

WHAT you have here is a collection of real stories gathered from Wilderness Medical Associates' instructors. It never ceases to amaze what a wide range of field experience is distributed throughout this diverse group of individuals. As our instructors continue their involvement in patient care and the outdoors, new stories will undoubtedly filter in and it's our intention to continue to add them to the compilation you have here.

DO these patient exercises along with your Wilderness Medical Associates' courses or on your own as a review of the mental gymnastics that effective patient assessment requires. Use the sample at the front of this workbook as a reference and realize that there are a thousand ways to write this stuff down and organize your mental process. Your notes will not be identical to the authors but should reflect similar assessment and treatment priorities.

YOU will likely wish you had more information to supplement each of these stories, especially details such as: distance to evacuation, weather, group size, etc. Including all of those details would have required a very thick book and I suspect that no matter how much background is provided, you will naturally wish for more information, as you all know ... *you really had to be there*. I've included what I hope will be the minimum amount of information required to make each of these anecdotes a useful exercise.

THINK especially about the assessment and plan sections of the SOAP notes (the A, A', and P), but go ahead and fill in all the information on the top of the form as well (the S, and O) to get comfortable with the SOAP note format provided in the supplemental SOAP Note Book.

YOU WOULD be surprised to find how different the format for recording this information is from agency to agency. On the ambulance, we call it a 'run sheet'; at the ski area, an 'incident report form'; in the hospital, a 'chart'. In our courses, we call it a 'SOAP note'. The important thing is that the process of gathering and writing down the information is comprehensive and leaves few questions unanswered. Complete the questions at the bottom of each story after you've completed your SOAP note but before you check the answers in the back of the book.

DO your best with each of these patients. Some will be very challenging when it comes to developing an assessment. You may have a hard time putting a name on things or ordering your priorities. Others are so easy you may wonder why you're doing them. These are likely the more common scenarios for us to encounter in the backcountry and are therefore worth our attention. No matter how simple or complex, each is included to make an important point. Remember the big picture and have fun with the stories.