

CWA Summit Session Spotlight: Creating A Culture Of Personal Responsibility

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in [CWA Blog](#)



In anticipation of the [2022 CWA Summit](#), May 18-20 in Salt Lake City, we're highlighting conference sessions we can't wait to see. Stay tuned each month as we spotlight the speakers and topics driving the future of indoor climbing!

The CWA Summit brings professionals from every corner of the indoor climbing industry together to learn, grow, and challenge one another.

In the Legal and Risk Management track, we're excited to bring you Lor Sabourin, [a full-time trainer with The Warrior's Way](#), and their session: Creating a Culture of Personal Responsibility.

You may be familiar with Lor from their groundbreaking documentary, [They/Them, by Patagonia](#). We caught up with Lor and they gave us a sneak peek of their session, and so much more.

2022 CWA Summit Session Spotlight Series

Creating A Culture of Personal Responsibility

- **Speaker:** Lor Sabourin, The Warrior's Way
- **Who Should Attend:** Anyone who makes decisions about risk management in the indoor climbing gym environment
- **What Will You Learn:** How to utilize your risk management program and gym culture to empower your customers to make risk decisions that evolve over time

- **Where and When:** At the [2022 CWA Summit](#), May 18-20 in Salt Lake City, Utah!

Jake Byk, Marketing Coordinator, CWA:

Tell us about your climbing background and why you wanted to present on risk management at the CWA Summit.

Lor Sabourin, Warrior's Way:

I started climbing when I was 12 at a climbing gym in Detroit. Climbing became a huge part of my life really quickly. I think as a kid, I was always at the gym. It was kind of my safe space... It's really important to me that gyms are really positive community spaces for climbers. And I'm just so excited to be able to talk about this topic that I think seems really dry – this topic of risk-taking and risk management – but approach it from a human-oriented perspective. [I'm excited to] talk about how we can incorporate healthy risk-taking... and how ultimately that can lead to creating a space of empowerment in gyms.

Jake Byk, CWA:

You've said in the past that your climbing community in Detroit where you came of age in the industry was welcoming – how did that affect your rise in professional climbing?

Lor Sabourin, Warrior's Way:

So when I came into the gym, there was a huge community of people that were just ready to share that love for climbing with me. I was a young teenager. Like they could have totally just treated me as a punk or treated me as annoying but instead, they saw my stoke for rock climbing and they'd invite me to go on trips and they'd encourage me....People were excited that I was excited about rock climbing. They supported me while I was projecting, you know, my first 5.7 and then projecting my 5.8. And there was encouragement along the whole way.

Jake Byk, CWA:

Tell us about your presentation. What should we be excited about and who would you say that it's for?

Lor Sabourin, Warrior's Way:

So the presentation that I'm doing is really looking at the work that we do at the Rock Warrior's Way with mental training. It's such an individual journey to work with risk and fear, but one of the really core concepts that we teach in Rock Warrior's Way is the ability to be self-aware and use your own experience as a framework for making risk decisions. So really what we're gonna look at is...this legal and risk management side of climbing, but through the sense of how do we create a culture that fosters healthy risk taking without pressuring people to need to take risks before they're ready.

Jake Byk, CWA:

So that seems like your target audience for this presentation is quite wide.

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Lor Sabourin, Warrior's Way:

Yeah. And I think seeing risk decision-making as a really integrated model [is beneficial] because I have worked in upper management in gyms...If we want a culture around risk-taking that's healthy, it has to be instilled everywhere from our tiniest kid club members all the way up to our upper management, and everything in between.

Jake Byk, CWA:

This is an interesting concept because you're trying to create a culture around that very personal decision of risk.

Lor Sabourin, Warrior's Way:

The risk decisions that you made yesterday aren't gonna be appropriate for you tomorrow. And definitely, **the risk decisions I was making 10 years ago are gonna be different than the actions I take today.** So, it's a different kind of approach to it.

Jake Byk, CWA:

In the form of an elevator pitch, why should people come to your presentation?

Lor Sabourin, Warrior's Way:

The reason for people to come is to gain a healthier relationship with risk in their own climbing that they can take with them to spread into their culture. We don't just take risks in climbing. Climbing is one of the places where we can be playful with risk. But we take risks in all areas of life. So if we really are empowering people to take appropriate risks and we're teaching them that skill set through climbing, you know, especially at a young age or when they're newer to climbing, we are creating a different culture around how we approach things that might bring up fear. [And] we're living in a world right now where that's an invaluable skill set.

Jake Byk, CWA:

What are you most excited about with the 2022 CWA Summit?

Lor Sabourin, Warrior's Way:

I am so excited to be able to see some of the people in the industry that I haven't gotten to see since the pandemic. I am so excited to just be in conversation with the people that are shaping the industry right now. I think it's so special to get the intentional time to like sit down and talk together.

Join Lor and many more indoor climbing industry thought leaders at the 2022 CWA Summit, May 18-20 in Salt Lake City!

About the Author



Jake Byk is the marketing coordinator for the Climbing Wall Association. He's an avid hiker, mountaineer, lover of hard-to-reach places and long drives. He's spent four years as a journalist, then a public lands advocate, documenting the Great Plains and Mountain West before joining the CWA.

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