

SWIFTWATER RESCUE CLASSROOM OUTLINE

Waiver explanations

Request information on health problems

“Challenge by Choice” - Students will decide whether to participate in each exercise.

Each exercise is EXPLAINED, then DEMONSTRATED.

If you are still unsure, then watch other students PARTICIPATE.

If you're still unsure, then don't do the exercise!

WE DO NOT TEACH first aid or vertical rescue skills. We recommend specialized courses for both.

Rescue Principles

- 1) Group Management: Keeping everyone together
 - Duties of the lead and sweep boater*
 - Duties of the individual paddler*
 - River etiquette*

- 2) Deciding to get involved:
 - Is someone in trouble?*
 - How can I help without unnecessary risk?*
 - What's the best way to work with the people who are there?*
 - a) *What's the Situation?*
 - b) *What do you need*

- 3) *Keep rescues as simple as possible (KIS)*
- 4) *Minimize your risk. The limits of RETHROG (Reach, Throw, Row, Go)*

- 5) *Understand the effects of STRESS and PRESSURE on your brain*
 - The brain has two parts: Logical (Higher) & reflex (primitive), Adrenaline can put the primitive brain in charge. It's why athletes choke; it's why people panic.*
 - a) *People tend to freeze up when they're in grave danger; preplanning, knowledge & training helps them react confidently.*
 - b) *Stress tends to narrow a rescuer's sphere of awareness; Consciously widen your focus beyond your immediate concerns*
 - c) *Adrenaline may cause rescuers to work at speeds beyond their skill CONSCIOUSLY SLOW DOWN. You'll still be faster than usual.*
 - d) *Move very deliberately on shore – watch your feet when you're on the move*

- 6) *Fast Rescue Strategies:*
 - a) *Self-Rescues are always the fastest*
 - b) *Fast assists are routine for whitewater paddlers*
 - c) *Getting outside help can be very time consuming*
 - d) *Get people moving - Evacuate by river whenever possible*
 - e) *The one big exception to the focus on speed: Spinal Injuries! Is there a MECHANISM for spinal injuries? If so, check for SYMPTOMS!*

- 7). *Rescue Organization*
 - a) *Leader Directed vs. Self Directed Rescue Response*
 - b) *Private boaters vs. outfitters vs. emergency responders*
 - c) *Training – Gear – Organization - Mobilization*
 - d) *Always look for the job that needs to be done, then do it*
 - e) *Work with existing leaders - Don't argue unless there is a risk to life*

8) *Site Setup and management*

- a) *Most rescues require that you to make physical contact with pinned boats or victims*
- b) *Provide backup on the nearest shore or rock*
- c) *Set upstream lookout and downstream backup*
- d) *Someone goes to the opposite shore or side if possible*
- e) *Once the victim is out of the water – check for injuries – plan for care and evacuation
(May need to end for help earlier during extended rescues)*

9) *River Signals*

10) *The Incident Command System and Protocols for interactions between units*

- a) *Present yourself as a RESOURCE, not an adversary*

11) *Managing Bystanders*

12) *The role of helicopters in river rescue*

13) *Liability and the Standard of Care*

Personal Gear a) *PFD, Helmet, Cold Water Protection*

b) *Knife and saw*

c) *Carabiners: Standard, Locking, and Auto-lock*

d) *Whistles*

e) *Webbing loop and/or Flip line*

Throw Bags– Types & Specifications a) *Rope Materials & Construction*

b) *Static vs. dynamic rope*

c) *Breaking Strengths*

d) *Throw bag design and lengths*

e) *Webbing and Prussiks*

Throw bag use in current

a) *Stance & Throwing: Underhand, overhand, & sidearm
Throw bag use in rafts (guide training only)*

b) *Positioning to catch & pendulum a swimmer*

c) *Catching the line*

d) *Individual and Buddy Belays*

e) *Vectoring the line*

f) *Team throw*

g) *Re-stuffing and carrying a throw bag*

Managing rope:

a) *coils & spaghetti piles*

b) *Staying out of the loop in and out of the water*

c) *Pulling on the rope: hauling team setup & the fireman's grip*

Swimming - the basis for self-rescue a) *Defensive and aggressive*

b) *Swiftwater entries*

c) *Crossing eddylines*

d) *Swimming into strainers*

e) *Swimming over pourovers and ledges*

Wading

a) *The Basic Principle – maintaining your balance*

b) *Individual – with paddle*

c) *Paired, Circle, Line, and Wedge*

Using Rescue Life Vests

a) *Allows you to belay someone in or around swift water*

b) *CAUTION: Not for Vertical Rescue!*

- b) *Makes and Models; Types of tethers*
- c) *How the swiftwater harness works; what causes the harness to jam*
- d) *Uses:*
 - Belaying shore-based personnel*
 - Self-belay*
 - Belaying Swimmers*
 - As a boat towing device*
 - Tired Swimmer Rescue*
 - Straight and Vee Lowers*

10. *Getting Lines Across a River*

- a) *Ferrying a line*
- b) *Minimizing water contact*
- c) *Putting a bend in the rope*
- d) *Line-supported wading*
- e) *Zip Lines*

11. *Knots:*

- a) *Figure 8 family (straight, on a bight, follow-through, directional)*
- b) *Fisherman's Knot, Water Knot, bowline*

12. *Boat Unpinning*

- a) *Why boats pin*
 - Types of pins: Center, end to end, pinch, and vertical pins*
 - Unpinning Open Canoes*
 - Unpinning Inflatables*
- b) *Developing an unpinning strategy*
- c) *Muscle Power Releases*
- d) *Mechanical Systems*
 - Anchors: Single & Multi-point*
 - The Z-Drag & Pig Rig*
 - Safety: planning for kick-back*

13. *Entrapment Rescues*

- a) *Causes of entrapment*
- b) *Canoe & kayak outfitting review*
- c) *Heads up vs. Heads Down situations*
- d) *Entrapment Rescue*
- e) *Get muscle to the scene; support, then extricate*
- f) *Stabilization and snag lines*
- g) *Foot entrapment Rescues*

14. *Loose Boat Rescues*

- a) *Chase people first, gear second*
- b) *When manpower permits, split up the load:*
 - one person helps the swimmer,*
 - another gets the boat, and the third gets he paddle.*
- c) *Encourage Self Rescue*
- d) *Swimmers should abandon gear in difficult rapids*
- e) *Using the "Hand of God" rescue to right a flipped kayak with a paddler inside*

15. *This is a good beginning. New techniques constantly evolve so keep on learning!*