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UNDERSTANDING RISK

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Below are examples of what *leads to* the RISKS. Risk is defined as the potential to LOSE something of value to us. What we need to remember is that our MOTIVATION FOR RISK is to GAIN something of value—good health, self confidence, recognition, spiritual growth, money, friends, relationships, career move, and so forth.

DANGER: Exposure to Perils and Hazards

PERILS: Sources of loss

HAZARDS: Situations that increase the possibility of loss

Conditions:	Actions:	Human Factors:
•Loose Rocks	•Might Fall	•Being In Fall Line
•Animals	•Might Attack	•Being in Path Of
•Swift Water	•Might Have to Cross	•Temp, Speed, Bottom, Skill, etc
• Rock Cliff	• Might Climb/Rappel	• Inadequate Protection, etc
•Frayed Rope	• Might Break	• Using Over Sharp Edge
•Tectonic Plate	• Might Earthquake	• Living in, say, Los Angeles
•Lightning	•Might Strike	•Poor Position
•Student Attitude (M)	•Might Harass	•Put in Tent w/emale
•Bald Tires	• Might go Flat	•Driving Students
•Stock Market	•Might go Down	•Not Selling in Time

POTENTIAL CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS IN OUTDOOR PURSUITS: A MATRIX

Potentially Unsafe Conditions: Due to:	Potentially Unsafe Acts Due to:	Potential Errors in Judgement Due to:
• Falling objects (rocks, etc.)	• Inadequate protection	• Desire to please others
• Inadequate area security	• Inadequate instruction	• Trying to adhere to a (physical, political, cultural) schedule
• Weather	• Inadequate supervision	• Misperception
• Equipment/Clothing	• Unsafe speed (fast/slow)	• New or unexpected situation (includes fear and panic)
• Swift/cold water	• Inadequate or improper food/drink/medication	• Fatigue
• Physical/psychological profile of participants and/or staff	• Unauthorized/improper procedure	• Disregarding instincts

Designed and revised by Dan Meyer: 1979
and Jed Williamson: 1984–2007

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