michael, as a Scout leader (or father), has forgotten or ignored this, he failed in what he was trying to do.

For the leader, there is therefore a general direction to be followed with educational objectives to be achieved. It is a start, but it does not explain how to go about achieving them. If it were only a question of selecting a well-conceived activity in order to achieve an objective

every time, it would be so easy! The activity is a vehicle but not a guided missile!

Activities are only one of the elements of the Scout Method needed to help reach the objectives, and it is Michael's job as a Scout leader to apply these elements intelligently.

To take the example of how Michael runs the group (the experts would call it his "leadership style"), it is clear that this has to be consistent with the objectives. If Michael wants his Scouts to learn the importance of listening to other people's points of view and of finding solutions which are acceptable to all, then he cannot impose his choices and decisions on the group. Otherwise, a situation would arise whereby everyone is equal but some people are more equal than others! The group's projects and activities, rules and regulations therefore

have to be the result of dialogue and reflect respect for others.

The Scout leader cannot compromise. He has to practise what he preaches, for fear of destroying the trust placed in him by those he has chosen to accompany and whom he wants to help to grow.

The way in which the young people live as a group, how the members of the group interact with each other and what they experience through life as a group form another aspect which plays a role in the educational process, in the same way as the educational objectives, the leadership style and activities. Why invent a "negotiation" or "active listening" activity while ignoring these aspects in the life of the group?

Indeed, providing an educational content to the activities of everyday life and using them as an integral part of the educa-

tional process is one of the essential characteristics of Scouting. This is why, when on an excursion or at camp, Michael gives his Scouts time to settle in, to prepare a meal, to set up camp - in other words, to live together. Unfortunately, some Scout leaders try to gain time for “real activities” by, for example, arranging for outside catering or providing sandwiches!

Scouting is a school of life. Michael knows full well that it was by walking that we learned to walk. Of course, we had to take the risk of falling flat on our faces, but in fact there were always outstretched arms to support us.

This is an image, of course, but this is how Michael perceives his role as a Scout leader, i.e. to create an environment which stimulates the young person to become aware of what he can do, to provide the conditions of

security needed for him to feel free to try and to learn, to help him to find ways and means of making progress and of making the experience personally meaningful so that it can become part of his life experience.

Michael is attentive to the global and balanced development of each young person and makes sure that, over a period of time, the activities and the daily life of the group help each person to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

Michael knows that his Scouts do not expect him to be a perfect human being, but they do expect him to play by the same rules. After all, he could hardly expect them to develop a sense of responsibility, for example, if he avoided responsibility himself!



*“Any fool can command, can make people obey orders, if he has adequate power of punishment at his back to support him in case of refusal. It is another thing to lead, to carry men with you in a big job”.*

*B-P*

# ADULTS SERVING YOUNG PEOPLE



Scouting is first of all a youth movement, an environment in which young people can express and assert themselves, experiment, discover things through activities that they enjoy, make room for themselves within the group and play an active role in it, and develop constructive relationships with other young people and adults.

Men and women who are willing to listen to young people and to their aspirations and needs are there to support them, to accompany them for a time on their path of life, and to ensure that the activities that the girls and boys want to take part in contribute to their physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development.

The adult is not there to behave like a young person, nor to prolong his own youth. As an adult in an environment of young people, he has to remain

the adult that he is in order to carry out his role, while being able to listen to them and understand them.

To be a leader, it is essential to recognize each young person as an individual. A child is not a blank page to be filled as the adult wishes. Nor is a child a block of raw material that an adult can trim and model as he wants. A child is a living, unique being, with particular capacities, destined to develop throughout his existence.

The role of the adult is to stimulate this growth process, to set pointers to enable the young person to find his way and make informed decisions, and to create an environment that can help each person to develop.

After all, you cannot make a plant grow by pulling on the stem!



**People need environments in which they can do and experience things that the family, school, work, etc., do not offer. Scouting must be one of those environments!**

- **An environment**

We live in a number of different environments. The work environment, for example, involves a number of specific characteristics - place, setting, atmosphere, people, perception of oneself and of others - which are not the same as those of the family environment, which also comprises a setting, an atmosphere, people, and a perception of oneself and others. Both of these differ from the leisure environment, for example.

When we define Scouting as an environment for young people, this is what we mean. This environment comprises a number of specific characteristics which differentiate it from other environments in which a young person develops.

In the Scout environment, each person has to take on real responsibilities to make the activities and projects happen, and

to ensure the welfare of the group. When the young person feels that his efforts make a difference and are appreciated, he will gradually develop the self-confidence that will enable him to feel more integrated, to assume more responsibility, etc.

Having a meaningful role to play is essential for development and it is one of the main functions of the Scout environment. Other environments, such as the family or school, do not offer this possibility to the same extent, precisely because of their different characteristics.

The family environment is often full of ambiguities and undercurrents. It can sometimes be a battle field of power struggles in which relationships are really based on relative positions of power between individuals, between individuals and subgroups and between subgroups. It is an environment in which

everyone has plans for others and where roles and life scripts are predestined to a large extent ("you will be a man, my boy!"). Of course, not all families are like that... or are they?

The school environment, on the other hand, fulfils a function of social integration. This institution often gets trapped in the ambiguity of what it claims to do, namely to educate (equal opportunities and development of everyone's qualities), and what it does in practice, namely selecting the "best", i.e. those who are able to enter the system and "succeed" by conforming to the demands placed on them.

There is no doubt that the family and the school play an irreplaceable role, and there is no shortage of examples showing how personal development is affected and compromised when either is lacking.

Unfortunately, however, neither can totally overcome its internal contradiction.

- **A relationship**

In Scouting, the educational relationship between the adult and the young people is above all a partnership. Both “partners” acknowledge each other’s qualities and both have an equally important contribution to make to their common project.

In the case of Scouting, the project is to lead a “happy, active, useful” life. Both young people and adults are committed to pursuing this project as partners in the process of living and each is enriched by the richness of the other.

This relationship implies mutual trust and respect, a willingness to listen to each other, and to accept that the other “partner” may have different hopes

and needs and may see the world in a different way.

The relationship is also based on the acknowledgement of the fact that each of us faces decisions and choices that we alone can make. No one can put himself in someone else’s shoes... even if he is a wise adult with lots of experience!

This kind of relationship between a young person and an adult is quite rare, but if you really want to be a Scout leader, this is what you have to strive for.

**As an adult in Scouting, you have made a commitment: to place yourself at the service of young people, and to devote time and effort to ensuring that this type of environment exists and that this kind of relationship can be established.**



*“To be a successful Scoutmaster, (...) a man must have the boy spirit in him and must be able to place himself on a right plane with his boys as a first step; he must realise the needs, outlooks and desires of the different ages of boy life; he must deal with the individual boy rather than with the mass; and he then needs to promote a corporate spirit among his individuals to gain the best results.”*

*B-P*

# THE AIM: THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Each human being is unique. Each of us comes into the world with a unique set of individual characteristics and the ability to develop them. It is by develop-

ing these characteristics that we develop ourselves. This growth process is obviously not restricted to the periods of childhood and adolescence. It takes

place throughout life, from birth to death.

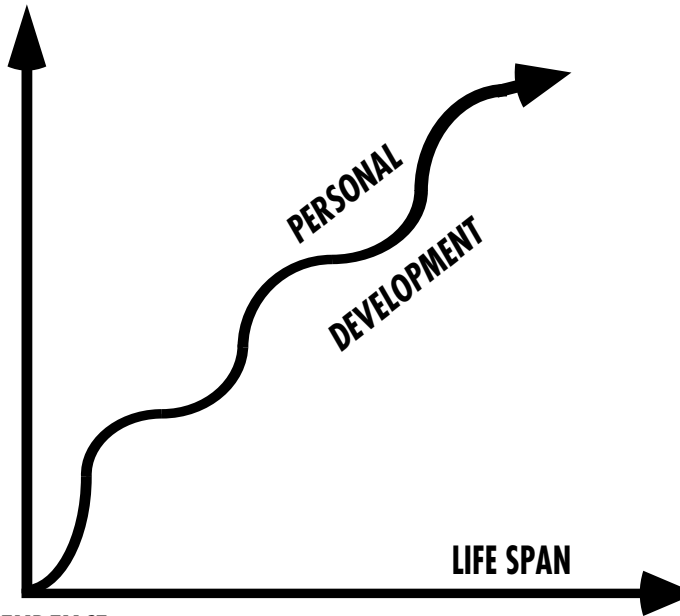
## 1. FROM DEPENDENCE TO AUTONOMY

### DEPENDENCE

- I can't cope by myself.
- I can't decide for myself.
- I don't dare to assert myself.
- I don't understand the meaning of life or the world.

AUTONOMY

DEPENDENCE

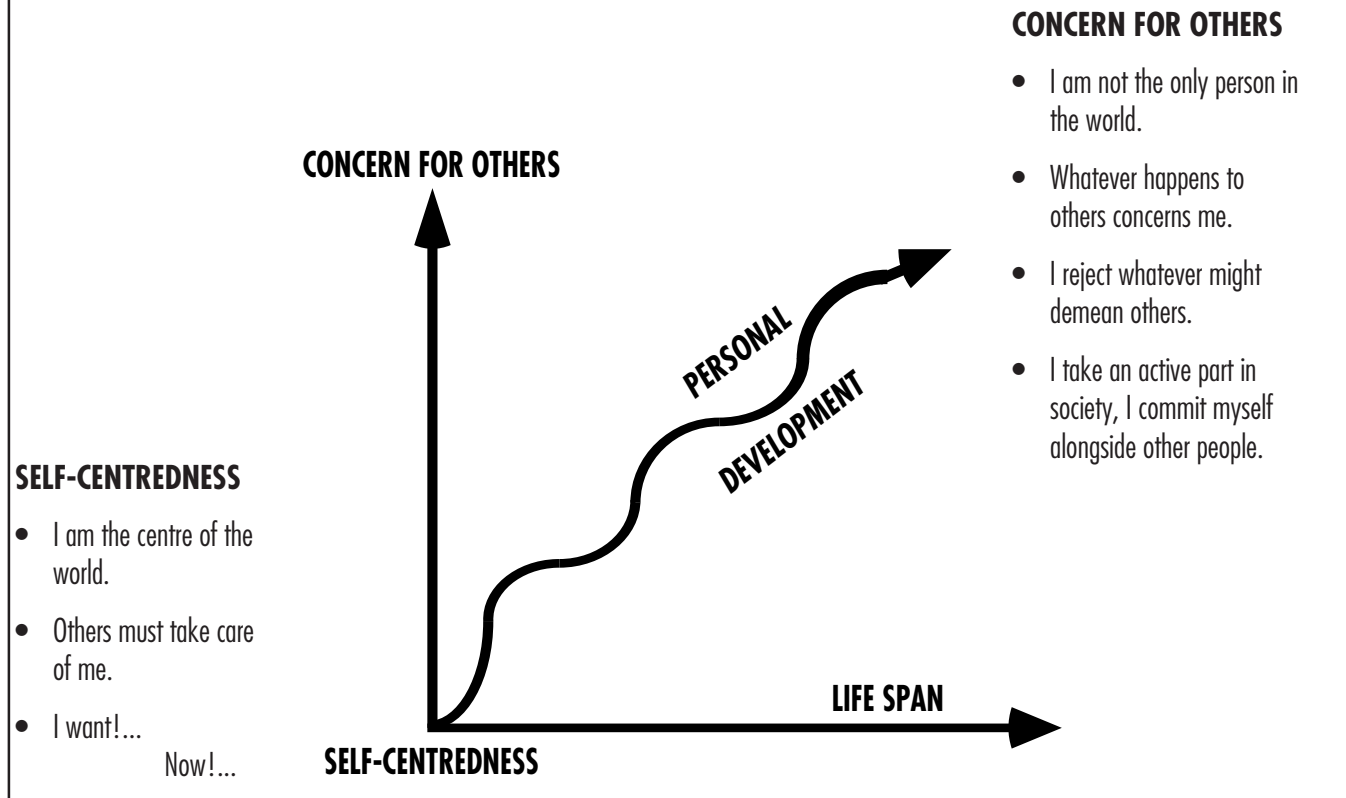


### AUTONOMY

- I stand on my own two feet.
- I decide what is good for me.
- I can assert myself.
- I develop and clarify my own values.

**Life is change. Life is the movement of the body, of thought, of emotions, of relationships, of the soul. Living means developing continuously. Developing means changing, moving progressively from dependence to autonomy in all areas - physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually. Developing also means discovering that other people exist, too, and growing from self-centredness to concern for others.**

## 2. FROM SELF-CENTREDNESS TO CONCERN FOR OTHERS



This process of growth does not follow a straight path. We all go through stages of development with spurts of growth that are

more rapid and more intense in some areas than in others. Our development goes through highs and lows, as well as dor-

mant periods. It may also stop altogether for someone who decides that there is nothing more to learn.

Naturally, the two preceding diagrams are simply a general illustration of the process. They do not describe the process in detail, nor do they show all the areas of development.

The development ideal pursued in Scouting is that of a happy, well-balanced person who is both autonomous and supportive - autonomous in the sense of being resourceful, being able to make decisions, and to assert oneself as a unique and responsible person; and supportive, i.e. being capable of sharing, genuinely caring about others, doing something for them, promoting a cause. Both are essential, although neither is easy to achieve.

It is nonetheless this dual capacity for autonomy and concern for others that fits the term “character” used so often by B-P. A person of character, in other words, is someone on whom

one can count to consciously use all his available resources in a given situation, acting responsibly towards himself and others.

Autonomy, in the sense meant here, has nothing to do with selfishness or self-centredness. A selfish person thinks only of himself and acts only in accordance with his own desires with no concern for others, as if he were the only person in the world. A self-centred person steers everything towards himself, and considers himself to be the centre of the universe. Everything must be organized to suit him, and others only exist insofar as they can be of use to him. An autonomous person cares both about himself and others, and deals with situations that arise to the best of his own interests, while respecting others.

Developing our personal au-

tonomy in all areas enables us to have more open and more authentic relationships with others, as an autonomous person accepts others and respects them as they are. He refuses to manipulate them to suit his own purposes.

When we talk about “development in all areas”, we are referring to the various dimensions of the person, i.e. physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual. We can develop in each of these dimensions throughout our lives.

However, just as we can strive for greater autonomy in each of these dimensions, so too we can find ourselves in a state of dependence on someone or something in any of these dimensions. A state of dependence in any of the dimensions hinders the autonomy of the person as a whole. We therefore need to break away from





dependence in order to achieve a greater degree of self-control.

Self-control does not mean ignoring, censoring or repressing one's emotions, feelings and urges, but having control over them - in other words, managing them, expressing them whenever necessary (while respecting the integrity of others), to ensure one's own equilibrium.

Let us take a few examples to illustrate what form this evolution from dependence to autonomy can take in different areas of development.

The simplest example is obviously in terms of physical development, as this is something tangible and easy to observe. Developing one's physical autonomy means developing one's ability to move, to use our legs, arms and muscles. In normal conditions, i.e. in the absence of illness or disability, physical

autonomy is acquired fairly rapidly. Although a baby is totally dependent on others to move, eat and look after his body, the essential functions are nevertheless acquired within the first years of his existence. Nonetheless, there is still a long way to go to improve those physical abilities, to remain healthy and in good shape. Moreover, physical autonomy does not only concern mobility and the ability to do sport, but also involves choices concerning our diet, the consumption of alcohol, the use of tobacco or drugs, etc. It also means being able to live with our own physical limits, finding ways of dealing with them and overcoming them - in other words, refusing to remain dependent.

Intellectual development, meanwhile, is the ability to understand and interpret situations and ideas, to judge things for ourselves, and to retain our own

free will. For example, I can listen to what someone else is telling me and think about it, but I retain the freedom to form my own opinion. It is also the ability to handle information, to analyse it and use it to work out one or more possible solutions to a given problem. Today, the ability to innovate and create is all too often compromised. It is difficult to escape being conditioned by society, fashion and the media, not to mention everything that aims to prohibit, control, and direct the way we think and act so as to bring us in line with what is considered by others to be "politically correct" or in line with fundamentalist thinking of one kind or another.

Achieving emotional autonomy involves first of all being able to acknowledge, recognize and express our feelings and emotions. Thus, accepting pleasure and joy, or pain and sorrow, without hiding behind an ap-

pearance of composure and rationality is a sign of emotional autonomy. Someone who does not know how to recognize and express his emotions severs himself from an essential faculty, and his life is impoverished accordingly. Furthermore, the emotions that we reject or are not able to accept for what they are will have an even greater hold over us, precisely because we are not aware of them.

Naturally, expressing our emotions does not exclude respecting the integrity of others. Wanting to hit someone and saying so is one thing (expressing feeling and emotion), but wanting to hit someone and actually doing so (carrying out the action) is quite different. The feelings and emotions that are activated by a situation (fear, anger, etc.) are natural, spontaneous and legitimate reactions. Self-control does not mean ignoring or repressing them so that they

surface later, in a stronger and potentially destructive manner; rather it means managing them in a dynamic and positive way, in our own interests and in the interests of those around us.

Is there such a thing as social autonomy? Is it not a contradiction in terms? Clearly not, because autonomy does not mean ignoring others, and behaving as if one were the only person in the world. Being autonomous also means recognizing and accepting others, as they are - in other words, different, but not worse or better. It means recognizing the fact that we are interdependent, acting in solidarity with others, without abandoning what we are and without denying or neglecting our own needs. Being autonomous means relating to others and communicating with them because we want to, rather than because there is no other choice. It means choosing to

cooperate, to support each other and to take the lead when necessary. And finally, it means moving from an imposed code of behaviour to a freely accepted value system on which behaviour which is responsible, respectful of others and of the common culture can be founded. In other words, it means moving from sham conformism to profound adherence to common rules which we have personally recognized as being valid and which we freely accept.

In spiritual terms, autonomy means first of all acknowledging a dimension beyond us (i.e. that we are not the beginning and end of everything), accepting to explore this dimension and to translate what we find meaningful into our everyday lives and into the ways in which we grow in all the other areas of development. The spiritual dimension gives meaning and di-

rection to all the rest and helps us reach an ever higher level of consciousness.

If we look at the fundamental principles of Scouting and in particular at the three dimensions referred to as “duties” (Duty to God, Duty to Others and Duty to Self) on which Scouting is based, it is easy to see that we are dealing with the full development of the individual. At the heart of Scouting (and in the heart of its Founder), this is the crux of the matter. If we want to contribute to the creation of a better world, improving society inevitably takes place through “improving” the individuals who make up that society, and this improvement can only come from the integral development of each individual.

Of course, Scouting could never claim to bring people to fully achieve these ideals, i.e. to fully develop their personality, as this

is the object of a lifetime! We also realize that Scouting is not the only agent of education which influences a young person’s life. The family, school and religious institutions represent other agents of education, each of which uses its own ways and means, and has its own strengths, weaknesses and limits. There are other elements, too, which we should not forget such as other boys and girls, the peer group or “gang”, the media, etc., all of which also represent “educational factors”, generally of a less formal nature, but which often exert more influence than the others.

It is for all these reasons that Scout leaders should feel rather humble, and accept that they are not the only agents. They should not, therefore, assume that they can “shape a young person’s soul”. However, Scouting can and often does play an important role, because

the effect of a particular experience on a person’s development is related not only to the duration of that experience, but especially to its intensity.

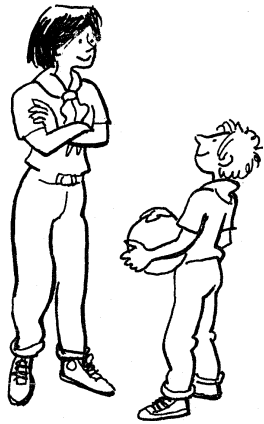
Scouting’s strength lies precisely in this area. It enables a young person to live through intense and meaningful experiences, both individually and as part of a group. Insofar as they are integrated by the person into his personal life history, these experiences become formative elements of his character.



*“Individuality over-developed means self let loose, which is the opposite of what we want. Individuality with character is another thing, it means a man with self-discipline, energy, ability, chivalry, loyalty, and other qualities that go to make a good man.”*

*B-P*

# AN APPROACH TO EDUCATION



According to one definition:

*“Education is an activity exercised by the adult generation on those who are not yet ready for life in society. Its aim is to arouse and develop certain physical, intellectual and moral states in the child that society as a whole and the environment to which he specifically belongs require of him.”* (E. Durkheim, 1911).

According to another definition:

*“Education is a series of methods which enable a child to go through the periods of development which lead him to as full a personal development as possible in terms of the opening that society offers him.”* (S. Lebovici, 1979).

The first stems from the Latin word “educare” (to “shape” or “form”, i.e. to give shape to something that has none), and the second from “educere” (to “blossom”, i.e. to draw out or bring to life something that is latent).

In both cases, two dimensions are inevitably present: the individual dimension and the collective one (the person and society), as it would be futile to claim to educate without taking both the individual and the society in which he lives into account.

Baden-Powell’s Scouting incorporates both of these dimensions. Its aim is both personalist and community-related. It aims to help the individual to develop, so that he or she will take an active part in society. Through its Method, it endeavours to accompany each young person along the road of his own personal development and advocates “education from within” as opposed to “instruction from without”. It is a matter of developing what is good and of making what is latent grow in a positive and responsible way.

This explains its enormous success from the outset, in a period when the tendency to “mould” the individual clearly dominated the world of youth education.

Apart from the fact that in this approach the young person is considered as a unique and responsible being who is able to organize his life, the advantage is that education is considered to be an on-going process and not something that one goes through, emerging at the other end as a whole person, or “adult”, at long last ready to start living. Each individual is a whole person at all stages of life. It does not do credit to humankind to consider the adult stage of life (assuming one knew when this stage begins and ends) as the only “complete” stage of the personality, before which one would not yet be, and after which one would no longer be, a whole person.

When we say that Scouting is a school of life, we mean that young people learn to live better, i.e. to live in an ever more conscious, fulfilled and responsible manner, in each of the five dimensions that we have already mentioned: physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual.

Viewed from this perspective, a person is a complex, whole being which cannot live in isolation from relationships. These are: relationship with self (body, emotions, will, desires, aspirations, etc.), relationship with others (individuals or groups), relationship with the world (nature, environment, society), relationship with God (life, death, the hereafter, etc.).

Of course, such “relationships” develop progressively, in accordance with a set of values to which the person has chosen to adhere and which give mean-

ing to his life. Indeed, ultimately, living means experiencing all these relationships in an increasingly conscious and unified manner.

A person’s relationship with his body is not independent from his relationship with others or from his relationship with God. It is clear that my physical appearance, the way I dress, my health, and the care that I take of my body influence the way others perceive me and the way I interact with them. The opposite can also occur, whereby my relationship with others influences my physical condition and my relationship with my body. Why bother to keep myself in good health if that relationship ends?

The same applies in the spiritual area. If my faith makes my body “the temple of the Spirit” this inevitably leads to a search for purity, which is expressed in

my actions, the way in which I perceive my body and take care of it, as well as by respecting the bodies of others.

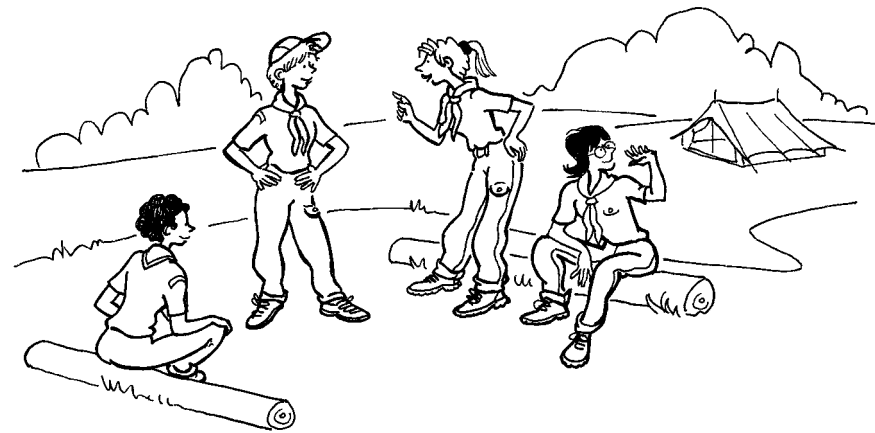
In this approach, education (i.e. the development of the person, related to the flow of life, to the development of a conscious, active and responsible person who is both autonomous and supportive), cannot take place in a sequential order. There is no automatic link between the stages of development, as development follows the flow of life - itself linked to the unique character of each person and how he chooses to exercise his freedom.

For the most part, each person develops as a result of his experiences. Life experience is, in fact, a set of linked experiences which have an effect on the person as a whole. Thus, an intellectual experience can trigger feelings, emotions and physi-

cal sensations, modify an individual's perception of himself and others, and be at the root of a spiritual experience.

However, it is the person who "decides" (not rationally, but on the basis of what he feels physically and emotionally) what he will retain and what he will reject from his experiences. Whatever he decides to retain will then become part of his life experience and therefore become part of him. In other words, I am, to a certain extent, what I do, what I feel, what I experience.

As far as education is concerned, this puts the educator or mentor, in his place - he or she proposes and the person disposes... if given the means to do so!



*“The two main methods of training are:*

*(1) By Education: that is by “drawing out” the individual boy and giving him the ambition and keenness to learn for himself.*

*(2) By Instruction: that is by impressing and drumming knowledge into the boy.*

*In the Scout Movement we use Number 1.”*

*B-P*

# AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

So far, we have presented the principles on which Scouting is based, and what it seeks to achieve. This all forms part of an educational system which also comprises a set of concrete educational tools without which these ideas, despite their appeal, could not take shape.

There are other institutions involved in contributing to the development of well-balanced and competent people who are actively involved in their communities. Scouting is not the only organization that aims at the “full development of the individual”. However, it is undoubtedly the only **World Movement** with this as its main aim. This is one of the most specific characteristics of Scouting.

Another of Scouting’s specific characteristics relates to the particular Method that it uses in order to reach this aim. This

Method is a combination of elements that cannot be dissociated. Of course, some of the elements are used elsewhere (an active learning approach, for example), but in Scouting all of the elements are entirely interdependent and form a system.

If any of the components of Scouting’s educational system were missing, the nature of the system would change, and it would no longer be Scouting.

This explains the originality of an approach that could be described as a rocket designed to **launch** (i.e. to separate from the original vessel) **a person who is autonomous** (i.e. able to make his own decisions and to manage his life); **supportive** (i.e. who actively cares about and for others); **responsible** (i.e. able to make decisions and assume the consequences, to keep his commitments and to



complete what he undertakes); **and committed** (i.e. who seeks to live according to his values, and supports causes or an ideal which he finds are important).

This is what Baden-Powell meant by a “**happy, active and useful citizen**”, a **person of character**.

In the three stages of the rocket, the booster engines are:

1. A PROPOSAL
2. A METHOD
3. DYNAMICS

These three stages are described in detail below.

### 1. A PROPOSAL

Scouting’s proposal is made directly to young people and for today. The young person is primarily invited to **be** (starting now), not simply invited to **become** (later). This proposal includes:

- **A personal commitment:**

A voluntary commitment to a growth ideal.

- **Taking charge of one’s life:**

Asserting one’s rights and assuming one’s duties, setting personal objectives and overcoming obstacles, developing one’s resources, being responsible.

- **Taking action today:**

Experiencing responsibility, commitment, the acquisition of skills, personal development, and relationships with others.

- **Progressive self-education:**

Being free, autonomous, responsible, fulfilled, open and supportive today, in order to be a fulfilled, responsible, capable adult tomorrow.





## 2. A METHOD

The Method used by the Scout leader to implement Scouting's proposal comprises seven elements which are closely linked and in continuous interaction.

In accordance with Scouting's proposal, which invites the young person to experience life today and thus be better prepared for the future, the elements of this Method constitute both a way of living today, as well as a preparation for tomorrow.

- **Law and Promise**

This is the central element of the Method.

The Law is the law of the group, but it is also a way of life, a set of "values in action" to which the young person commits himself through the Promise.

For the leader, the Law there-

fore represents a life ideal for every member of the Movement, young person or adult, as well as an educational tool - a way of learning the meaning of the concepts through direct experience.

The Promise also encompasses these two dimensions; in other words, it is a commitment to live according to the Scout Law, law of the group and life ideal, but it is also an educational tool, a way of learning about the meaning of personal commitment and keeping one's word through direct experience.

**Adhering to the Law means experiencing a code of living today and developing the ability to keep to freely accepted rules for tomorrow.**

**Adhering to the Promise means experiencing voluntary commitment today and, for tomorrow, learning to keep one's word.**

Michael realizes that what counts is not that his Scouts can recite the Law by heart, but that it is really integrated into their way of life, guiding them both within the group and outside of it.

Whenever the opportunity arises - which is frequently the case - he refers to the Law to make them think about something they did, the way they treated someone, or whatever. The Law provides an excellent evaluation tool, a set of criteria with which the young people can compare what happened in a particular situation to what should have happened if the Law had been applied, whether it be to do with the young people's relationships with each other, the life of the group, or an activity.

Thus, when a patrol did not show up at a scheduled meeting point during an excursion, simply because the Scouts

changed their minds, discussion with the patrol focused on mutual trust and respect for others – in this case, of Michael, who was anxious when the patrol did not turn up at the rendez-vous.

For Michael, it is not a question of making the Scouts feel guilty, but simply of making them aware of the consequences of their hasty decision. Becoming an adult also means foreseeing and assuming the possible consequences of the decisions that one takes.

As for the Promise, Michael does not consider it as the investiture of an ideal, perfect Scout. It is a commitment that one makes in front of one's peers, acknowledging that one has understood the rules of the group and the Scout ideal, and that one wants to "do one's best" to follow these rules with the others and live according to this ideal in one's daily life.

Michael considers that the moment of making the Promise is an important occasion. He tries to make it a meaningful event for each Scout, a milestone in his personal life, but certainly not an initiation rite or sacrament!

- **Small group operation**

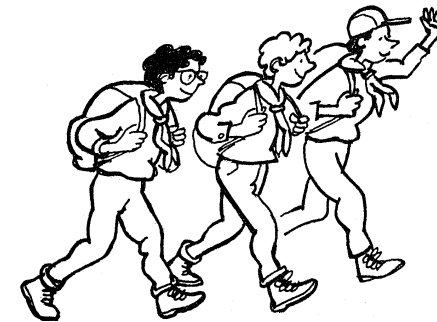
What Baden-Powell called the "patrol system" is a fundamental element of Scouting.

The small group (team, patrol, etc.) is the basic grouping in Scouting. It comprises seven or eight young people together - slightly less in the younger age groups - with one of them as the "leader". Quite simply, it makes use of the natural dynamics of young people, their tendency to form groups of friends and do things together. Several of these groups together - usually four or five - form a troop, which is supported by an adult leader.

The system works well when this system is respected, i.e. when the initiative comes from the patrol, when the young people have a real say in the choice of activities and in the decisions that concern them, and when the adults involved are truly supportive and stand alongside the young people to help them to succeed.

In other words, the "patrol" is not a subdivision of the troop, and the "Patrol Leader" is not a channel through which the adult leaders communicate their orders and decisions.

Through working together on their activities and organising their life within the small group, a bond is created between the members. Each member discovers the others, gets to know them well with their strengths and limitations. Each person knows how far he can count on each of the others, and in what areas, and each person also



discovers the contribution that he can make to the life of the group. It is indeed an experience of life that the Scouts share within the small group, with its joys and good times, as well as its difficulties and, perhaps, break-ups.

**Finding one's niche in the group and playing a real role. Expressing one's point of view, participating in decisions, influencing the course of events, today.**

**Talking problems through, listening to other points of view, accepting that others can have different ideas and opinions.**

**Being actively involved in what happens.**

**Learning through experience what it means to really listen, to participate, to live democratically, to be responsible, and to respect commitments, for tomorrow.**

**Experiencing solidarity and interdependence, attention and respect towards others, developing one's sense of service today, for tomorrow.**

For Michael, this is not always an easy course to follow, as he often thinks that he would gain a lot of time by taking the decisions himself. After all, he is an adult, he has already gone through all that, and his experience should suffice to convince his Scouts. Unfortunately, it does not work like that, and "experience is a torch which sheds light only on the person carrying it".

What the Scouts get out of the experience of operating as a small team is invaluable. Michael recalls that when he started his Scout group a few years ago, it took almost a year for the patrols to form. But it was worth the time it took! Once the patrols had really become established, they were close-knit, capable, able to take decisions, to share out tasks and organize themselves.

If Michael himself had formed

the patrols and divided the main group up from the start, he would never have achieved all of this. This experience helped him to realize the validity of what B-P knew intuitively, i.e. of making constructive use of the child's natural playing mechanisms, and of young people's dynamism, natural tendencies and capacities.

#### • Learning by doing

Initially, and in the minds of many, learning by doing quite simply means substituting theoretical, book-related teaching with concrete practice of the technique or skill to be developed. However, learning by doing is far more than acquiring technical know-how (such as tying a knot in order to learn how to tie a knot). It can be used in all the areas of development. Thus, group life enables the person to learn to relate to others, the Promise teaches a



sense of commitment, and the practice of service creates an awareness of solidarity.

“The school of life” has a double meaning, as it means learning to live (i.e. acquiring useful knowledge, abilities and attitudes so as to lead an autonomous, supportive and responsible life) as well as learning from life (i.e. learning from everything that happens in the group, the activities and the situations that each person encounters in the group).

Scouting is about enriching the everyday activities of life with an educational content. The leader needs to observe everything that happens and to invite everyone to take part in an evaluation, encouraging reflection and providing feedback so as to get everything out of the experiences that can contribute to the development of each person in one area or another.

**Getting actively involved in hobbies, getting up and doing things that one is interested in today, and thus stimulate for the future the spirit of discovery, the curiosity to experiment and the desire to participate rather than to watch.**

**Getting involved in the action so as to develop in every area.**

**Developing useful skills, finding ways of dealing with situations, today. Developing the resources to be able to take on challenges and developing the desire to continue to develop skills for the future.**

For Michael, enriching what takes place in the group is a permanent challenge. This means ensuring that the activities and everything that happens within the group contribute to the development of the young people in one area or another.

Naturally, when the young people come up with ideas on what they want to do, their thoughts centre mainly around adventure, challenge and fun. How

those activities can be made into learning experiences is usually the last thing on their minds. Ensuring that there is an educational content to their adventures is Michael’s job, although it does not necessarily need to be made totally explicit from the outset and throughout the entire activity.

Another problem Michael faces is to ensure that, over a period of time, there is a balance in the activities so that, taken as a whole, they contribute to the “full development” of the young people.

All of us, including Michael, know of “macho troops”, in which most activities focus on physical development, sport, physical challenges, etc., ignoring any other dimension. As a computer specialist, Michael could easily be tempted to think that new technology is what Scouting should be concentrating on today and, given his

professional skills, he could easily get his Scouts to spend most of their time doing all kinds of computer-related activities. Michael knows, however, that if there is not a balance in what they do, the outcome would be a troop of weak-armed technical wizards. It is not always easy to be a Scout leader!

- **Symbolic framework**

Right from the beginning, Scouting has had a symbolic framework (that of the backwoodsman, the lover of the great outdoors, the explorer) which has triggered the imagination of the young people - and met their need for something wonderful.

How many young people in England in 1907 could run through the countryside in shorts, knead dough on their jackets on the ground, make a fire, follow trails, and sleep in

tents? At that time, being a Scout symbolized being free to roam, living in the wilderness, finding all kinds of creative solutions to practical problems, getting away from a pre-set way of living, through which the person's qualities, enthusiasm and ability to play an original and active role in society could develop freely.

Later, in other places and for other age groups, other symbols were used - life in the jungle: the "Man cub" and the social organization of the pack for Cub Scouts, based on the Jungle Book; the myth of the knight and crusader: spreading the ideals of service, generosity, courage and selflessness; the myth of the Red Indian: life in nature, courage, the tribe, the simplicity of the customs, the originality of Scouts among ordinary people; the myth of the commando and liberator: strength of character, ability to

survive in a hostile environment full of enemies, but a defender of the good cause, of justice and freedom; or the myth of the pioneer: the discoverer of a new world and a pioneer faced with real challenges, "builds bridges across valleys".

Other symbolic frameworks and other myths have also characterized the Movement, and naturally vary according to the culture in which they are set.

Each of these myths corresponds to a stage in the history of the Movement and of the society in which they emerged. What they all have in common is that, for the boys and girls concerned, they give a tangible form to an ideal. They stimulate their creativity and encourage them to invent the activities, objects and mental images that will turn them, for a moment in time, into heroes within this symbolic framework.



It is not a question of escaping reality, but of projecting oneself into the future or into another environment, of preparing oneself by facing challenges in this imaginary, exciting, dynamic world, to confront the challenges of life as it is and of people as they are.

Here again, B-P intuitively knew the importance of capturing the interest of young people through their capacity for wonderment and their ability to totally immerse themselves in a different world. For the young people, though, what they experience in their imaginary world is not so far removed from what they deal with in real life and often constitutes a helpful route to reality. This is one of the essential strengths of children's natural games. Banning children and young people from being heroes in make-believe settings can quite simply bar the way to dealing with real life.

**Freeing the imagination in a world of fiction to stimulate the ability to create, invent and to marvel - for a richer, more intense life.**

**Experiencing playing a real role in a team today, based on the person's current interests and level of development.**

**Learning to deal with real life through fiction.**

**Living the dreams and myths of one's age to the full, so as to have a better adult life tomorrow, with no regrets of missed experiences which have vanished for ever.**

Last week's troop weekend in the mountains was "the polar bear challenge". With snowshoes on their feet, Michael and his Scouts walked in the snow, built igloos for the night, and picked dry wood from under the trees to make a fire. The Jura mountains, thirty kilometres from Geneva, had become the Far Canadian North, and as far as the Scouts were concerned, it was a great adventure which

had nothing to do with Sunday cross-country skiing excursions with the family. Here, it was a question of survival, in the wind and the cold, at night, under the stars and snow. Everyone returned home with a story to tell and the feeling of having really achieved something. It was not a question of being able to boast, but simply of being able to say: "That night, I really tested my limits. It was an amazing experience, and the "polar bear" helped me."

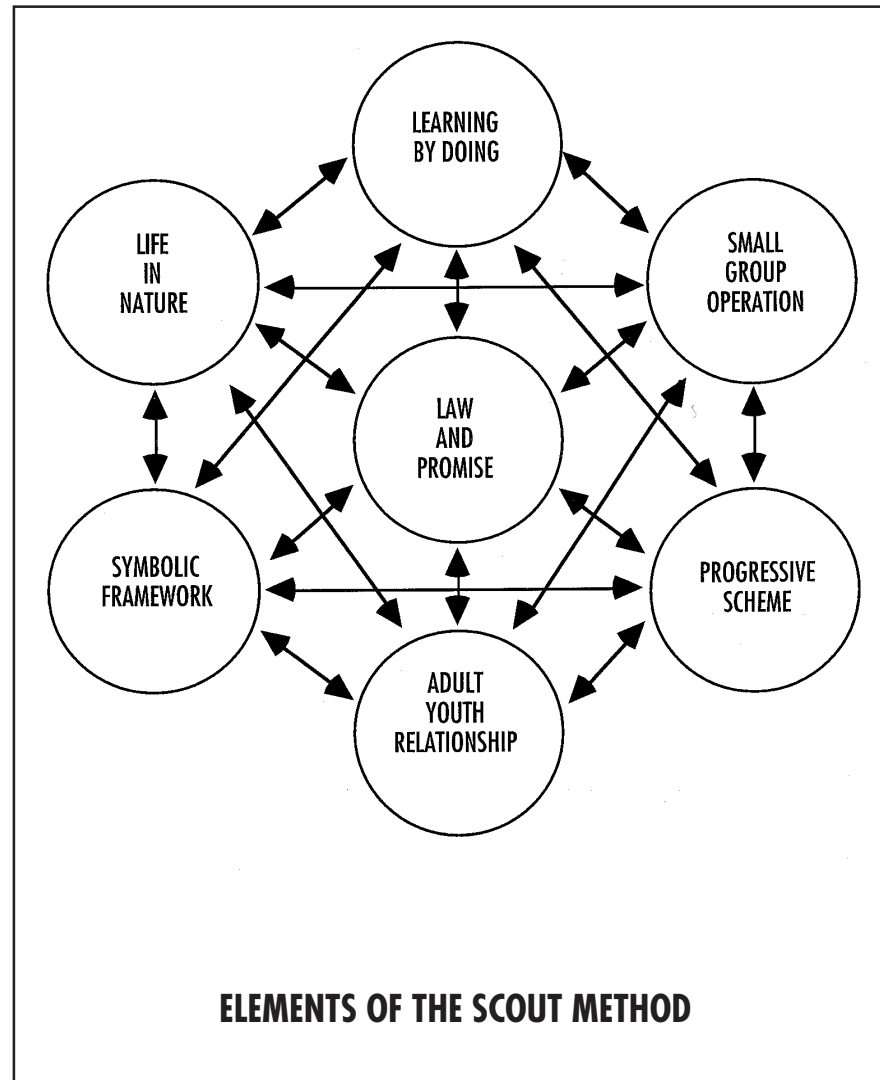
- **Progressive scheme**

Through the activities and group life, each Scout makes progress in one area or another. Each person progresses towards objectives related to the various areas of development. Enriched with an educational content, the activities are conceived so as to support this personal development.



Even if, as far as the young people are concerned, the emphasis is on the activity, with the challenges and opportunities it offers, and the pleasure they get out of being immersed in the heart of the action, the activity is, in reality, directed towards an aim that does not necessarily have to be explained at the start. The activity simply needs to appeal to the young people. Its value will be discovered later.

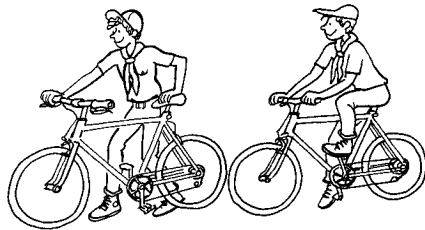
When a Scout makes his Promise, he makes a commitment to “do his best”. The real criterion in evaluating progress is therefore the progress made by the person himself in terms of where he personally started from. In certain activities, competition is sometimes a factor of stimulation and motivation, but “who did what the best, fastest...” is certainly not a criterion for evaluating personal progress.



In Scouting, if the project were to climb Mount Kenya, the main goal would be to reach the top, but not necessarily to be the first to get there, nor to succeed at the first attempt. And at group level, collective success is more important than individual achievements. It is the whole patrol which reaches the summit, as everyone has helped each other, with the stronger ones supporting the weaker patrol members.

In Scouting, progress is often recognized through badges. These are intended to show that the Scout has acquired a skill that can be put to the service of the group. It is not a question of collecting badges, but of achieving personal progress.

For Michael, who is aware of the aims of the Movement and of the educational objectives, it is not always easy to get his Scouts to take responsibility for



**Taking responsibility for oneself today, setting growth objectives in the various areas of development, and measuring the distance covered. Measuring personal progress in terms of change in oneself over a period of time, rather than comparing oneself to or competing with others.**

**Developing one's skills in order to be able to play an active part in the life of the group and of the broader community as of today.**

**Developing curiosity and a desire to learn and discover today, so that tomorrow one can continue to be equipped to live in a world of progress and change.**

themselves and to set their own growth objectives. He realizes that it is not because the association has taken great pains to carefully establish these objectives that they will become a reality and be adopted by the young people themselves. When all is said and done, each person decides on the direction that he wants to take and the goals he wants to reach and he will continue to do so throughout his life. No one can do this in his place. All that anyone else can do is to awaken and arouse his interest, and accompany him on his path towards his chosen objective, offering him the means to achieve it and helping him to succeed.

Michael realized that Mark, who was relatively new to the group, was having trouble in really feeling part of the group. Michael could see how Mark cautiously stood back from the other young people. Michael thought about

it, and remembered that Mark loved playing the drums. At a recent troop meeting, Mark was given an opportunity to show what he could do with a drum kit. The group band asked him to join and their jamming session got a roaring applause. When the time came for a group evaluation meeting, Mark had changed. He was glad he had something to offer the group and was much more at ease. He finally felt he belonged.

#### • **Adult-Youth relationship**

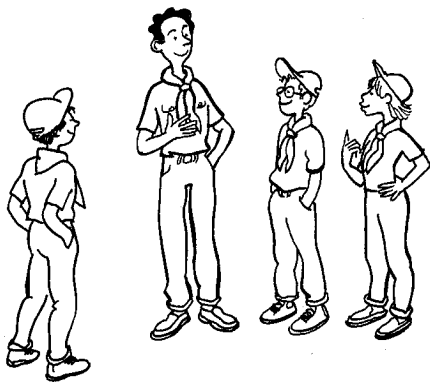
Scouting is a youth movement in which adults play an important support role. Both the young people and the adults share the same ideal and the same commitment. They are united by the same Promise and observe the same Law. They are therefore partners, committed to the same goal: the full development of the individual. Naturally, each retains his identity and specifi-

city. It is not a question of the adult playing the young person, nor vice versa with the young person ignoring his own concerns or interests and viewing his youth and adolescence as a stage to be got through as rapidly as possible, so as to be able to get on to the "serious things".

Young people need adult men and women to help them achieve what they undertake, develop their confidence in themselves, discover their limits, face moving on to another stage in life, and find reference points - adults they can talk to.

Adults need young people who challenge them and bring them to question the validity and authenticity of their personal choices and commitments. Young people help them to retain the freshness and curiosity of people who are discovering things for the first time.





On such a basis of mutual listening and respect, of partnership and sharing, the Movement helps to increase real communication between the generations, without power struggles, fears, and designs on others. Each person - young person or adult - accepts the other as he is. This does not imply leniency in terms of behaviour; it simply means having a positive attitude in terms of accepting and listening to the person.

In educational terms, the attitude of the leader consists in listening to the young people, being prepared to talk with them, valuing what is good, instilling confidence, reassuring them, and creating a safe environment in which the young people can experiment and discover. The adult needs to ensure that everything that happens is evaluated and put into perspective, so that the skills and knowledge acquired and

the progress achieved are clearly identified and integrated into each person's life experience.

**Enjoying greater communication in every day life with people from a different generation.**

**Experiencing a positive and rewarding relationship with adults, based on authenticity and trust, dialogue, listening to each other and a shared commitment towards common values.**

**Developing for later a sense of mutual respect between young people and adults, feeling comfortable in communicating with other generations.**

On 11th March, in that morning's newspaper, Michael read about two adolescents, Veronica and Sebastian, who had been accused of murdering another youth. According to Veronica's lawyer, what had emerged from the initial discussions was "the total lack of communication with adults, including her family." Further down in the same article, Veronica's father had stated:

"I feel guilty about what has happened to my daughter. If I could take her place, I would do so, believe me." This does not mean that Veronica lacked a "home", "good advice", or "discipline", but that the lack of communication and the "non-presence" of adults had resulted in an existential void, enormous inner turmoil, and a total loss of reference points - leading to the irreparable.

Obviously, this was a news item about an extreme situation, but Michael was bothered by the importance that the lack of contact with adults played in this affair. He realises the importance of his involvement with the young people in his group, to whom he offers support and the source of reference of an adult willing to listen to them, as well as to set limits and requirements. The role he plays among them is not easy and requires a great deal of him, but

on the basis of what he read in the newspaper, and what can happen to other young people without adults they can talk to, he feels that it is most certainly worth the effort!

- **Life in nature**

Nature is an ideal setting for Scout activities. In the beginning, B-P, who himself was used to living in the outdoors, to travelling the length and breadth of the vast spaces of Southern Africa, and to bivouacking and tracking, drew from his own personal experience and adventures, in order to offer enjoyable activities to young people.

Quite clearly, nature is a setting in which we are really forced to face reality. Nature will not let us cheat. In nature, the cold, the heat, the rain, the snow and the wind are all elements from which we cannot escape. We

have to adapt to them and find appropriate solutions. Moreover, if we try to live in harmony with nature, we inevitably rediscover how little we really need in order to live. How superfluous the gadgets of town life then seem! It was, after all, in the desert that many prophets and mystics met God! Nature can therefore be a temple.

When we talk of “nature” and of the “outdoors”, we are talking about real nature – the countryside, forest, desert and bush - and not just the school playground or local campsite. Even if circumstances do not always make it easy to truly get into nature, and even if not all Scout activities take place in contact with nature, camps and treks in nature remain indispensable. Without them, there can be no real Scouting.

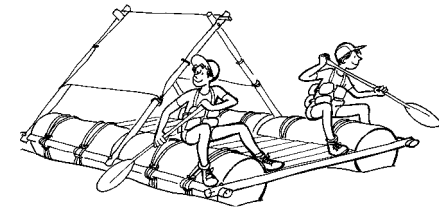
Living in nature also means living in harmony with nature,

respecting and protecting it. For Scouts, the very first “environmental protection” activity is to recognize and observe the basic rules of camping and hiking in harmony with nature. It is only later that specific activities to protect the environment are undertaken to enrich the “nature” side of Scouting.

**Beholding the intricate and awesome world of nature. Discovering our true selves through life in nature, our illusions blown away by the winds. Recognizing our limits and using all our capacities to survive the sun, rain and snow.**

**Experiencing the interdependence of the natural world and the need to preserve it. Developing a responsible attitude and behaviour which respects the balance of nature today and for tomorrow.**

For Michael and his group, two weeks at camp in summer, and a weekend camp every month throughout the year, whatever the weather, is the bare mini-



mum. The locations are always chosen with care and checked out in advance so as to offer as many opportunities as possible for activities, discoveries, challenges and “responsible camping”. In this setting, everyone has to use his capacities to the full, relying on his own resources and those of the group to overcome obstacles. There is nothing superfluous at camp. Town life is left behind and it is a matter of discovering how to live comfortably with few resources.

Michael appreciates these opportunities for his group and for himself to get back to the essentials of life for a time, putting aside everyday worries and things that one takes for granted. In nature, the group becomes closer knit. Sharing and cooperating take on more meaning and are thus reinforced, as is that special feeling of belonging to a group which is so

different from groups of friends at school or in town.

### 3. DYNAMICS

The dynamics of Scouting’s educational system refers quite simply to how everything needs to work together so as to facilitate the development of young people in practice.

The dynamics of Scouting involves four interrelated and interdependent elements. All of these elements interact with each other and all of them, like forces of energy, must push in the same direction, i.e. the development of young people. These elements are:

- Educational objectives
- Activities
- Structure and functioning
- Group dynamics

Within an association, each of these aspects and how they

interact need to be borne in mind at all levels, even though the way of looking at them and the kind of action that will need to be taken will be different at national level and at local level.

At national level, it is a matter of ensuring that the dynamics are an integral part of the thinking process not only in terms of education *per se* but also in terms of support structures.

It is of course at local level that the dynamics actually come into play - in the real life situation of a unit. The leader must, therefore, understand the dynamics and be able to make adjustments when needed.

#### At national level:

#### Youth Programme design

- **Educational objectives**

At national level, educational objectives cover both the **final**



**objectives** (what a young person could be expected to achieve in terms of growth in each area of development by the end of the oldest age section offered by the association); and **intermediate objectives** (what a young person could be expected to achieve in terms of growth in each area of development by the end of a specific age section).

Educational objectives express what we are trying to achieve in a tangible and measurable manner. They also give meaning and direction to what we do in Scouting (in other words, they are why we do what we do and guide how we go about things to achieve a particular result).

We need to bear in mind, however, that while the educational objectives defined by the association at national level constitute part of the framework of the youth programme, they are

not directly applicable to each person nor to each local unit.

Nonetheless, they may serve as instruments for measuring the educational quality of a unit and for verifying that the association's youth programme is relevant to the needs of young people at a given time and in a given situation.

- **Structure and functioning**

Every national association defines a structure, organization charts, lines of responsibility, the systems of assemblies and councils, the decision-making mechanisms, the role and leadership style of adults, etc. for each level of the association and for all levels together.

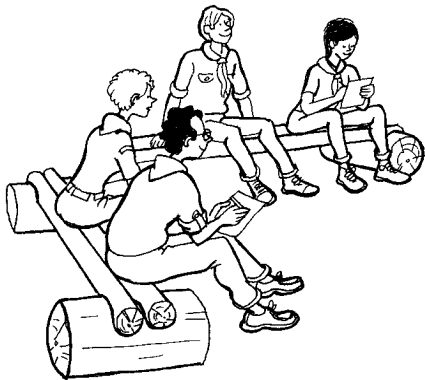
However, if we are to be consistent in what we are trying to offer young people, the way in which the association is structured and functions (including

leadership styles) matters.

The structure and methods of functioning of the association put in place by the national level can serve as a model all the way down to grassroots level. Structure and functioning are an important component of the dynamics at local level, too, and need to facilitate, not hinder, personal development.

It would, for example, be very difficult to stress the importance at local level of each young person learning to take part in the decision-making process, accepting responsibility for themselves, developing autonomy, etc., if all the decisions are taken at the top and conveyed to the bottom for execution.

The structure and functioning must therefore be consistent with the other elements of the dynamics, the Scout Method, the educational proposal and Scouting's purpose.



- **Activities**

In Scouting, activities are a medium used to achieve objectives and thus, ultimately, to fulfil Scouting's aim. However, the nature of an activity does not make it a Scout activity and the way in which it is carried out is just as important as the activity itself.

For example, you can camp in a way that has nothing to do with Scouting, and many people do so. Despite the fact that it is "outdoors", the school playground has nothing to do with the "nature" that B-P had in mind as an ideal setting for Scout activities.

We should not forget either that one of the essential features of Scouting's educational system is that it seeks to enrich the natural and spontaneous activity of children and young people with an educational content (making full use of their dynamism, their curiosity, their desire to be part of a group, their taste for adventure, etc.), as well as to enrich the everyday activities of life, such as feeding oneself, finding shelter, keeping warm, cool, etc..

Evidently, the activities must also be conceived so as to offer opportunities for learning experiences to occur, heading in the general direction of the educational objectives. Otherwise, there is a danger of organizing activities simply for the sake of keeping young people occupied.

However, it is not enough for an activity to be well-conceived, consistent with the objectives, useful to the community, well-prepared, etc. - it must also appeal to the young people.

If an activity is to serve any purpose at all, it must therefore be developed on the basis of what young people want to do.

- **Group dynamics**

Group dynamics refers to how people in a group act, react, interact, the roles played, etc. and the effects that all this has on the group - constructive or destructive. At national level it is important to recognize the crucial role that this element plays in the success or failure of a group and in the development of young people.

It is primarily through group life and the relationships that develop that the young people can learn to communicate on a deeper level, play a meaningful and responsible role, help each other out, realise the need to work out their conflicts in a non-aggressive way, understand the importance of keeping commitments, and so on.

While the group dynamics in each unit cannot be determined at national level, what the association can do is to ensure that

the structure and functioning that it proposes facilitates constructive group dynamics. Considerations include the size of the patrols, gender of the members, the span of ages within the unit, the distribution of roles and responsibilities, the decision-making process and instances, relationship between groups, degree of independence and autonomy, support to adult leaders, a strong identity or not, etc..

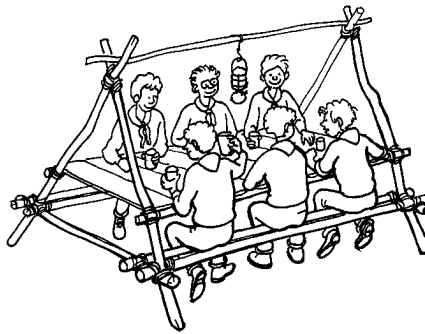
**At local level:**

**Programme implementation**

- **Educational objectives**

For each member of the group and for the group as a whole, the educational objectives indicate the direction and destination, but it is up to each young person and the group, with the assistance of the adult leader, to





formulate the objectives that they set themselves, and then to evaluate how far the young people have come in terms of achieving them.

It is up to the adult, over a certain period of time, to check that the objectives set by the young people with his or her assistance correspond to the different areas of growth, and thereby to ensure the full and harmonious development of the individuals and of the group as a whole.

- **Structure and functioning**

The level of sophistication (i.e. the level of simplicity or complexity) of the structure and functioning put into place will reflect the group's history and level of maturity.

The various components will need to be introduced progressively in a newly constituted

group so as not to overwhelm the young people (or the leader) with complex structures and ways of working which they are not yet ready for. For example, a new group which is not very tightly-knit will have trouble acting in an independent and responsible manner. Ensuring the success of an activity by adopting a more directive attitude may therefore contribute to the unity of the group and help it to mature through action and become more responsible and more autonomous.

In contrast, the directive attitude of an adult towards a group which is able to assume responsibility for itself can only lead to rebellion or cause the group to regress to a greater state of dependence.

In the same vein, attention needs to be paid to ensuring a correlation between the kind of activity proposed and the needs

of the group at a given time (e.g. there is little use in organising an evaluation session at a time when the group needs to expend physical energy).

There is therefore a need to ensure coherence between activities, group dynamics and the way in which the group functions. And all three of these elements of the dynamics need to be coherent with the educational objectives sought.

- **Activities**

While the programme certainly has a number of permanent features, the choice of activities, the way in which they are carried out, the result obtained and their impact on the group and on each member are specific to each group. Standard activities conceived at national level for the "average" group may serve

as a model or help a group to get started. However, the group must then assume responsibility for its own activities, conceiving and implementing activities which appeal to its members, taking the conditions in which it is operating into account.

It is up to the adult leader to enrich what the young people want to do in terms of activities, so as to give them an explicit “educational” content - in other words elements which will contribute to the growth of the each young person and to the achievement of the objectives set.

It is also up to the leader to ensure that the variety of activities undertaken covers a sufficient range of objectives to ensure the full and harmonious development of each person.

### • **Group dynamics**

The quality and richness of the group dynamics determine the quality of the activities undertaken.

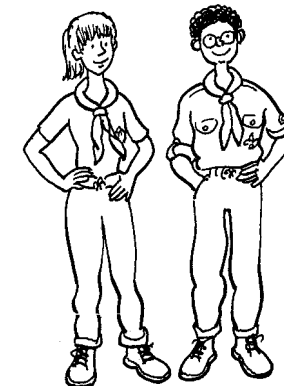
Moreover, without needing to have recourse to specific “activities”, it is in the group that the young people can learn about relationships, respect, dialogue, responsibility, listening, etc.

### **National and local levels**

In the light of all this, it is clear that the youth programme developed by an association does not really take shape until placed into the reality of unit life.

The role of the leader is of paramount importance, as he has to have a clear understanding of the youth programme and be able to implement it, while taking the reality of his group into account.

If the leader is not thoroughly familiar with the association’s youth programme, he will clearly not be able to adapt it - you cannot adapt something if you do not understand it - and will improvise something that might well work but will have little to do with Scouting. The art of the leader is to put Scouting into action and to ensure that it works; i.e. to ensure that what takes place in the unit really helps the young people to develop in terms of autonomy and solidarity.

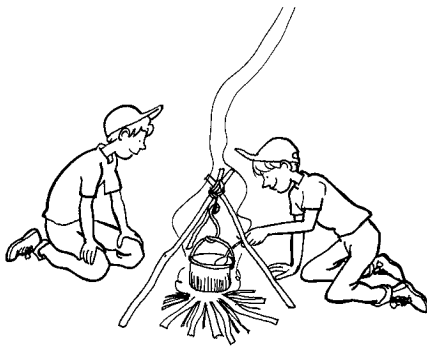


*“Our method of training is to educate from within rather than to instruct from without; to offer games and activities which, while being attractive to the boy, will seriously educate him morally, mentally, and physically.”*

*B-P*



# CONCLUSION



In writing this publication, we had in mind every Scout leader in his or her unit. We have written it for an imaginary person working in a setting and conditions which are specific to him or her. Quite clearly, it is the purpose, method and spirit of Scouting which are universal. The conditions and sociocultural environment in which this purpose, method and spirit are implemented are not, however, universal. In practice, they have to be adapted to the particular society and to the age of the children or young people with whom one is working.

Thus, for example, we have made “Michael” a “computer specialist”. Not everyone is a computer specialist, but this is not what counts. What does count is the reasons that have driven him to become involved in Scouting to work with young people, and the way in which he goes about it.

Elsewhere, the leader might be called Ahmed, Jane, Kim, Carlos,

Manuela or Koffi, and might be a civil servant, a shopkeeper, a craftsman, teacher, or whatever. The group might not be mixed, and it could just as well be a group of Cub Scouts aged ten to twelve rather than adolescents aged fourteen to seventeen. This does not alter anything essential in this publication, and it is up to each reader to interpret what he or she reads in accordance with the conditions under which he or she is working.

Young Cub Scouts would certainly not participate in decision-making in the same way as older Scouts. If the leader wants to practise Scouting, what matters is being able to understand that he or she has to find ways of allowing the Cubs, within the limits of their capabilities, and at a level corresponding to their stage of development, to have a part in the decision-making process. If the leader wants to practise Scouting, he or she has to develop responsibility in the young people through opportunities to practise

responsibility; i.e. by entrusting them with real responsibilities within the unit.

Had we attempted to take into account all the variations and all the social, cultural and other differences, we would have had to write twenty-five such publications (at least)! However, we are confident that those who read this publication will realize that: “Naturally, the details of how I live and work do not correspond to those described in this publication... Naturally, my troop is different from the one described... Of course, it never snows in my country, and we could not therefore build an igloo... But it is the ideas that count. I now have a better understanding of what Scouting is and of everything that has to be done to lead a group of young people in accordance with the Scout Method.”

We hope that we have achieved our intention.

**The quotations of Baden-Powell contained in this publication have been taken from:**

- p. 3 : Aids to Scoutmastership**
- p. 7 : Life's snags and how to meet them**
- p. 10 : Aids to Scoutmastership**
- p. 16 : Rovering to Success**
- p. 19 : Headquarters Gazette**
- p. 37 : Aids to Scoutmastership**