

WHAT IS THE WAYFINDER EXPERIENCE?

For years now, the Wayfinder Experience has been a popular program for teens during Omega Family Week. Teens come back year after year for the exciting stories we create and the dynamic community that we build. There is however some confusion, curiosity, and questions about what we do, and why we often play out seemingly violent scenes and scary stories. We hope this information sheet will help.

The core of the Wayfinder program is teaching teens the values of playfulness, creativity, communication, and the ability to say “Yes!” to life. We spend the first three days playing games that build a sense of community and train teens for the Wayfinder Experience—a mythic enactment of sorcery, alchemy, and healing magic.

As in any good heroic story, there needs to be an adversary. What would Star Wars be without Darth Vader, the evil emperor, and the Storm Troopers? When viewed from the outside, without the context of all the preparation we do, onlookers of the Wayfinder Experience often question the violence they see enacted. While the action of the story contains some illusion of violence, the kids themselves are dramatizing the conflict. When Hamlet and Laertes duel, the actors themselves are not driven by bloodlust—their characters are. This is exactly the case with our story, which contains intense conflict and drama, culminating in battle.

The kids fight Monsters, Evil Wizards, Tyrannical Kings—all reflections of the inner struggles each and every human being faces on a daily basis. In this way, the game is a therapeutic experience, and teens can gain a new and positive sense of themselves.

Throughout the camp, we train teens to deal with the underlying themes of the game: life and death, healing, fair play, communication, and transformation. We train them to play well, to play safely, and to enter into a magical realm. If you ask them (and please do!), you will find that the teens who have been coming for many years have learned valuable life lessons through the Wayfinder process that help them in their everyday lives.

We do our absolute best to keep the game private, away from untrained onlookers, especially younger children. We ask you to respect our process, and especially to keep your younger children from following us during our story Wednesday night and Thursday.

Joseph Campbell talks about the myths that have informed humans throughout history, and that, in today’s world, much of our mythological information is transmitted through movies. The Wayfinder Experience is much like being in one’s own movie.

We’d love to tell you more about it, but couldn’t dare ruin the adventure for the players. Be sure to ask them on Friday how things turned out! Feel free to approach our staff if you have any questions concerning our program.

Adventurously yours,

Staff of The Wayfinder Experience

wayfinderexperience.com