

STREET SURVIVAL

For The Prepared Citizen



By: Jim Jones

Criminals are basically dumb and cowardly, that's why they are criminals. To offset this lack of intelligence they have developed instincts and what is known as "street sense". The great majority of intelligent, working and responsible people do not have well developed instincts and have not had the criminals years of developing "street sense" so they are at a great disadvantage in a crime situation. In many ways the citizen is in the same situation as a conventional army confronted by a guerrilla ambush. You are carrying out normal operations and are deployed and equipped for getting to work or buying groceries where-as the criminal has the initiative in selecting the time, place and method of attack. Just like the guerrilla he will want to strike hard and fast and get away without being pressed or pinned down. The average street crime takes from 4 to 6 seconds from the time the victim realizes its happening till the time the criminal is gone. In the streets a little paranoia is very good thinking. Whether your walking or in your car you should be thinking a little like you are on a combat patrol where you are the point man, the squad leader and the rear guard.

Deny the enemy a target: Plan your route so as to avoid high crime areas, empty parking lots, dark alleys, etc. and if you must move through such areas plan to do it at times when it is light and most crowded. As much as possible avoid being on his ground (e.g. alleys, dark streets, bad neighborhood) If he ant's to commit a crime against you let him come to you on ground that you know well.

Deny the enemy confidence: One thing a criminal does not want is a fight so he looks for "soft" targets. A person walking along daydreaming or looking down at the pavement tells him that this target is not alert and is probably submissive. If you are marching along with purpose, scanning the area for threats and with your head high the criminal will probably look for someone else to attack. Clothing can help to, someone wearing boots, a leather jacket and a buck knife on his belt is a lot less likely to get jumped that someone wearing thongs, shorts and a sweater. If you encounter a person or persons coming towards you never (I mean never) look down, keep your head up and look past them. Remember downcast eyes say, "I am submissive and I will do what you tell me to do" never let a criminal or anyone think that! Remember all the criminal knows about you is what he sees so if you look like the Terminator he has to assume you could be the Terminator.

Deny the enemy surprise: As I said you are the point man and the rear guard so as you move into an area scan the whole area to identify danger areas and good ambush sites then you

can plan your route to avoid what you can and make a reaction plan for those you can't avoid. Then as you move through the area tune your senses for noises, shadows even odors (most criminals don't bathe and may smell of alcohol or Pot).

If there are other people along the route what are they doing? Are they watching you? Can they intercept you? Are their actions normal or do they seem to be waiting for something? Don't forget your rear guard duties by zigzagging a little on the sidewalk and turning your head you can get a good view of what's in back of you. You should do this at least twice every block. Don't put yourself in the enemy's kill zone where he can surprise you. Walk on the outside of the sidewalk or even in the street if necessary so he has to come out of hiding (in alleys and doorways to attack). If your scan picks up a suspicious person or persons ahead of you go to the other side of the street, after all they don't know where you were going so crossing the street it says either 1) you were going to do that anyway or 2) you are a very sharp person and should be left alone. Be sure and buy one of those small stick on convex mirrors to install on your left rear view mirror. Carjackers and "snatch and run" thieves will approach from your blind spot while you sit at a traffic light or in a parking lot. The extra mirror will help you spot them. A mirror or two in your trunk lid will help you spot attackers who close in on you while you are loading or unloading groceries.

Deny the enemy the initiative: Rest assured that the criminal or gang has a plan. Their plans will be simple because they are simple. You must have a plan to and your plan must be simple because you are smart and know that simple plans work. Remember you only have 4-6 seconds so you must know exactly what you are going to do and have gone over your plan so you can react fast. Your plan can be "I will scream and kick like hell" or "I will throw my bag and run the other way" or "I will start yelling Fire as loud as I can". One idea is to have a money clip with a few dollars in it (the clip gives it weight) that you can throw in one direction while running in the other direction. Consider routes of escape (avoid dead ends) and potential safe havens to head for such as open stores, well light areas, gas stations etc. Inventory your weapons (everything you have can be a weapon) and how they can be used.

Deny the enemy privacy: Just like the guerrilla ambush, the criminal does not want to have the cavalry show up and pin him down so stay where there are other people good lighting and high visibility. If you are about to board an elevator or a subway car and don't like the looks of someone on board don't get in. For better to ride the next elevator or train than the next ambulance. Listen to your instincts! If you are in the elevator and someone gets one that worries you get off! If attacked in the elevator Do Not Push The Emergency Button, as it will stop the elevator, instead push all the floor buttons and prevent the attacker from pushing the emergency button. This way you have an escape opportunity every few seconds when the door opens. **NEVER GET INTO A CAR WITH A CRIMINAL!** If you are in your car and a criminal points a gun at you can hit the gas and take your chances with traffic or get out of the car but do not let them get in with you. If a criminal points a gun at you and says "get in the car" run like hell. The chances that he will shoot at you are about 50/50 the chance that he will hit you if he does shoot at you are about 50/50 the chances that if he hits you the wound will be fatal are less than 50/50 so your chances of survival if you run are about 90% but crime statistics show that your chances of being found dead if you get into a car with a criminal are almost 100%. **DON'T GET IN THE CAR!** At home you should have motion-activated lights to cover your routes to the front door and garage. Be sure to cut down bushes and place mirrors to deny potential assailants any place to hide.

Weapons: Criminals are generally not very intelligent, have little or no conscience and act on instinct. Responsible citizens on the other hand are generally intelligent and conscientious and unless they have had intensive combat training they will think about and analyze the consequences before using deadly force. In the seconds it takes for an intelligent citizen to compute the probability of being wrong the criminal will kill or disarm him. If you elect to carry a gun or a knife you had better be absolutely sure that you know how to use it and that you will use it without hesitation. If you have doubts then you are just carrying a weapon for a criminal to use on you and perhaps others. In most cases pepper spray units are recommended. Because they are simple to operate and non-lethal almost anyone will use them without hesitation. They are very effective come in sizes to fit almost anywhere and are legal in most places. Pepper sprays have ranges of up to 20 feet and will put down an attacker or several attackers for several minutes. In the event that you do spray the wrong person no lasting harm is done and if it can be shown that you had good reason to fear harm you probably won't be sued. Keep one in the car, in your pocket or purse and a bigger 15 oz fogger for home.

You don't need to be Rambo to survive on the city streets but you must make plans, be equipped and maintain a high level of awareness. Remember that predators always eat the weakest and the slowest. In the urban (and suburban) jungle the unaware and the unprepared will perish. Don't let it be you or those you love.

** Although anti-gun and some police groups maintain that guns save few citizens at home or on the streets their numbers are misleading. In reality few citizens ever report having prevented a crime by pointing their guns because instead of being given a medal that they deserve they would be treated like a criminal. The street facts are that lots of people I know are alive because they head or at least the criminal had reason to think they might have a gun. As I said criminals like easy safe targets. The effect of public disarmament is to make the streets safe for criminals. The slogan "When Guns Are Outlawed Only Outlaws Will Have Guns" may be true but gangs of thugs who are good with knives and clubs really don't need guns against unarmed citizens so maybe the slogan should be "When Guns Are Outlawed Outlaws Won't Need Guns".*

This article originally published in **NEW DIRECTIONS newsletter** published by Live Free International. For information about Live Free and New Directions send \$2.00 to:
Live Free, P.O. Box 375, Dolton, IL 60419, USA

Copyright 1998, Live Free, Inc., Chicago, IL all rights reserved