

Risk, Rapport, and Reflection: Making the Daily Debrief Worth the Squeeze

Presenters: Kristin Arnold & Sheldon Kerr, IFMGA/AMGA Mountain Guides, Moxie Mountain Guides

Format: 60-minute interactive workshop

Target Audience: Field staff and program managers (intermediate level)

This workshop explored how daily debriefs—an essential tool for risk management, learning, and program quality—are often skipped, rushed, or limited to 'eventful' days. Through stories, guided reflection, and partner exercises, participants built and practiced debrief questions that uncovered lessons from 'non-event' days, integrating both physical risk and inclusion/rapport considerations.

Drawing from their experience as IFMGA guides, avalanche forecasters, and instructor trainers, Kristin and Sheldon demonstrated how thoughtful debriefing improved decision-making, strengthened team culture, and made inclusion a measurable part of risk management practice.

Action Steps:

1. Implement one new debrief question that addresses psychological safety and inclusion.
2. Structure daily debriefs to be engaging and actionable within five minutes.
3. Train staff to use debriefs as tools for soliciting high-quality feedback and improving craft.

About the Presenters:

Kristin Arnold (she/her) is an IFMGA mountain guide and co-owner of Moxie Mountain Guides, specializing in technical skiing/climbing, instructional coaching, and inclusion as risk management consulting. A former pro soccer player, she has led 30+ Alaskan expeditions, guided ski descents on Chilean volcanoes, trained U.S. Special Forces in alpine rescue, and worked as an avalanche forecaster. Kristin is also an instructor/examiner for the AMGA and an instructor trainer for AIARE.

Sheldon Kerr (she/her) is an IFMGA Mountain Guide based in Colorado with a degree in Feminist and Gender Studies from Colorado College. She has guided on five continents and worked as an avalanche forecaster, inclusion consultant, ski patroller, AIARE instructor trainer, and AMGA examiner. She co-owns Moxie Mountain Guides, a mission-driven service dedicated to removing barriers to technical guiding through equity pricing, affinity group partnerships, and instructional excellence.

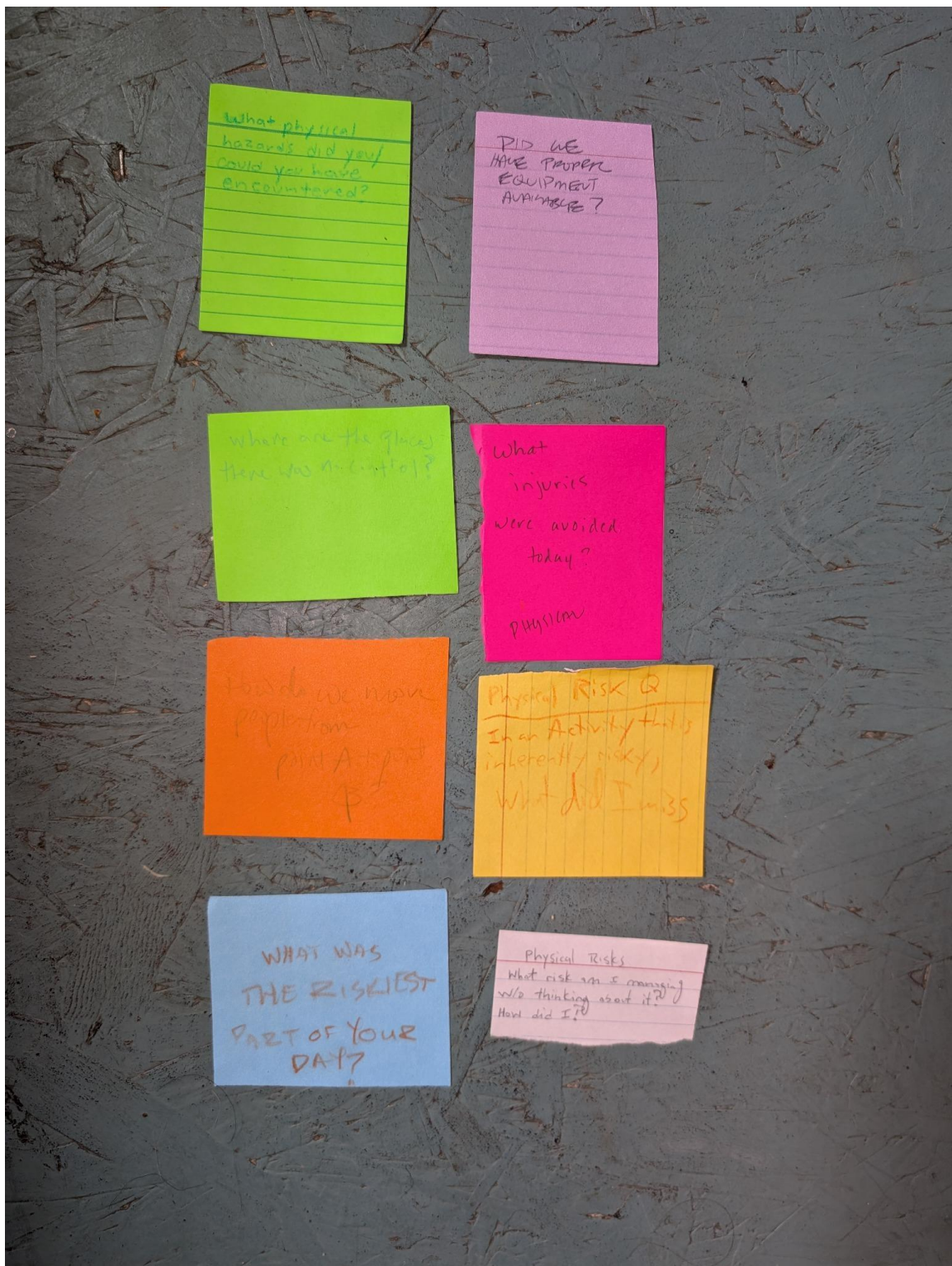
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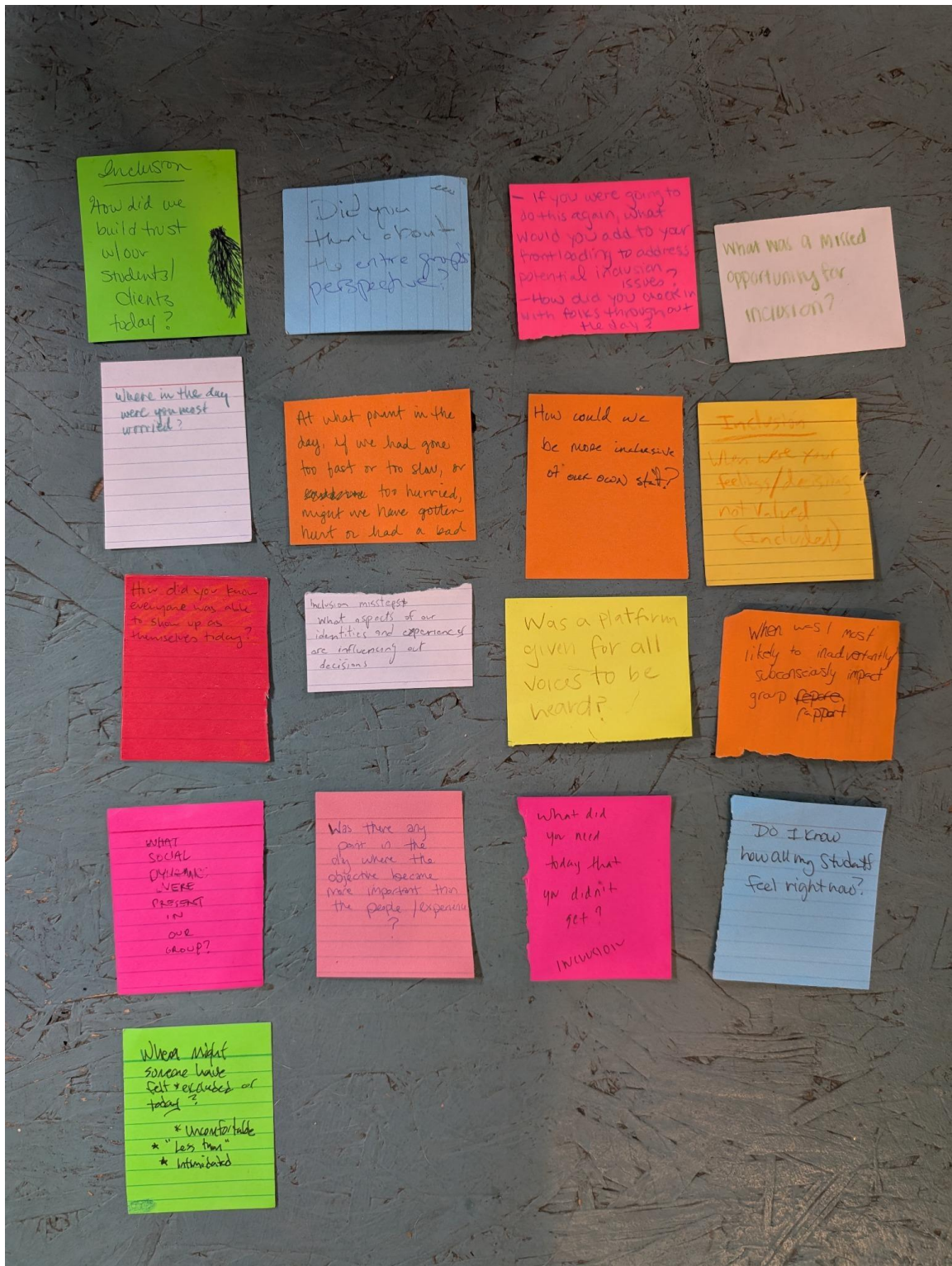
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Participant Debrief Questions Generated During the Session



Debrief Questions – Physical Risks



Debrief Questions – Inclusion Risks (1 of 2)

How was that
show up as
elves today?

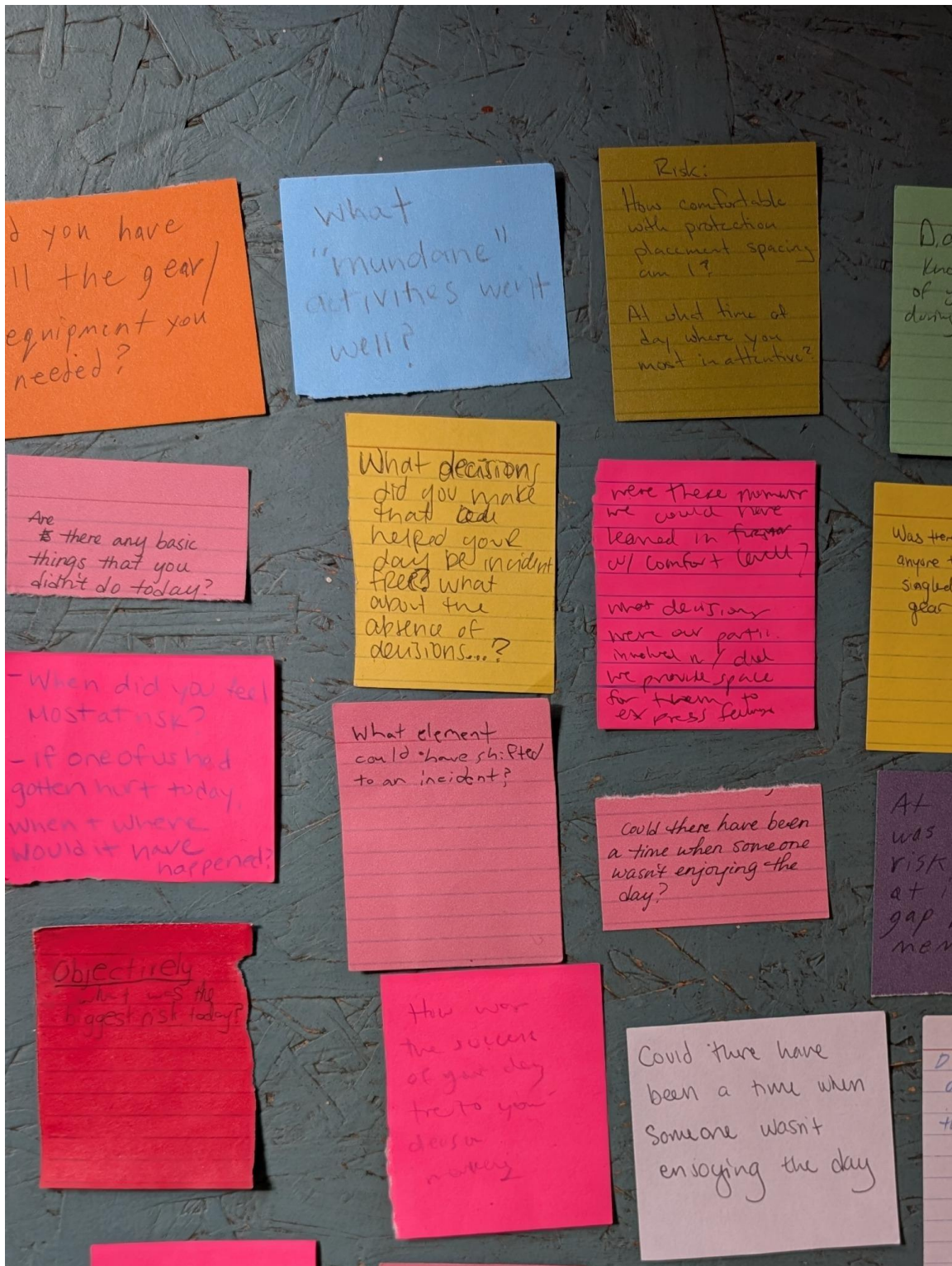
What aspects of our
identities and experiences
are influencing our
decisions

AT
UAL
HUMANES
WERE
ESSENT
IN
OUR
GROUP?

Was there any
point in the
day where the
objective became
more important than
the people / experience
?

even night

Debrief Questions - Inclusion Risks (2 of 2)



Debrief Questions - Inclusion and Physical Risks