

THE BEST DEFENSE IS A GOOD OFFENSE

There is a big difference between self-defense and personal safety. Self defense is predicated on the fact that you are in a very bad place to begin with. Things have already gone to hell in a hand basket. As such, self defense is making sure the situation doesn't get any worse -- it is damage control, pure and simple. However, no damage control is EVER as good as preventing the problem in the first place. That's personal safety... Marc MacYoung

Best defense is a good offense. The best offense is good personal safety.

- 1) Don't put yourself in a bad position. This is about the only time you can have complete control.
- 2) Use your Brokers Prescreening and Showing protocols.

In my research I found repeatedly that the success of most assaults against women is determined long before the physical act. "90 % of attacks were not a surprise" Meaning most women had a gut feeling they did not follow. Most of these people were getting signals but were confused by their own internal conflict between what they were feeling, sensing about someone and what they were hearing from that person.

In order to have the best personal safety you need to really understand everything that happens that leads up to the actual attack.

The five stages of an attack are; **Intent, Interview, Positioning, Attack and Reaction.**

Intent:

This is where the person crosses a normal mental boundary. From this point, the person is mentally and physically prepared to commit violence in order to get what he wants – whatever that may be. Being able to recognize when intent is present is one of the key components of your personal safety. Yet, this isn't always as easy as you might think. The criminal has often learned how to mask it behind words and feigned innocence. Being Realtors and professional sales people, every one of you should have at least a basic understanding of body language. I know you all can recognize this but the trick is to not get caught up in what is happening yourself so you don't realize what is happening until too late. Violence doesn't "just happen out of nowhere." His own body will tell you he's about to attack -- even if his words are deceptively calm and normal. A person who is prepared to engage in physical violence will give off certain physiological signals. Literally his body will betray that fact, no matter how his words or behavior attempt to cover it. Often this collective set of signals is referred to as "vibes." And yes, someone who is prepared to commit violence gives off "bad" vibes. There is nothing esoteric or "woo-woo" about this. It is a collection of small signals that we all unconsciously recognize. They range from physiological (Skin flush/pale, muscle tension, breathing, etc..) to motion (how someone moves while under the influence of adrenaline) and to speech (cadence, tone, pitch). Learn to trust your gut instincts and base your decision on that and not on what he is saying.

Interview:

This is where the criminal decides if you are safe to attack. "Can I get away with it?" is a major motivation for what people decide to do -- or not do. This is one interview you want to fail. If you fail, the assailant decides that he cannot successfully, or easily, attack you. There are several kinds of interviews common to criminal attacks.

The 5 basic kinds are: **Regular, Hot, Escalating, Silent and Prolonged**

Regular - This is the most common form of interview for muggers. The criminal will approach you under the guise of normalcy, i.e., needing information or small item (e.g. matches). This is a distraction. While he is talking, he is not only getting in position to attack, but a) checking your awareness about what he is doing and b) your commitment to defending yourself. This is why you should always be careful when someone approaches you in a fringe area and asks for something. Your answer should always be "no" and insist on him keeping his distance. Both muggers and stranger rapists often use this technique.

Hot – Hot interviews are sudden and unexpected emotional blitzkriegs against you. They just "pop out of nowhere." You are minding your own business one minute, and the next you have a threatening, obscenity-spouting, screaming person charging down on you. The success of this strategy relies on you not being accustomed to dealing with extreme emotional violence and reacting in a stunned and confused manner. You must be willing to immediately shift into an extreme of physical violence to fail such interviews. Paradoxically, if you can immediately display this commitment, the attacker will often abort. I don't know much about this one, but my research turned this up in a couple of different areas so there must be something to it.

Escalating - Unlike a hot interview, which starts out immediately hostile, an escalating interview starts out normally but it rapidly turns hostile. The person or people test(s) your boundaries by escalating outrageous behavior. Every time he is not slapped down (i.e., he is successful), his behavior becomes more and more extreme until finally he attacks. This is very common interview for date rapists. It is also common when you walk into the middle of a group of loitering young thugs, what "supposedly" starts out with them "jes messin' witcha" escalates into a robbery or assault sometimes both. This is the one I think you should be most concerned with. As the person has ample time to test your boundaries while on the showings or at the open house.

Silent – A silent interview is when a criminal puts himself in a position to observe you. He may never speak until the attack, but he has been watching all along. He may position himself out of sight in a parking structure and follow you. Or he may make his presence known and decide to attack if you show fear of his presence. This is the one I think you should remember if you just "happen" to see someone from an open house in a strange obscure place.

Prolonged - An interview can take anywhere from mere moments (hot) to weeks (prolonged). Prolonged interviews are often combined with other types. Being stalked is prolonged escalation. A serial rapist can silently watch a victim for days. With prolonged interviews, the intent is seldom obvious from the beginning. This could be a guy who looks at houses over the course of a few weeks and time until you are lulled into a false sense of security and you slip up and allow yourself to go into that den/bedroom in the basement. – Lady at last seminar example.

Positioning:

This is the criminal putting himself in a place where he can successfully attack you. A criminal (or even a violent person) doesn't want to fight you; he wants to overwhelm you. To do this, he has to put himself in a position where he can do it quickly and effectively. An attempt to develop positioning is the final proof of ill intent. Someone trying to position himself to attack removes all doubt that the situation is innocent.

A key point of positioning is "fringe areas." You will seldom, if ever, be robbed or raped in the middle of a crowd. A fringe area is where you are close to people, but out of range of immediate help. Even a separate room in a crowded house can constitute a fringe area, as many women who were raped at parties can attest. Being alone with someone in a fringe area is a major part of the opportunity element of the triangle. Like the Interview, there are several kinds of Positioning.

Closing – The most basic form of positioning is simply walking up to the victim. The closer a criminal gets, the greater his ability to overwhelm and control. Five feet is the closest you should allow someone you don't trust to approach in a fringe area – whether you know him or not. If the person insists on coming closer after you have warned him away, he has clearly announced that his intentions are not good.

Cornering/trapping - This is the second most basic form of positioning and the most common. This is the one you need to be most aware of inside of the home. He approaches you from a direction that traps you between himself and a large object, like a car or wall or in a remote room or a basement den. This also entails his putting himself between you and an exit. You may see this as a guy who tries to get you to go to a somewhat remote part of the house because he has a question and you just have to see what he is talking about.

Surprise – This is your classic jump-out-of-the-bushes type of position. The criminal puts himself in a place where you don't see him (or if you do, it is at the last minute). From this position, he can easily step out and attack. Once you know these locations, this kind of positioning is easy to foil. Do your best to keep good track of who is entering and who is lingering right about the time for the open house to get over. By keeping yourself near the front entry way you should be better able to know who is coming and going. Count the number in and the number out.

Pincer – Professional criminals often work in packs, so you will not face just one. The most common maneuver for two criminals is the pincer. One criminal circles around while the other distracts you. You should always be aware of individuals splitting up when they approach you. Another trap is when two characters face each other in a narrow walkway in such a way that you must pass between them. A third trick is to spread out along a way, when you pass one he starts following you, while the other waits down the way.

Surrounding – This is the most common ploy of a pack (three or more). Again, one will distract you while the others surround. They can swarm around you, but most often they will casually drift. A serious danger sign is when a group is spaced out along the wall in a walkway. When you are at midpoint, it is simple for the wings to fold in. For you as Realtors you will find this most likely during an open house. Where one person asks a bunch of questions to keep you in one spot while others either case the house for a future break in or actually steal right then.

Attack:

Now here is where I would say if you feel threatened with physical violence or the threat of violence then go on attack yourself to protect your life. I myself would have to prove that my life was threatened because of my training. You on the other hand will have more leeway.

Conclusion

The fastest way to figure out if you are in potential danger is to look for these three elements; Ability, Opportunity and Intent. If you see one, look for the others. If you see two out of three stop whatever else you are doing and pay close attention for a moment. If you see him trying to develop the third, withdraw from the situation to a safer area. This is easier than using physical violence. If you do not see these elements then odds are you are safe. What is important to realize is that the first three stages might not occur in that particular order. A violent and selfish person may suddenly find himself with the perfect opportunity/ability to commit a rape, and suddenly the intent appears. This is why you always need to check for ability, opportunity and intent (AOI).

The biggest thing to remember is not get trapped in the house, keep an open route to the outside. I know, you are thinking, right; just let them walk around alone. How am I going to know what they are thinking, do they like it. Or heaven forbid, are they snooping or stealing and I'll get blamed. Just remember these things are all safety measures you need to be aware of. By now you should know to be more aware to everything that is happening and reading more about the entire situation. Don't be cynical or paranoid. You should be either be comfortable or uncomfortable and be able to recognize this.

Flight or Fight

Adrenaline what is it.

Epinephrine is a "fight or flight" hormone, and plays a central role in the short-term stress reaction. It is released from the adrenal glands when danger threatens or in an emergency. When secreted into the bloodstream, it rapidly prepares the body for action in emergency situations.

You have all heard about the mom who lifts a car off her kid or someone doing something that seems super human. Maybe you can better relate to this smaller example.

What are you supposed to do when you ask a closing question? Well you should shut up, right? Then when you are waiting the tension builds. Time seems to slow down. You feel all nervous and twitchy and it just feels like you are going to burst unless you talk. 30 seconds seems like forever.

Well you are feeling a small amount of adrenaline dumping into your system. Now when your body is in an immediate threat of danger you can magnify that feeling 10,000 fold.

This brings us to the difference between Fear and Panic. The difference between fear and panic is, knowing what to do.

If you have a reliable, effective solution then fear is an asset. You know what to do and fear just makes you do it faster.

On the other hand, if you don't know what to do -- or don't trust what you know -- then you will freeze in terror. You do this because you have no clear goal or way to get there.

So remember this VERY important distinction: Fear helps, panic hinders. Fear is your savior, panic your nemesis.

Pain- from an ant on up every animal's initial reaction to pain is to get away from it. If you are going to hit someone to cause pain and get them away from you, you MUST mean it. It is critical that if you hit your assailant you do it with force. You MUST make up your mind to go from being attacked to being the one doing the attacking, full force. You absolutely have to flip the on switch and explode in the persons face.

This is the part I've been in turmoil about the whole time I've researched this. I don't want to show you how to gouge out someone's eyes or collapse someone's throat only for you to over react to a situation and then get in trouble. The soft spots on the body and things I'll show you in a little while can really cause some intense damage. You need to be able to tell the difference between fighting and self defense. It is Very important to use physical means as a last resort and only in proportion to your threat. So say you are at that family gathering and your sister-in-law or someone is getting on your nerves again, you can't pop her in the throat and drop her to shut her up. No matter how much you want to.

Common weapons you carry with you all the time; Heels, both on your foot and on your shoes, Elbows, Knees, your head, a lighter, your keys, your pads of paper if you carry them the easiest one - a pen.

Demonstrate:

How to hit: Through not at. Forward or like an axe or back fist.

Open hand, slap to ears, Claw like animal.

Position of fist - Closed hand or with nails or open using finger tips, back hand, palm strike.

Elbow – backwards or for striking – elbow is harder than your fist great for when he is close.

Knee - To groin – try to pull on shirt while kneeling, hands behind his head knee driven into face.

Foot – grate the side of your shoe down his shin, stomp on top of foot

Head – forehead to the nose or back of head to the nose.

Biting – be careful with biting. It may only enrage him more if he has a good grip on you, not what I would recommend but, still a very viable weapon.

Pen and keys – dagger or punch

Soft spots – ears, eyes, throat, solar plexus, shins, nose, groin.

Now if you ask a military person, when they are placed in a position to defend themselves they will eliminate the threat. In your particular situations your goal should be to make it so you can break his grip perhaps disable him and give yourself enough time to get away. You have a small window of opportunity. Take advantage of it. React immediately. Your best chance to escape violence and minimize injury is in the first few moments. The very parts of your body you don't like are the root of your power, your legs, your hips and your butt. Be sure to use them. The ability for aggressive self preservation is hard wired into all of us. It is a natural primal survival instinct you already have it in you. You just need to unearth it and bring it to bear. – Now I had one lady tell me she couldn't do it because women are raised to be compliant, docile, and to make everyone happy. Who has kids or nephews?

While you are executing your moves you need to yell. Yell NO or the action you are doing. Like groin or kick or face... Very important that you yell something while you do your moves. To make your moves explosive use your whole body, not just the body part. Don't tap drive through your target. To be explosive, get down and dirty. Use your hips; load your kicks to make them crack.

He has you by the wrist. Twist and pull – hard.

One hand on your shoulder – opposite hand hold his hand in place, same side arm up and hit continue pressure at elbow while twisting, kick to face.

You are pressed against a wall his hands on your shoulders or throat he is close. Ear slap, thumbs to eyes, throat punch, knee to groin. Repeat as needed.

Standing front choke where his arms are longer than yours – clasp hands, chin down, thrust up, then down on their nose, knee/kick to groin. Don't worry if it is your foot or your shin that hits the groin.

Standing front choke. Left arm over grabbing his far arm, Right arm straight over his arms, twist around, use recoil energy to elbow or back fist in face/neck, knee to groin

On your back being choked – eye gouge, throat punch, cross arms bring down hard, bring up your foot and use hip to twist off, kick to groin or face.

On back hands pinning arms – He can't continue attacking you, he doesn't want to just sit there and restrain you like that, it's no fun. Relax, let him think he can unzip his pants. As soon as he lets go, strike to eyes, strike to throat, twist hip to throw him off, kick to groin/ face

From back bear hug type grab. stomp, step, smash hand to groin, elbow to face, knee to groin, knee to head.

From back, Choke: Twist around to face opponent bring head up between his arms, hands clasped drive them up like before and do rest of that technique.

Going to a kneeling in front of him position. Crouch down to get spring action in your legs. Knock holding arm out of way, upper palm thrust to chin. Throat/eye punch, knee to groin. Knee to face.