



PTC Session 411

Exploring the Patrol Method (For Youth)

Planning & Training Conference
Chief Seattle Council
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Agenda



1. Introductions
2. Why the Patrol Method?
3. The Adult Role in the Patrol Method
4. The “Objections” to the Patrol Method
5. The Patrol Method in Practice ... Making it Work!!
6. Q & A



Introduction

- **Who I am...**
 - Bill Burris, Scoutmaster, T499 Newcastle/ Renton
 - ~17 years as Scoutmaster, Currently also an AOL Den Leader, Member of the Mountain Territory District Committee, Wood Badge member and have been a Wood Badge Staffer
- **Class Material:**
 - Full presentation will be available online
 - Email me for questions ... for link to this presentation – billb499@msn.com
 - **For adherence to YPT (Youth Protection) standards always copy another adult when corresponding with any adult (leader)**



Why the Patrol Method?



- *“The patrol system is not one method in which Scouting for boys can be carried on. It is the only method” Robert Baden Powell*
- *“It is not the slightest use to preach the Scout Law or to give it out as orders to a crowd of boys: each mind requires its special exposition (“Explanation/ Description”) of them and the ambition to carry them out”Robert Baden Powell*

Personal & Team Growth Happens



- Personal & “Team” Growth happens when there is cooperation within a group of equals. This is when the really radical idea of Scouting takes place
 - Youth Self-Government through the Patrol Method!!
 - **“Oh No!!! The Kids Are In Charge!!!”**
- The Patrol Method happens when Scouts
 - Make their own plans
 - Formulate their own rules
 - Keep up their own discipline ... by modeling expected behavior
 - Elect their own leadership charged with implementing these plans

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The Patrol Method provides the opportunity to learn through experience what it means to belong to a group (Team/ Patrol) and to accept personal responsibility.



Important Parts of the Troop Program Are



- Advancement
- Activities at Troop Meetings
- Outdoor Activities
- Camping Trips
- Attendance
- Membership Retention & Growth
- Fundraising

- **All are very important, but they are actually just decorative ... Important but they are mostly Administrative.**



The Patrol Method – The Real Heart of the Troop



- *If we build on the Patrol Method ...*

*The Program Features and
the Administrative measuring
tools will happen!!*



Adult Role in The Patrol Method?

- Adults can be the “Lecturer” or can be the “Guide”
- Guiding Scouts using the Patrol Method is ...
 - A gentle push in the right direction and letting the Scouts move forward
 - Be there as a support for advice when asked ... Good answer to the Scout is “What do you think...?”



The Adult Role in Scouting is Important!!!

..... But Adults are not in the Troop Youth Leadership Structure they aren't even on the chart.



- In the Patrol Method Scouts can and should ...
 - Form their own patrols
 - Elect their Senior Patrol Leader and Patrol Leaders.
Adults don't appoint them!!

.... Adult Leaders respond to the choices made by the Scouts and Start **guiding** the leaders the Scouts elected.



The Patrol Method Can Mean Dramatic Changes!!

- There are Troops where the patrol method is approached differently and to different degrees Often driven by the “concerns” of the Adults
- Since people(Adults) are usually resistant to dramatic change there are **objections** when the Patrol Method is being considered.





Objections!!!!

Objections to the patrol method come from adults and Scouts.

1. If Scouts are given the choice Scouts will not form “**balanced patrols**”.
2. If Adult Leaders don’t have a say Scouts won’t elect “**qualified leaders**”.
3. Without direct Adult oversight Scouts will not do their “**jobs**”.
4. Since Scouts “**don’t plan as well**” or present things as well as adults, “**our program will suffer**”.
5. If given the choice, Scouts will not do things that result in “**advancement**”.
6. Our Older Scouts “**don’t want to work with younger Scouts**”.
7. We (The Adults) aren’t comfortable with giving Scouts this much “**power**”.

BAD ASSUMPTIONS!!!



Patrol Method in Practice – Making It Happen

1. Scouts form their own patrols and choose their own leaders

- If the Adult Leaders assign the Scouts to Patrols , the Scouts likely are not going to observe the structure of the Patrol.
 - Given the opportunity Scouts will gravitate, at meetings, to be with their friends.
 - So ... when forming or re-forming Patrols, let the Scouts choose which Patrol they want to be a member of.
 - **With support & guidance from the Senior Patrol Leader & ASPL(s)**



Patrol Method in Practice – Making It Happen



2. Be Patrol-centric.

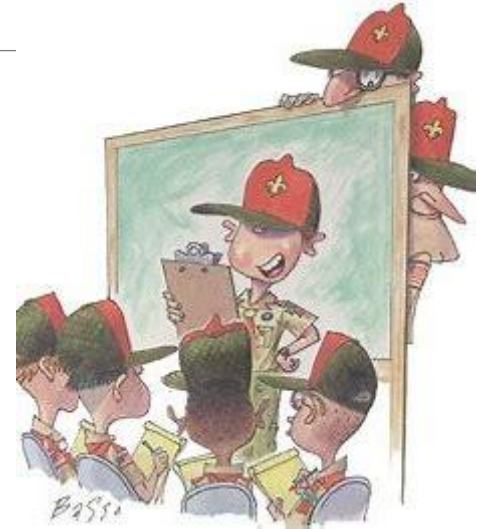
- Have a dedicated time set aside for Patrols to meet at every Troop meeting ...
“Patrol Corners”
- Camp **by Patrol**
- Play Games **by Patrol**
- Work Scout Skills **by Patrol**



Patrol Method in Practice – Making It Happen

3. Adults ... Keep your distance.

- Youth leaders will not lead “freely” if an adult is in the area.
- Adults likely can lead, present, and organize better than some Scouts
 - BUT ...When they do, they’ve taken the experience and that “Growth” opportunity away from the Scouts.
 - Adults can be close enough to observe but not close enough to be a “dominating influence”.



What does all that mean??



1. Hold a Troop/ PLC (run) “**Annual PLANNING**” Calendar Meeting
 - **Scouts select** Troop Meeting Activities
 - **Scouts select** Weekend Activities
 - **Scouts select** Summer Camp location!!

Scouts can be creative and imaginative.

Use this when picking activities

 - **Science Night**
 - **Movie Night**
 - **Campfire Night**
 - **Patrol Cookoff**
 - **COPE Game Night**
 - **Guest Speaker Night**



What does all that mean??



2. Patrols

- **Scouts select** their own Patrols and Patrol Name
- **Scouts elect** their Patrol Leaders

3. **The Scouts, as a Troop, elect their Senior Patrol Leader**



During Troop Meetings

- The PLC -- Senior Patrol Leader, Asst Senior Patrol Leader(s), and Patrol Leaders run the meeting
 - Select & Run the Pre-Meeting Activity
 - Flags ... Announcements
 - Skill Instruction (As a Troop or in the Patrol)
 - Patrol Meetings (Every Troop Meeting)
 - Skills Instruction
 - Skill of the Week ... Knot of the Week
 - Patrol Activity Planning
 - Main Meeting Activity
 - Inter-Patrol Game
 - “Roses & Thorns” ... What did/didn’t work?



The Patrol Method Requires **PLANNING** ... Patrol Leaders Council (PLC)



- **Meets Once a Month ... Minimum**
 - **Separate from a Troop Meeting!!**
 - Reviews Troop Calendar Events for **“Planning”** Purposes
- **Scouts in Attendance**
 - Senior Patrol Leader ... Manages Meeting with the assistance of the ASPL(s)
 - Patrol Leaders ... Represent their Patrol Members
 - Other Youth Leaders (Troop Eagles, Scribe, Troop Guide(s), Quartermaster(s) etc.) ... Provide **“Planning”** Input

Adults are not at the “PLC Table”!!



ACTIVITY/ MEETING PLANNING!!!

***“Fail To Plan ...
Plan To Fail”***



ACTIVITY/ MEETING PLANNING!!! ... Tools






[Troop Meeting Agenda - Troop Leader Resources \(scouting.org\)](#)

<https://troopleader.scouting.org/troop-meetings/>

Other tools, Information and Worksheets

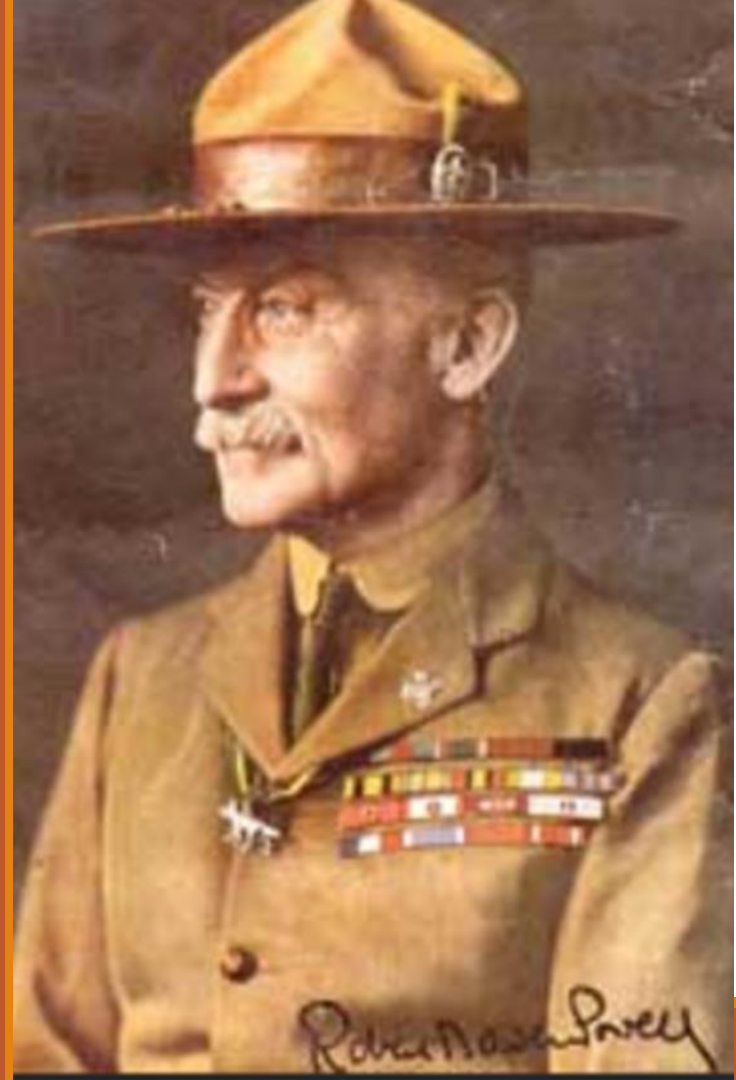
- ❖ Annual Planning
- ❖ Monthly Planning
- ❖ Troop Meeting Planning/ Agenda



 Meeting Plan: _____ 			
Week __ Date _____			
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening __ minutes before meeting			_____
Opening Ceremony __ minutes	Flag presentation Oath and Law Uniform inspection		_____
Group Instruction __ minutes	• • •		_____
Skills Instruction __ minutes	• • • 		_____
	• • • 		
	• • • 		
Breakout Groups __ minutes			_____
Game __ minutes			_____
Closing __ minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		_____
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting __ minutes	Leadership team review plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		_____

*“Train Them ...
Trust Them ...
Let Them Lead!!”*

- *“The patrol system is not one method in which Scouting for boys can be carried on. It is the only method” Robert Baden Powell*



Questions

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Thoughts

