

Clothing and Equipment List for Wilderness Therapy Intensive

The first half of this course takes place at a primitive retreat center (“Stillpoint”) at about 7,200 ft elevation. We will be camping out (strongly recommend having your own tent or tarp), but have access to an old cabin for cooking and meeting. You may leave extra items at Stillpoint while we are in the backcountry the second half of the Intensive.

The second half of the Intensive is in the backcountry (the Sangre de Christos mountains in southern Colorado), where the weather is unpredictable. It can be cold and wet (even snow!) one day but hot and dry the next (or even within the same day). For some of you, the information below will be “old hat,” but a reminder never hurts. Think about the following:

- You should plan to dress in layers, i.e. several lighter layers of clothing rather than one heavy layer. This allows you to take layers off or on as the weather changes, so you can regulate your temperature better.
- With the exception of regular underwear and t-shirts for warm days, your clothing should **not contain any cotton**. Your clothing should be made of new synthetics (e.g. pile, fleece, polypropylene, etc) or wool because they retain much of their insulating properties when wet. Synthetics are preferable over wool because they dry quickly and most people find them more comfortable next to their skin.
- This list is for the August Wilderness Therapy Intensive. If you are purchasing equipment for this course, keep in mind that in the second year you will also be spending extensive time outdoors in fall and spring conditions. This may influence your purchasing choices for this course.
- You will be provided with group gear such as pots, stoves, group water purification, first aide kit, and tarps for the backcountry.
- If you have any questions, please feel free to call Kate Mazuy 303.245.4838.

EQUIPMENT for the backcountry:

1. Backpack for carrying 40+ lb., with padded shoulder straps and waist belt (**4000 to 6000 cubic inch capacity**).
2. Backpack cover (for rain proofing) or heavy duty plastic bags (typical garbage bags are too light)
3. Day pack (for extra clothing, equipment, and food on day hikes /peak climbs – **at least 1,500 cubic inch carrying capacity**)
4. Sleeping bag (down or synthetic rated 10 - 20 degrees Fahr., depending on how warmly you sleep); with stuff sack
5. Sleeping pad (closed-cell foam, ensolite, or therm-a-rest style)
6. Ground cloth (plastic or waterproof nylon sheet at least 3' x 7')
7. Headlamp plus extra batteries and bulbs. LED type headlamps recommended – no need for extra bulb.
8. 2 water bottles / camelback: minimum of 2-quart carrying capacity. At least **one wide-mouth bottle recommended**)
9. Unbreakable cup, bowl, spoon (other utensils optional)
10. Small pocket knife with can opener
11. Sunglasses with keeper strap (100 % UV block highly recommended for high altitudes in Colorado)
12. Sunscreen rated SPF 15 or higher
13. Lip balm rated SPF 15 or higher
14. Insect repellent (optional, the bugs aren't usually too bad)
15. Toilet paper (for 5 backcountry days), plus multiple Ziploc storage bags (one for clean TP; others for soiled – we carry out used toilet paper)

16. Watch with alarm
17. Whistle on a neck cord
18. Compass
19. Journal or notebook and pens / pencils
20. Toiletry kit, including feminine hygiene needs (note that any soap should be biodegradable) and any medications you take on a regular basis e.g. aspirin. (We will provide a first aide kit for the unexpected events.)
21. Prescription medications – you should have a back up set of any vital medications in case you lose or get your primary set wet. If you know you have serious (i.e. life-threatening) reactions to anything we might encounter, for example bee stings, please bring appropriate medicine, such as an epinephrine pen.

CLOTHING for the backcountry: Temperatures can be below freezing at night and wind + rain during the day.

1. Medium or heavy weight hiking boots (**broken in**), waterproof, **above-the-ankle**, with hard lug sole for traction. **School policy requires you to wear boots with above-the-ankle support when carrying a full backpack, regardless of your level of experience or your usual mode of footwear.**
2. Camp shoes - (lightweight – to get out of hiking boots: e.g. sandals, tennis shoes, Crocs)
3. 3 sets of socks (synthetic, silk, or wool) [set = whatever *you* wear at one time, e.g. liner and heavier]
4. 1 pair shorts (quick drying material such as nylon)
5. 1 pair long pants (insulating) for cooler weather at night or at higher altitudes (NO cotton blends)
6. Long underwear, 2 tops and 1 bottom (No cotton blends)
7. 2 or 3 insulating upper body layers (NO cotton blends)
8. Fleece or down jacket
9. 1 tee shirt or tank top (for hotter weather - quick-drying recommended)
10. Regular underwear (quick drying recommended)
11. 1 pair lightweight gloves (polypro or wool)
12. 1 wool or fleece hat
13. Sun hat or visor (full hat recommended)
14. 1-2 Bandannas (for sun protection, sweat band, or as small towel)
15. Full rain gear: jacket with hood) and pants - no ponchos. If you have a non-breathable rain jacket, a light wind shirt is recommended.

NOTE: Bring all the items listed in “EQUIPMENT for the backcountry” and “CLOTHING for the backcountry” to the first day of class at the Naropa campus.

OPTIONAL GEAR for the backcountry:

1. Extra prescription glasses or contacts
2. Camp Chair (e.g. “Crazy Creek”) **strongly recommended!!!**
3. Biodegradable soap
4. Lightweight camera and film
5. Field guides (e.g. flowers, birds) – we also have a resource box with lots of field guides
6. Binoculars

For Stillpoint (1st half of trip), you may want to bring additional items, which you can then store at Stillpoint during our backcountry time. For example:

- Additional clothing, such as cotton shorts, tank tops, etc. (Stillpoint is at a lower elevation. Days can be warm to hot.)
- Additional footwear – e.g. tennis shoes / approach shoes
- Large towel
- Musical instruments
- Tent – strongly recommended for sleeping at Stillpoint

Buying Gear

When buying gear, it helps to visit several stores; you get to see different options and talk with different people. Some sales people will try to sell you what they want without listening to your needs. The more information you have, the wiser your choice. What works for one person may not work for another.

Hiking Boots

Your most important piece of equipment is your hiking boots. Because you will wear your boots almost everyday, their fit and functioning will significantly affect your experience. If your boots don't fit, don't provide good support, or don't keep your feet dry, your well-being and pleasure will be impacted. Take time and care in buying boots. And make sure they are broken in before you are in Boulder.

What not to buy:

Please do not buy "running-style" boots, such as ones made by Nike, Hi-Tec, and Adidas. We also recommend against the lightweight canvas boots that many boot companies and outdoor stores promote. Although these are fine for manicured trails, day hikes and small expeditions, we will often be in rougher terrain, including loose gravel, mud, small streams, and tall, wet grass.

What to buy:

The best choice is an all leather, medium-weight, ankle-high boot. The thickness of the leather and the stiffness of the sole determine the stability and support a boot offers. You do not need heavyweight leather. The medium-weight boots are fine. Buy a boot that has the leather glued and stitched to the sole (the best stitching process is "welt-stitching"), because this will avoid the sole delaminating from the boot.

Fitting your boots:

Boots should be sturdy and comfortable while wearing two pairs of wool socks or one pair of wool socks and one pair of liner socks. The heel should lift up only slightly going up a grade. The toes should not bang into the front going down a grade. Take a few minutes to walk around the store. Are there any spots that rub or irritate you? These spots will most likely turn to blisters after a few hours of hiking. Keep in mind that some people's feet vary in size throughout the day. Your feet may be slightly swollen in the afternoon. Size may also vary depending on temperature and water consumption. Any store should allow you to return the boots if you have not worn them outdoors, so taken them home and wear around the house for extended time in order to ensure the fit. Then, when you are sure about the fit, take them for longer hikes outdoors to break them in.

Where to buy good boots:

You can find good boots at stores specializing in mountaineering and backpacking. In addition to local shops, there are a few big chains with good selection: e.g. REI, Campmor, and Sierra Trading Post.

Sleeping Bag

Following is some advice for those of you who choose to purchase a bag at a mountaineering store. You may choose either a synthetic or down-filled sleeping bag. Synthetic-filled sleeping bags are easy to launder, maintain some loft when wet, and are less expensive than down-filled bags. Down sleeping bags are lighter in weight, more compressible, very comfortable, and last longer. They are also more expensive than synthetic and have the disadvantage of providing almost no warmth if they get soaked. Most people in Colorado use down bags.

Be sure your bag has a hood that goes around your head. Square-shaped bags are bulkier and heavier for given warmth than mummy or modified-mummy bags. Weight and room in the pack are important

factors for 1-2 week trips.

Backpacks

When selecting a backpack, make sure to test it with about 50 pounds in it. Different packs carry weight differently. What works for one person may not work for someone else, so go with what is most comfortable for you. Fit is also important. Working with a salesperson who really knows packs and listens to your needs is important.