

## Mountain Skills and Trip Coordinator Course – May 25

After a fantabulous day on the Porcupine creek trail and an awesome potluck supper Saturday night, we decided our night was over at 2330 and then next day was to begin at 0900 as discussed.

Sunday May 25<sup>th</sup> – Last day

As we casually gather all of our things and made our nutritious breakfast to the start of our last day of adventure, we were informed by our new assigned trip coordinator that we were to be out of the hostel by 0830 due to electrical problems. That was a 0810, thus the scrabble began! We meet in the parking lot at 0830 with all of our goods everyone ready and packed. Mission Accomplished! Only to realize that this too was a test!

We all drive to our next location of our days hike. Today brought us another great May sunshine day with some overcast clouds in the distance. We are going to embark on the Wasootch Creek Trail. The rapid warm up began with a steep elevation mixed with rock steps, tree roots and mixed dirt and stones for at least 25 minutes. Rule of climbing this type of elevation to take small flat uphill steps lock your back knee then small step up with the other leg – this technique will prevent you from quick fatigue and exhausting your knees and legs. So if you are unable to talk calmly while climbing you are definitely going too fast.

This day was going to be filled with multiple scenarios and we knew it!!! From a hiker forgetting her food and water back at the car to a simple broken leg, fearful hiker to runaway hiker, broken shoelace to seeing a bear in the bush while taking a much needed release of water break, and of course the guy that has been looking for just the right girl.... so why not try the hiking club!!!

We were all put to the test one by one. During these scenarios it seemed they always ended up with many laughs but most important a lesson on coordinating a hiking trip and how to deal with these possible scenarios.

Important to remember : Common sense RULES.

Few things to note ---- your number one priority is the GROUP. Just because you are leading the group you don't have to be in the lead position you can assign

another hiker and you can be the sweep (end of the line). By being at the end you can observe your hikers and assess their skill levels, fatigue, concerns.

If problems or concerns arise you can take time, think about it, and stop the group if you have to remember the hike is a fun and sociable event. And we all want to be SAFE.

Being a trip coordinator means taking control of an untoward situation that may arise and make a decision and stick to it and stay calm.

Other lessons we learned: flat steep rock slabs mixed with shale- Ensure your feet are flat preferably on the flat steep rock slab whether you are going straight up , straight down or even walking sideways- trust yourself and your boots.

Remember it is not always the quick way up or down but the safest so you may have to take a few extra steps to make your way.

Electrolytes: Important to see the signs of dehydration. Observe your hikers when they walk, are they tripping over small rocks, swaying, losing balance??? Time to take a break and rehydrate with water and electrolyte tabs.

We never did feel that rain maybe the tears on our faces from laughing but the hike ended with no injuries, some great actors and lots of comedians!

We all gained new hiking friends and most important learned loads of information to be able to hike with confidence and safety.

Thanks to Steve and Sandy for sharing your overwhelming knowledge!!!!

Melayn, Jack, and Karen