Avalanche Consequence Lesson Plan

Preload: With the chart of experience/confidence graph in classroom or sketched on snow

- statistical preload of 25% who die from trauma
- use the fire/rescue model of risk/frequency, square. High risk/low frequency relating to skiing in the backcountry and risk vs reward

Other considerations

- L2 students? Pro track
- youth & confidence
- Later in course to facilitate trust and bonding experience of students for a potentially vulnerable experience
- site privacy for interruption free experience

What worked

- transition from rescue scenario debrief to consequence exercise
- ask for volunteer(s)
- reference back to experience/confidence graph.
- emphasis having a near miss/paradigm shift experience in a safe environment.
- take volunteer(s) and tell them they did not survive the avalanche- give them 5-10 minutes to reflect on this, away from the group. Have them choose a volunteer to go with them
- address the group-reemphasizing the potential positive benefits of the exercise
  - ask them to support the volunteer(s)
  - ask them to honor the experience as if it we were real

When the volunteer(s) return, have them dig a shallow grave. (ally can help dig)

- this will help shift the action from a mental to a physical experience in volunteers, to avoid getting into the mental emotional state

- trench should be shallow with room for 6”-12” of snow on top

- set blocks aside to cover head for air space

- consider das parka if temps are cold

- when hole is complete instruct volunteer(s) to say own short obituary to group

- obituary should be facilitated, if going on to long (this can be a mental dialog, the nuggets are after the burial)
-allow observer emotions to go

-Bury volunteer(s) with positive airway. There should be enough snow to feel the weight and cold of the snow on their body. Use blocks around face or clothing.

- instruct them to stay in as long as needed to experience what it is like.
- if more than one volunteer have them remain silent until they all come out

-Re-entry should be held with compassion and honoring the brave volunteer(s)
  give them time for the experience to set in.
  -facilitate conversation. Volunteer may speak first or still may be processing the experience in which case have audience share what witnessing this experience brought up for them. Encourage quiet ones to speak

-Tie it together with positive words
  -quote about life/death if you want.

Mary Oliver; *When it’s over, I don’t want to wonder if I have made of my life something particular, and real. I don’t want to find myself sighing and frightened, or full of argument. I don’t want to end up simply having visited this world.*

-why experiencing this can short cut learning curve. avoiding near miss/accident
- confidence is not directly related to accuracy. (Makadakus)
  -Improve accuracy with tools leaned & applied in course
- Native cultures practice death to live fully
- Risk vs reward

-move group from site with tour to integrate and move energy
- identify students who may need one on one to work through ideas of death

- Post course;
  - feedback from students/instructors on what worked/didn’t, how to improve