

## **Guiding Principles FAQs**

### **Where did these come from?**

The Guiding Principles ("GPs") were the result of a desire to create an explicit link between the history of the Camp Echo trip program and the present (and the future). The process for uncovering the GPs began in March 2009, in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Almost 30 folks gathered for two days to share stories about the trip program and discuss what made Camp Echo's tripping program so unique. The group was made up of current and former guides and trippers, as well as the current Echo leadership. In addition, many people sent in their stories, which were added to the conversation. Following those two days, a sub-group worked to uncover the common themes present in the stories. Those common themes became the GPs and Simple Rule.

### **Why La Crosse, not Echo or Evanston?**

La Crosse is the hometown of Jon Brenner, the first director of the Camp Echo Trip Program. We felt it was important to include Jon's voice and his stories in the process, and having the initial gathering in La Crosse was the easiest way to make that happen.

### **Why "Principles?"**

A principle is defined as a "a fundamental truth that serves as the foundation for a system of belief." It is our belief that the GPs represent the "fundamental truths" of the Camp Echo trip program; they are what make an Echo trip feel like an Echo trip.

### **What are the Practices?**

The Practices are things that trip guides can do, every day, to help bring the GPs to life. They are not the only things guides can do, but they are some of the methods for living the GPs that the Camp Echo Trip Program recommends. Each summer, guides will have the opportunity to contribute to the Practices, helping determine what they are, and what the priorities will be for their specific trips.

### **What's the difference between a "Principle" and a "Rule"?**

The safety issue was a higher priority than the Principles (for example, it's more important to be safe than to "say yes") so it became the sole Rule.

### **Why Six?**

No particular reason. That was the number that worked. The process was very grassroots and focused exclusively on the stories that were shared in La Crosse. We went in with no preconceived number of GPs, and no preconceived idea of what any of the GPs might be. After a lot of listening and then combining, refining and prioritizing, six clear themes emerged. Those six themes became the Six Principles.