



Mental Health Awareness

Ben Maxfield @ BXM Expeditions shares some words for us following Mental Health Awareness month.

We should start this off by saying we are not experts in Mental Health issues, however, we are experts in the outdoors and I'd say we have some expert skills in working with people, in particular younger people.

There is no denying and in fact many studies prove that the outdoors is great for your Mental Health, being in the outdoors breathing the fresh air helps people think clearly, reducing stress and often rationalise anxieties. The outdoors can bring joy free of charge and take your thoughts away from whatever it is that is causing you stress. Being outdoors allows the mind to spark your imagination and be creative with your thoughts. There is no judgement in the outdoors, just utter acceptance.

Acceptance, is something special that people in the outdoor world become accustomed to, particularly those who work in the outdoors. At BXM we employ over 400 outdoor practitioners and we allow them all to embrace their personalities and take them in to their work. So many individuals with quirky ways that form a solid base for our young people to feel accepted and free. Allowing our staff to be themselves shows the young people they work with that they too can be themselves. This ethos resonates all the way through BXM, including our liaison and logistics team who have no reason to put on an act with clients. BXM Media who make websites for outdoor professionals are encouraged to put their personalities in their work, everyone is given free reign and trusted, accepted.

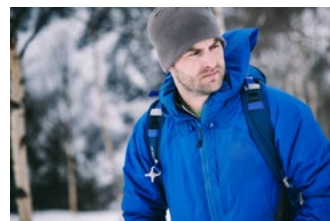
As for our Outdoor instructors, these are the people we try to look after the most, they are often on the road all summer, not going home to loved ones and working with different teams of instructors every week. This is great for making friends and meeting new people but the trade off is that they are at risk of becoming lonely if they feel they need some support. At BXM we recognise this and

work hard to ensure our instructors form a community where they will always have someone to talk to.

Whatever you are doing in life, indoors or outdoors, having someone to talk to at any given time is crucial. You can enjoy your time alone, but you should never actually feel alone. If you are worried or anxious then speak to people, communicate even if it doesn't feel effective you should try, rationalise the consequences of not doing something and try to remember thoughts are magnified at night. Try to make sure you go outside everyday even if it is a short walk, preferably somewhere with some nature, it will improve your mood and actually improves your memory.

BXM are committed to learning more about mental Health and our charity BXM Inspired is looking for investments so we can offer more trips for young people with mental health issues. All of the trustees are planning to launch an intervention trip for young people suffering with mental health and anxiety.

Mental Health issues and the anxiety they can create are no small thing and let's face it most of the time people don't know who around them is suffering, but someone close to you probably is, so be kind to everyone, accept individuality and never let anyone feel segregated. In reality, all anyone wants to do is help. We feel good for helping others so let's improve our mood at the same time as making someone else feel better.



Ben Maxfield,
BXM Outdoors

