

ALBERT TIMEN

PREVENTIVE
SECURITY
BEHAVIOR

For The Everyday Civilian



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The reality of Terrorism and Terror threats around us is not new, neither a surprising actuality, yet still the wave of events ranging from "Lone wolf" Active Shooter to a combined attacks by Terrorist groups loaded with explosives and high powered automatic rifles aiming to target soft civilian localities leaves the public with high levels of anxiety and fear.



Picture credit: BBC News Online

A large part of the fear and anxiety spread is contributed to the media, which is inundated with news and commentary that play a major role in the countless process of interpretation by so many experts and commentators, mixing up their own versions and agendas into this exposed and vulnerable field of emotions.

What the public need is training and guidance, teaching them how to behave in times of routine, and how to act if and when they find themselves in the midst of such events. The point made must be two fold - One that is encouraging, and one that is directing awareness and personal preparedness.

Statistically, we still need to remember that chances of a anyone being caught up in such event is still small, and far less than the likelihood of involvement in an accident. However, just as we are proactively preparing for road accidents by investing and purchasing vehicles with safety features like Airbags, collision avoidance systems, adaptive headlights and sensors, and wearing our seatbelts - the same should be applied here.

Preparedness and personal awareness will not only increase the chance to get out of an incident safely, it also reduces the level of anxiety, and enhances the sense of personal security. It leaves us with the ability to realize that we have to take charge of our own security and safety.

There are many approaches out there that sounds like "This is exactly what I need", but in fact only contributes to short term sense of security, when in reality are very hard to maintain due to our routines and lifestyles.

In order to make sense of all of this information, we need to look at the most critical aspects which are logical and can be done by everyone.

These preventive security behavior guidelines are intended to help members of the public by providing a basis of awareness with the purpose of informing the individual, the organization, and the community. It should always be advised and recommended to take part in training sessions that are specifically organized on this subject.

Realistically, Security forces are not made to be present everywhere at any point in time. Therefore the Personal Security of the public is subjected in their hands to a very large extent. In times which a concrete terrorist threat is imminent, every citizen should follow a number of rules that will allow him, his family, and those around him to hold a normal life and an appropriate level of Personal Security.

Here are simple guidelines for a safe behavior that applies anytime and anywhere, especially in risk areas during periods of tension in view of terrorist threats.

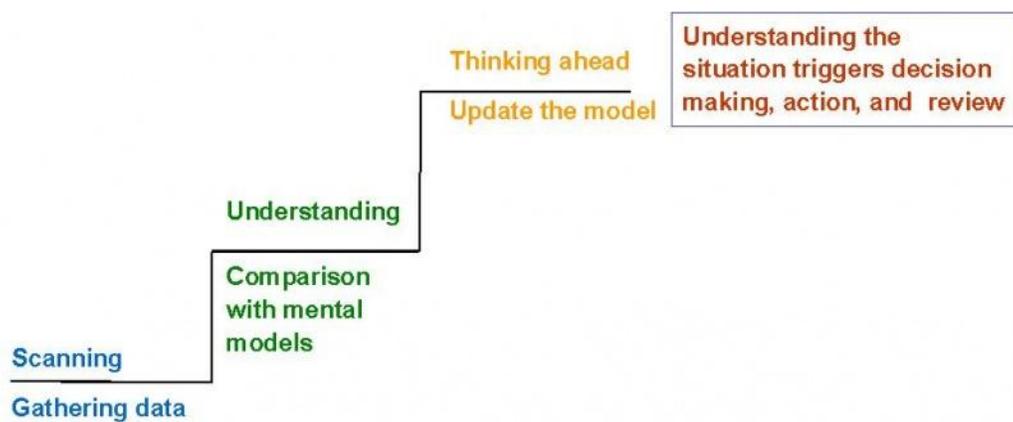
Be Prepared

Normally when people go about their business they don't expect gunshots, therefore they will assume that it's something else they hear because it doesn't fit with their expectations. Removing our expectations from reality makes us vulnerable.

We need to run through and visualize a few worst-case scenarios, creating mental models that will help us make the process quicker to understand and resolve. (see below model)

Ask yourself: if anything goes wrong, what is my first response going to be?

Spatial Orientation and Situational Awareness is having an accurate understanding of what is happening around you and what is likely to happen in the near/immediate future and being able to identify potential threats and other dangerous situations.



We are often easily taking a sit in the public space such as restaurants ,cinemas and theaters without paying second attention to the emergency exits. Knowing where the emergency exits are can save your life. Making sure there is an open and direct path to them should be a prime consideration in your choice.

Become your own flight attendant : Orient yourself towards the Exit signs and choose your seating wisely!



Act fast and Decisive

The human reaction time and decision-making has been a popular research topic for experiments made by field researchers. In the 1950's, Air Force Colonel John Boyd borrowed from this human-factor knowledge as he developed his Observe-Orient-Decide-Act (**OODA**) loop decision-making model.

Boyd's OODA loop boiled down to its essence and defines the most critical component of human performance - Reaction Time.

John Leach, a Survival Psychologist and Military Survival Instructor studied life-threatening situations around the world and has found that "only 15% of people will respond in a way that helps them survive. Up to 75% will just be too confused by what is happening around them to react at all. The other 10% will react in ways that reduce their chances of survival and get in the way of other people". Source: John Leach, Survival Psychology (1994)

It is in human nature to wait for other people to act first in situations where group dynamic is involved. Many will wait for others to act first. This impacts our OODA loop decision making and reaction time. Once a decision to initiate a motor program has been made it is difficult if not impossible to inhibit the action. Acting decisively will further increase your survival chance if you immediately act without waiting for someone else to do it.

Improve your response time by making it a conscience decision to take a specific action as your primary goal before any incident takes place!



Know your "Cover Vs. Concealment" options

Scan the vicinity around you in order to look for assets, and Identify the type of area and its makeup. This will help you to choose and determine a holding place in case of sudden attack in your area. This area of practice is called "cover consciousness" by Law Enforcement Personnel and can have a positive impact on your survival chances.

When a shooting attack happens in a crowded space even a single bullet can end up injuring numerous people in its trajectory. Keeping out of view reduces the risk of becoming targeted on purpose and also the chances of being randomly hit by someone simply spraying the room with fire.

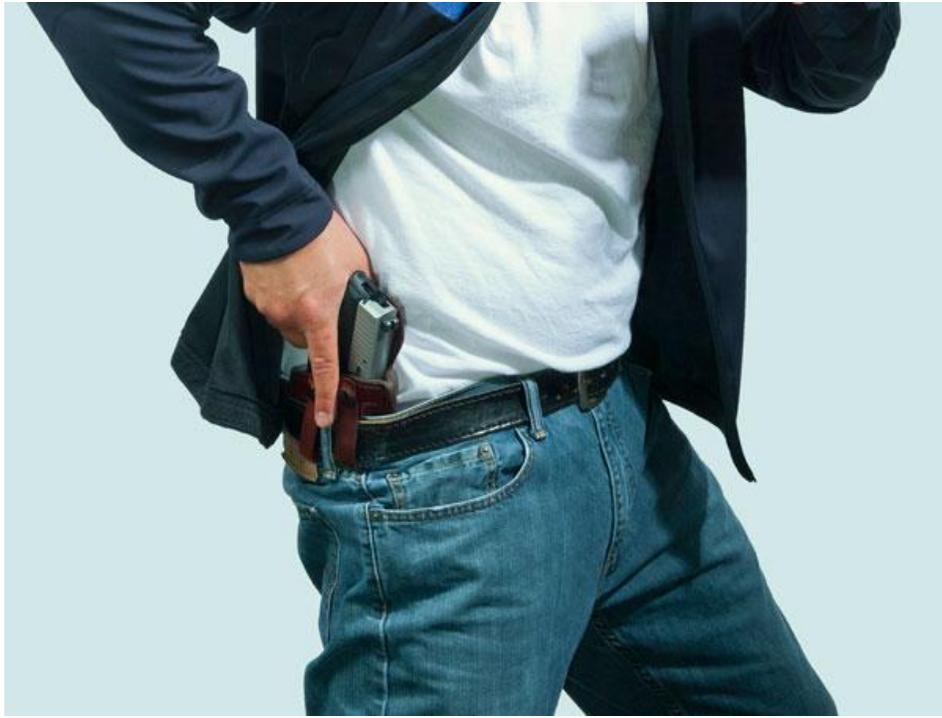
While Concealment obscures your position from the attacker, the Cover absorbs the attacker's bullets and can even stop flying shrapnel from a detonated explosive device. Recognizing the assets around you by actively scanning for possibilities, identifying & choosing where and what can become your cover is a practice that has proven to save lives before. Make it a habit to pay attention and become "cover Conscious".

Fight

When thinking about worst case scenario this particular one is indeed the highest on the scale of the range of possible responses, and it only makes sense when you are directly confronted, or trapped without the possibility to remove yourself from the situation.

If you're only remaining option is to engage the active Killer, "speed, surprise and violence of action" is the only recipe for survival. You have a small window of opportunity, you need to identify the moment and "fight for your life" with everything you have.

Your chances are much higher if you carry a weapon as a concealed carry permit holder. They raise even more if you are trained and equally prepared and decisive to engage.



Notes

The purpose of the above guiding principles is to raise the awareness and personal preparedness to reduce panic and allow citizens a reasonable response in case of suspicion or an actual event while informing the appropriate authorities about the situation.

In any case, the preferred action in dealing with suspicion or with the actual incident should be carried out by official security forces trained and equipped for the situation.

In the meantime, remember that recognizing and understanding these practices on a conscious level may be the difference between survival and becoming a victim. However, in order to do so it is important to observe, pay attention to, and listen to our surrounding.

As we all know, the ability to overcome violent incidents depends very much on our own preparedness and personal awareness.

About the Author

Albert Timen is a security consultant, with over 20 years experience in Counter Terrorism, Military & Law Enforcement training. Having served with the Israeli Military, Law Enforcement and Security agencies as a respected trainer, specializing in operational readiness and Personal protection.

<http://www.combatconcepts.info/instructor.html>