



## ...What stays with you decades later

Saturday night at 10 PM, at every Camp Chateaugay reunion, everyone heads over to Wilderness for the campfire.

During the summer, Wilderness is the zone for the oldest campers. It's the absolute pinnacle of the camp experience. You're only allowed to go there when you're a Wilderness camper. It's where you spend your final summers at camp before moving up to staff. It's a big deal.

Even now, younger campers won't enter. They know the rule.

But at reunion? Alumni in their 20s, 40s, 60s all sit around the Wilderness campfire together.

And something happens.

You're looking up at the stars. The fire's going. And next thing you know, you're remembering. That conversation about whether everyone sees colors the same way. The first time you talked about something big as your own person, not just as someone's kid. Those moments where you were aware of yourself thinking independently for the first time.

The feeling from your formative years is unchanged. The conversations are the same. Deep, meaningful, and silly at the same time.

Someone shares something real. What they've been thinking about. What's happening in their life. They're telling this to people they might have just met the day before. And on the other side of the fire, someone else is being completely silly and irreverent. Both happening at once.

That's camp. And it's just like what happens during the summer.

At the reunions, decades disappear. It's like no time has passed at all.

That's muscle memory.

## How It Works



Muscle memory, in my layman's understanding, is when your body does something automatically, without thinking based on rote repetition.

Learn to ride a bike as a kid. Take decades off. Get back on, and your body just knows.

Camp works the same way.

Not just the songs you remember or the activities you did. It's the feeling. The joy. The freedom. The version of yourself you got to be there.

It settles in you. And it stays.

This summer is Camp Chateaugay's 80th reunion.

At every reunion, the pattern repeats. Friday afternoon check-in. Saturday activities and dinner. Then that Wilderness campfire.

Alumni show up and feel it immediately. Camp is still camp.

Same lake. Same songs, with some new ones. Same feeling when you walk through the gates.

That's why people come back. Not for nostalgia. For the actual feeling of being there again.

## What Doesn't Change



Camp doesn't change much.

The world does. Technology accelerates. Culture shifts. Childhood looks different every decade.

But camp? Camp is still camp.

You can come back to it, either via a reunion or just in your memory, and feel like yourself again. Knowing that version of yourself that was free and silly and expansive.

Camp maintains this as a place that stays with you.

If you're an alum reading this, you already know. Camp is still with you. The songs, the inside jokes, the feeling of being there.

If you're sending your child to camp this summer, this is what they're coming to. Not just a summer. Something that stays with them.

If you're finding out about camp for the first time, this is what we're protecting. A place that holds summer after summer. A place where joy lasts.

Eighty years. The same lake. The same feeling.

That's what Camp Chateaugay is.

**See you this summer.**

Mitch

**PS - We are celebrating our 80th Summer with aa reunion THIS summer, so if you'd like to attend, you can register [here](#).**