

Endorsements for “Can I See Your Hands!”

A rarity in the security field, Gav Schneider blends comprehensive operational experience with a strategic, forward-looking approach towards ensuring that safety ... in all forms ... is at the forefront of individual and group decision making. The duality of his experiences, in the field and the halls of academia, enable Gav to provide credible, succinct, and actionable guidance to anyone interested in protecting themselves and creating safer environments.

- Claire S. Willette, former US Department of Defense Official, Senior Expert Advisor to the International Standards Risk and Security Committees, and Principal at Windrose International Pty Ltd, Strategic Policy and Risk Consultants.

“Can I see your hands” is the title and underpinning philosophy of this fascinating and very personal book by Dr. Gavriel Schneider, focused on the issues of personal risk management, personal safety and personal resilience. As an emergency services leader, I understand how personal resilience is a key part of effective performance under pressure, and in my experience resilient individuals tend to be more adaptive and able to cope even in difficult times. Resilient individuals are also more likely to “bounce back” in difficult times and this description also applies to martial arts training, for example, in learning to fall correctly (an essential skill in martial arts that is covered in the book)—and repeatedly picking yourself up and start all

over again. At one level this is a practical skill that simply improves personal safety, but [it] is also a metaphor for bouncing back from situations that sometimes happen in life. This is just one of many examples of how the author uses his many, many years of martial arts training to give everyone some simple tools to improve their personal resilience safety and security.

The personal reflections and insight of the author give the reader a strong sense of the work and dedication the author has put in to perfecting his ability, and his very personal style allows the reader to establish a better attitude of awareness to protect your personal safety and improve your personal resilience to the risks we all face in our everyday lives.

- Tony McGuirk was former Chief Executive and Chief Fire Officer of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, one of the most complex emergency management organizations in the UK. He has been a National Advisor on Emergency Management in the UK, and has extensive experience dealing with crises, emergencies and disasters. He was awarded the Queen's Fire Service Medal in 2006, and made a Commander of the British Empire in 2011. He has worked in North America, Canada, Europe and the UAE, and in 2015 he moved to Australia having been awarded a Distinguished Talent visa for his work in disaster and emergency response and management. He is a Fellow of the International Institute of Risk and Safety Management, and a Fellow of the International Institution of Fire Engineers.

Gavriel Schneider has been a source of invaluable information and inspiration to me personally since my arrival in Johannesburg almost 10 years ago and during my transition into the private security sector. ‘Can I See Your Hands!’ builds on my learning and teaching as a police officer and a security consultant, as it emphasiz[es] the fundamental principles of crime prevention and personal safety—where prevention is the primary aim.

Gavriel's writing style is clear, and to the point, and gives a detailed understanding of the knowledge, skills and experience required for a proactive approach to personal risk management.

I recommend that everyone should read this book—as doing so will undoubtedly save lives!

- Dave Dodge, former London police officer, Chairman of the South African Institute of Security and ASIS International, Chapter 155, Johannesburg. Dave was a London police officer for over 30 years and has been a safety and security consultant in Southern Africa for 10 years. During much of this time, he was involved in the provision of education and training to law enforcement officers and corporate clients. In addition to being an assessor and verifier for international security qualifications, he is an acknowledged expert on security risk assessments and the development and implementation of international standards.

Gav's personal insights and academic knowledge make this book a must for anyone who wants to think about their security and that of those they love. This book is useful for lots of different people!

- Jason L Brown, FSyI, CSyP, RSecP, National Security Director, Thales Australia & New Zealand, Chair of ISO/TC 262 Risk Management Technical Committee, and Chairman of the Board of Security Professionals Australasia.

In today's fast-paced world of change and constant connection, we are regularly reminded of the real and digital threats that surround us. In response, we cannot survive without the natural mental shortcuts we take; yet these seemingly beneficial shortcuts open the door to being taken advantage of, and can lead to potentially dangerous situations. Gav's book teaches us the importance of understanding these natural processes and reinforces the need to take personal responsibility in such situations. He provides a framework and practical

steps each of us can take to improve our personal safety and that of our loved ones.

This book is a poignant reminder that as the world knocks on our front door, we need to be appropriately vigilant about who we let in.

- Tom Ristoski, Executive Director Strategic Partnerships & Executive Education at Australian Catholic University

I have known Gavriel for more than 20 years. Since he was a young man, he worked to be one of the best students in Martial Arts. I taught and trained Gav for a while and saw his values and persistence to achieve his goals. His dedication for pursuing his goals are noteworthy. Over the years, he continued his studies and developed to be a master in Martial Arts and achieved his Doctorate. I am very proud of him. Gav grew and became a leading force in self-defense and Security Risk Management. I can proudly call him my Friend and a professional partner in self-defense and counter-terrorism.

- Yaron Hanover is a Grand Master black belt, he is a 10th Dan Grand Master DSSJ martial artist, Krav Maga, MMA and international counter-terrorism expert. He is the CEO of the Hanover Toolbox company, which manufactures innovative self-defense tools. He has dedicated his life in pursuing excellence in these fields, putting an emphasis on weapons training and knife fighting. Yaron has served and trained Israel's top military and government counter-terrorism units, as well as facilitated training for similar units around the world. Yaron has headed the personal security of such persons as Michael Jackson while on tour. Yaron holds many Israeli national champion titles and as a senior instructor has a legacy of personally training well over 35,000 students. He is featured on the Krav Maga Wall of Fame and has Master titles from the International Budo Association, as well as the European (EJJU), American, British and South African Jiu-Jitsu Association.

Dr. Gav Schneider has written a must-read guide for anyone considering that it might be a good idea to know about protecting what counts in the many complex moments we must deal with in everyday life. Read this book and learn from one of the best—“Can I See Your Hands” is a rare insight into the mind of a true Master.

– Kate Down, Behavioral Scientist

In a time when Global, Regional, Local, and personal safety appears to be on an ever-increasing cycle of decline, this book by Gav offers a congruence of his own personal journey, [which] has been a lifelong dedication to understanding the increasing threat environment, and his commitment to sharing his extensive knowledge and experiences for the greater good of all. I commend Gav for his commitment and delivery of this personal and excellent read, [which] really demonstrates, not only his commitment to “real life” experiences, [but also] demonstrates an academic commitment that delivers a comprehensive and credible guideline that allows the reader to implement solutions to safety, with the confidence of his wealth of knowledge and legitimacy.

On a personal level, I commend Gav’s commitment to personal integrity, resilience and the endless pursuit for growth and excellence, the traits I see he carries and delivers in all facets of his private and professional life.

– Mark Carrick, Former Commander of New South Wales Police Terrorism Intelligence, as well as the former National Capability Advisor on Counter-Terrorism Intelligence to the Australian Government’s National Counter-Terrorism Committee. Mark is one of Australia’s most experienced Counter-Terrorism practitioners, with over 20 years’ experience in Law Enforcement spanning many disciplines including, Witness Protection, Close Personal Protection, Crime Management, Change Management and Counter-Terrorism Intelligence. In 2010, Mark became the first Police Officer in

Australia to receive the rare ANZAC of the year award from the Australian Governor.

Gavriel Schneider has written a quintessential manuscript on self-protective strategies. In today's society of ever increasing violence, it is no longer rational to solely rely on others for your wellbeing. This book provides a systematic approach to our daily routines to reduce the risk of becoming a victim, it enables us to effectively contribute to our own safety and that of our family

- Steve Furmedge, Director Security, Public Transport Western Australia, and 8th Degree Black Belt

"Risk" is a term that gets used often, but is seldom understood; we all think that we know what it means, however when we are asked to provide a definition we find ourselves unable to give one. Gavriel Schneider, is an expert at identifying, defining and determining risk, and providing means for reducing, mitigating and dealing with it. This book is a manual/textbook in risk management. If you have an interest in learning how to predict, identify, and avoid violence, this should be a book that is in your library.

- Gershon Ben Keren, 5th Degree Black Belt, Professional Security Consultant and Amazon Best-Selling Author

In today's often violence-ridden world, be it in public spaces or even the supposed safety of one's own home, this book is a timely reminder that people with intent can hurt and seriously injure or kill other people who are not prepared to defend themselves and/or protect loved ones. In a logical progression of practical steps, Dr. Gavriel Schneider has outlined how to prepare oneself, not only physically and mentally to either implement avoidance or deflecting mental strategies, but also to be prepared to physically defend oneself (becoming a "hard target"), particularly when there might be no one else readily available or nearby to do the "protecting" on

your behalf. This book admirably accomplishes the initial aim as being “to create a base level of proactive awareness and preparedness that will empower” the individual in accomplishing self-protection as such situations might suddenly arise when one is in a vulnerable and unprotected position. In other words, it provides the individual with some skills to manage any threat with the objective of surviving such an incident with the minimum amount of injury or loss. By the nature of the book, it deals with “worst-case scenarios” as a way of mentally preparing (denial avoidance) and acceptance that the risks (probability) of “bad things happening to good people” are a constant threat to ordinary people in today’s unpredictable world. A recommended read for all interested in preparing for those violence risk possibilities and to be able to “look after yourself” in any potentially violent and/or dangerous situation. The overall message of the book is clearly stated that, as individuals, we need to accept that we must take responsibility, to some degree, for our own safety and security.

- Professor Anthony Minnaar, Research Professor of Criminal Justice Studies, University of South Africa

CAN I SEE YOUR HANDS!

CAN I SEE YOUR HANDS!

A GUIDE TO SITUATIONAL AWARENESS, PERSONAL
RISK MANAGEMENT, RESILIENCE AND SECURITY

Dr. Gavriel (Gav) Schneider
CPP, FGIA, FAIM, FIS (SA), 7th Dan

Foreword by:

Dave Grossman

Lt. Colonel, US Army (ret.)

Author of *On Killing*, *On Combat*, and *Assassination Generation*



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*Can I See Your Hands!
A Guide to Situational Awareness, Personal Risk Management,
Resilience and Security*

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Dedication

To all the brave men and women that take the initiative to protect those who cannot protect themselves ... and to those who will make the hard decisions to do the right thing at the right time in the future!

This book is dedicated to my mentor and friend, the late Major David Sharp, BEM. HM (P.F. ROK), Comm. M (USA), your life experience, and knowledge is well-remembered—as you used to say: “Moving On Now”

*“The Only Thing Necessary for the Triumph of Evil is that
Good Men [or Women] Do Nothing.”*

— Attributed to Edmund Burke

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Foreword

**by Dave Grossman,
Lt. Colonel, US Army (ret.)**

You hold in your hands an amazing book, unlike any other on the subject. Many good books have been written about the critically important topic of protecting yourself and your loved ones from violence. And the best of these, such as Gavin de Becker's *The Gift of Fear*, have been integrated and applied in this book.

Consider, building on others work and enhancing it as just this one aspect of what Dr. Gav Schneider has done to make this the best possible book on this subject. You will find many books on many topics that seem to operate in a vacuum. But the best books on any subject are those that "stand on the shoulders of giants" and build on that which has already been written, skillfully weaving these together with new information and new insight, to create a book that is greater than the sum of its parts. And that is what Gav has done in this book, incorporating, applying, and recommending some of the great works that have been previously written on this vital subject.

The next factor that makes this book truly unique and important is the incredibly thorough and comprehensive scope of (as Gav puts it) the "level of awareness, prevention and capability that the average, everyday person needs" to deal with the threats that face the average citizen today.

I have read many books on this subject, and I can honestly say that no one has come even close to matching Gav in addressing the full span of diverse challenges that face the average citizen today.

Finally, the author, Dr. Gav Schneider, is truly and uniquely qualified to write this book, drawing upon his experiences in 17 nations and as a leading academic and speaker. He has a Doctorate in Criminology and a 7th Degree Black Belt, just to cover a few of his qualifications.

He has “been there” and “done that.” Most of all, Gav has had a lifetime of real-world experiences, which he applies in a powerful and masterful manner, in order to give you, the reader, a truly valuable and unique resource to face the dangers of an increasingly violent world.

And we have never needed this book more than we do now.

Wherever you are, right now, as you read these words, you can probably look up and see some of the things our society has done to prepare for the threat of fire. Some form of “fire code” has influenced the building you are in, right now. You can probably see smoke alarms and possibly fire-exit signs. A fire extinguisher or a fire hydrant may be directly in sight.

By some estimates, half the construction cost of a modern building will go into meeting the requirements of the “fire code.” Fireproof or fire-retardant material for the structure of the building, and for internal furnishings, versus the cheapest alternative. Electrical system brought up to fire code. Double the electrical system in some buildings to run wiring to all fire-exit signs and smoke alarms. A fire sprinkler system under pressure for the lifetime of the building.

The “fire alarm” in many buildings is an amazing expense all by itself, with a separate network of wiring running through our civilization, from every building to the local fire station. And from our youngest days we did “fire drills” and perhaps you were taught “stop, drop and roll” in case you ever caught on fire.

Vast amounts of money, time and effort go into preparing for fire. In the United States, every year around 300 people are killed by fire, but approximately 15,000 are killed by violence. If we can spend all this money and time to prepare for fire (and we should), how much more so should we prepare for violence?

And yet, the comparison between fire and violence completely breaks down when we consider the psychological effects of “natural factors” versus violence.

During the 9/11 attacks in the United States, terrorists murdered nearly 3,000 citizens. The stock market crashed, the US invaded two nations, and our world changed dramatically.

That same year, over 30,000 Americans were killed in traffic accidents, and it didn’t change anything. Because they were accidents.

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* from the American Psychiatric Association (the “Bible” of psychiatry and psychology) tells us that whenever the “cause” of a traumatic event is “human in nature” the degree of psychological trauma is “usually more severe and long lasting.”

Ask yourself how you would respond to these two scenarios:

1. A tornado (or earthquake or fire or tsunami) hits your house while you are gone and puts your whole family in the hospital. How do you feel about that?

Most people would say that they are glad their family had survived.

2. A gang hits your house while you are gone, and beats your whole family into the hospital. How do you feel about that one?

Most people do have to admit that there is a vast difference between the way these two scenarios make us feel. We have to admit to ourselves that preparation for violence is usually minimal, if addressed at all.

Consider:

- The attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, with 2,996 dead. Generally considered the most horrendous terrorist attack in history.
- 69 murdered and 120 wounded on Utoya, Norway, in 2011, in the most horrendous massacre by a single individual with a firearm.
- 15 murdered by a student in Winnenden, Germany, 2009, in the worst massacre by a juvenile in history.

- 50 killed and 50 injured in the 2019 terrorist attack, in Christchurch, New Zealand.

This is not some ancient history. Not some distant land. This is us. Now.

In the US, the FBI tells us that the number of mass murders is doubling every decade, and the average body count is going up. You do not have to go any further than the front page of your newspaper to find similar examples in your own part of the world.

There is a new twist to terrorism: it's called body count. Whether the perpetrators are school killers, workplace killers or international terrorists, they are not interested in negotiating; their only goal is to kill as many people as humanly possible.

The defining challenge of the years to come is to protect our loved ones, our students, our customers and our employees from violence in the same way that we protect them from fire.

But wait. The sky is not falling. It is completely within our ability to meet this challenge. There are simple, straightforward measures we can take to protect ourselves and our loved ones from violence.

You hold in your hands the finest available guideline, by the most eminently qualified individual, uniquely designed to help you to meet this need. With all my heart, I encourage you to read, study and apply this book into your own life to protect what is most dear and precious to us—to protect what counts.

Dave Grossman

Lt. Colonel, US Army (ret.)

Author of On Killing, On Combat,

and Assassination Generation

Director, Killology Research Group,

www.killology.com

About Dave Grossman

Lt. Col. Dave Grossman is a former West Point psychology professor, Professor of Military Science, and an Army Ranger who is the author of *On Killing*, *On Combat*, and *Assassination Generation*. Col. Grossman's work has been translated into many languages, and his books are required or recommended reading in colleges, military academies and police academies around the world. These include the US Marine Corps Commandant's reading list and the FBI Academy reading list. His research was cited by the President of the United States in a national address after the Littleton, Colorado, school massacre, and he has testified before the US Senate, the US Congress and numerous state legislatures. He has served as an expert witness and consultant in state and federal courts, including the well-known *United States v. Timothy McVeigh*.

He helped train mental health professionals after the Jonesboro school massacre, and he was also involved in counseling or court cases in the aftermath of the Paducah, Springfield and Littleton school shootings. He has been called upon to write the entry on "Aggression and Violence" in *The Oxford Companion to American Military History*, three entries in the Academic Press *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict* and has presented papers before the national conventions of the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics. He has also published several novels, and he has five US patents to his name. He has a black belt in Hojutsu, the martial art of the firearm, and has been inducted into the USA Martial Arts Hall of Fame.

Today he is the director of the Killology Research Group (www.killology.com), and in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, he has been on the road 250 days a year, training elite military and law enforcement organizations worldwide about the reality of combat. He has written extensively on the terrorist threat with articles published in the *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy* and many leading law enforcement journals.

Preface

It is hard to provide credit where credit is due to all who have influenced this work. This work is based on three decades of cumulative experience and consolidated, based on my own interpretation and experiences. I apologize in advance for missing anyone or not giving respect or kudos where due. For where I have reinterpreted and adjusted other people's work based on my own experience of explaining and teaching, I have attempted not to overshadow or diminish the values of previous contributions and attempted to purposefully not revisit respective experts' work in too much detail, whilst seeking to explain it in my own words.

I have tried to accurately recall past events when given as examples, and have attempted to ensure, to the best of my ability, correctness. However, time and memory may have influenced my recollection, as it does for everyone.

In terms of political correctness and the tiny nuances that might cause people to take offence, please note that I have made every effort to be sensitive to issues that may cause concern. These days, however, it seems almost impossible to not offend someone. If you read this book and take offence to any aspects, I hope you can disregard them and move on to the next piece of information, as this may be something that could save your life and you might do yourself a disservice by not persevering. I have worked, traveled, and/or trained in close to 20 countries and have enjoyed immersing myself in different cultures. As a white Jewish male, born in South Africa and now living in Australia, I have had great experiences with people of many cultures. I have been deployed

protecting Arab Sheiks and Princes. I have had Black, Indian, Asian, Christian, Muslim, Jew, and Hindu (and the occasional atheist) men and women work with me on protective teams or as my students from all over the world, and, in every way, have quite literally placed my life in their hands. I have found that those who complain the most about cultural sensitivity and gender issues are usually the ones who are not out there getting on with things. So, in the spirit of what this book is all about, I urge the reader to “get on with things” and not try to interrogate the material in ways that do not add value.

This book is structured sequentially, so the chapters should be read in order. However, the final section, *Appendix: Scenarios and Applications*, can be applied as a stand-alone summary where the application of some of the principles and concepts discussed in the book are applied to practical scenarios and examples.

For those of you in a rush, there are key point text boxes and bolded text throughout, which should enable you to be able to scan through the book and pick up some of the key concepts and principles. Or if you want a refresher, you can simply page through the book and review the text boxes, bolded texts, and chapter summaries.

Academic referencing has been applied in a very basic form to ensure credit is given where due; however, to ensure a flowing and easy read, this has not followed standard academic referencing systems.

For more information on my companies online and for face-to-face training, please visit www.risk2solution.com and www.r2s.academy.

Acknowledgments

This work is an attempt to distill and summarize two decades of exposure and experience in terms of the risk management, martial arts, safety and security industries, along with striving to live a life of integrity. Indeed, every influence, both positive and negative, has contributed to the compilation of the contents of this book. Listing all influences would be a book in itself. However, I would like to start off thanking my grandfather, Sonny Cooper, who exemplified what it means to be a role model and how to live a life of dignity and respect. I would also like to thank my mentor, the late David M. Sharp, my wife, who is a constant base of support, and my kids, who have reminded me how important it is to play. Thank you to my parents who have continued to support and encourage me, no matter how far apart we have been at times. A special note to my father for his excellent editing work. To my siblings who are overachievers in their own right. And to Dr. Dennis Hanover, Master Vernon Rosenberg, GM Yaron Hanover, GM Guy Hanover and all of my other teachers, mentors and friends whose knowledge and guidance is beyond value. To the contributors of knowledge in their fields, Dave Grossman, Geoff Thompson, Gavin de Becker and numerous others whose work in this area and whose publications are incredibly valuable in empowering people to lead healthier and safer lives. To Professor Anthony Minnaar—a true academic Superman. Special thanks to Marc Botes for his contributions and assistance with editing and formatting. To Mac McGuire, who exemplifies the “never give up spirit.” To my fellow warriors at Gendai Ryu and the Modern Warrior Alliance, my colleagues and partners at

Risk 2 Solution and to the police officers, soldiers, security professionals, martial artists and everyday people who, when the time is required, have unleashed their inner sheepdog and with whom I have had the honor of working over the years—thank you for your continued professionalism towards keeping people safe and making sure that there is a base for good in this world.

Lastly, thank you to you—the reader—who, by taking the time to read this book and apply some of its contents, is directly contributing to making the world a safer place for all of us.

About This Book

The title of this book, — *Can I See Your Hands!* — refers to one of the key intended outcomes of reading this book— being able to tell if people want to cause us harm or not. In a very simplistic form, if you can see someone's hands and know they are not concealing them, holding a weapon, or positioning to strike you, your levels of trust and confidence can increase. This simple example can serve as a reminder for us in many of the complex moments we must deal with in everyday life. The complexities and threats of our fast-paced and modern world have never been more diverse or challenging than they are now, ranging from ever-evolving cybercrime and modern-day terrorism to old-fashioned violent assault and petty crime. In addition, the fast-paced world and the way we live bring levels of stress and pressure that our ancestors did not have to deal with. As an example, the fact that we are now expected to be plugged in and reachable 24/7 in itself has many negative consequences from a health perspective. The aim of this book is to provide the reader with an understanding of how the world has changed in terms of the level of awareness, prevention and capability that the average, everyday person needs to consider towards keeping themselves and their loved ones safe. **This book is all about you**, the reader. The focus on you, the reader, is crucial because, at the end of the day, it doesn't really matter how skilled, competent or capable people like me are. The reality is that when things go wrong, those who, by definition, are tasked to protect you would probably not be there to assist. These people include security officers, soldiers and law enforcement officers. Had they been present, the incident would probably not even have occurred. The main aim of

this book is to create a base level of proactive awareness and preparedness that will empower you, the reader, to enjoy your everyday life to the fullest. However, this freedom does come at a cost.

The world has changed in terms of how terrorists and criminals think and act. While technology and global travel have made things a lot easier and simpler for us, the core reality is that our opponents use these very same tools against us every day. Issues such as self-radicalized violent extremism and the evolution (or devolution) in terrorist methods of attack—from well-planned, complex and integrated attacks on targets of significance to lone-wolf attacks using simplistic weapons such as knives—have become commonplace. This has resulted in the normal civilian having to invest a significant amount of effort in personal safety and security. This is especially true in the Western world, although far more individuals are killed by radicalized terrorists in areas like the Middle East or Africa than the media tends to report and focus on.

Despite the media's ongoing sensationalist broadcasting of global terrorist or criminal incidents, it is imperative that we maintain a sense of perspective when it comes to these issues. The fact is that globally there are significant losses in numerous other areas, as well (which actually makes terrorism in terms of loss of life and financial loss seem inconsequential). Some of these include:

- Health and safety issues, including accidents in the workplace
- Medical issues
- Workplace violence
- Domestic violence
- Crime such as fraud, assault and other related activities.

In support of the above, the findings of a report compiled by the International Labour Organisation,¹ entitled “The cost of violence/

¹Source: Hoel, H., K. Sparks and C. Cooper (2001). *The cost of violence/stress at work and the benefits of a violence/stress-free working environment*. Geneva: International Labor Organization (ILO).

stress at work and the benefits of a violence/stress-free working environment,” indicate some worrying issues:²

- Violence (from external threats like terrorist attacks, as well as internal threats) represents a problem in a growing number of workplaces, even though the number exposed directly to physical assault remains relatively low. Employees in service industries, e.g., retail and health care, are most at risk of physical assaults, whilst people working as taxi drivers and police officers are the most vulnerable groups with respect to homicide, and, as has been demonstrated most recently, media institutions and those covered by the media are most vulnerable to terror attacks.
- While violent attacks and even murders have received considerable attention in the US, across the world a far greater number of people generally report being exposed to violence of a psychological nature (such as arises from publicized terror attacks), workplace and domestic violence or bullying.
- The costs to organizations are primarily related to sickness, absenteeism, reduced productivity, replacement costs and additional retirement costs. A significant proportion of the workforce also reports being exposed to sexual harassment. There may be further costs due to damage in production or equipment, as well as costs in connection with grievance and litigation, e.g., investigation and mediation costs. A potential public loss of goodwill towards the organization may be another more intangible cost.
- The costs to society are related to medical costs and possible hospitalization, benefits and welfare costs in connection with premature retirement, as well as potential loss of productive workers. On the basis of figures from a number of countries, it is estimated that, in total, stress and violence at work may account for 1–3.5% of GDP.

The goal is not really to divide threat issues into different categories, as this can become very complicated in terms of having to have a

²While this report seems to be a bit outdated, the data and findings are certainly real and will most likely continue to be issues of concern for the foreseeable future.

separate approach to terrorism, natural threats, crime and other issues. The main goal is to basically establish an attitude of proactive awareness and some standard operating procedures (“SOPs”), or plans of action, that the individual can then take and superimpose onto his or her environment. The reasoning behind this is to provide the individual with the ability to identify, predict and, hopefully, avoid any threat that may cause them harm. Should it come to a worst-case scenario, where the threat cannot be avoided, our goal is to empower the individual with some skills to manage the threat with the objective of surviving such an incident with the minimum amount of injury or loss. Ideally, such skills would also extend to helping the individual’s loved ones or those around them. These skills should be integrated into the individual’s everyday repertoire, and great care has been taken in this book to make these skills and tools as simplistic as possible. The reason for this is simple: the more complicated the skill, tool or SOP, the greater the chance that the

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GOOD PEOPLE.**

individual will not be able to recall it in situations of extreme stress, and the more things can go wrong. The old adage “Keep It Simple, Stupid” (the “KISS” principle) certainly holds true here.

The message is very simple—we **need to accept that we must take responsibility, to some degree, for our own safety and security.** Whilst the ability to bounce back after something bad happens (resilience) is important, I believe we need to focus on Presilience^{TM3} (the focus on prevention and preparation). Despite their best intentions,

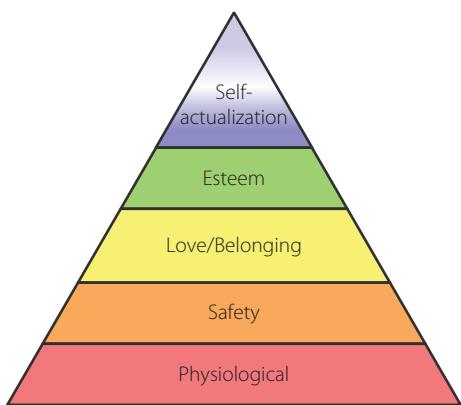
³Presilience is a trademark of Risk 2 Solution Holdings.

the authorities are fighting an intense, seemingly losing, battle against extremism, cybercrime, crime and evolving threats, simply because of the limited resources available to counter these threats. The goal is for you, the individual, to become part of the solution. This may mean you taking a more active role in contributing to the specific security or safety setup of your country, region, town or neighborhood. The aim is to make not only you, but also the community you live in, a more unattractive target for those who wish to harm others.

Accepting that something bad may happen to us is no easy matter, especially when that something bad may include losing our lives or the lives of loved ones. And yet these are the very things we need to invest time and effort into, as unpleasant as it may be. As human beings, we are wired to ignore unpalatable issues, we believe that crime or terrorist attacks won't happen to us, and, if it has happened before, that it can't possibly happen again. The goal of this book is one of empowerment. In my experience, I have found that people fear most that which they do not understand. With that in mind, this book will attempt to demystify how crimes and terrorist attacks are committed, and how we could proactively act to minimize these threats happening to us. The first step in this process is to accept that it could happen to you. Depending on where you live and what you have been exposed to in your life, this could be very easy or very difficult to do. It is crucial that we deal, once and for all, with the denial most of us harbor—the belief that, somehow, we are exempt from these criminal activities and bad things happening to us.

From a psychological perspective, the well-known and often quoted “Hierarchy of Needs” developed by the renowned psychologist Abraham Maslow and first published in 1943 in his paper “A theory of human motivation”⁴ illustrates that we need to address our safety and security needs (bottom two levels) before we can move onto other aspects.

⁴Maslow, A.H. (1943). “A theory of human motivation.” *Psychological Review*. 50(4): 370–96.



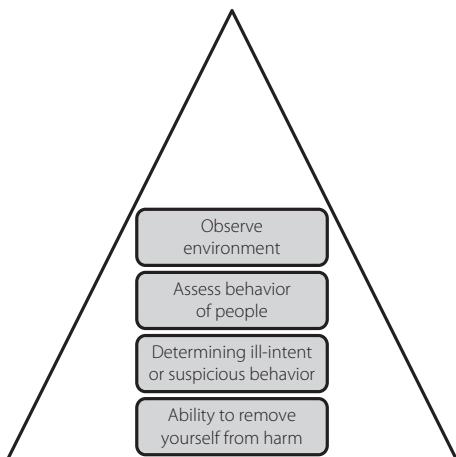
As such, this book is focused primarily on those aspects first, in order to form the foundational building blocks for more evolved needs that sit in the Self-Actualization level. This is critically important, as I have found that whilst in today's modern world, where we often have the luxury to

focus on the upper three levels of the pyramid (Love/Belonging, Esteem and Self-Actualization) we tend to simply take for granted that our lower two foundational levels will always be met.

Thanks to many aspects, such as the formalization of society, modern technology, etc., in most first-world countries these aspects do seem to be a mandatory expectation. However, one simply must look at local crime statistics, chat to local law enforcement, ambulance or emergency services officers, or notice the poor or unemployed in our communities and you realize that in many cases the expectation is not always met. Because of our inherent denial of unpalatable issues, we tend to keep blinders on and not address the lower two levels of need in a coherent and structured manner, that is, until something negative happens which forces action and skills development at these levels. In reality, our approach to self-development should be based on a solid foundation of knowing that we can address and manage our needs in the lower two levels and not rely on the uninformed perception that these levels will always be met because we expect that others manage them for us. As such, a focus on health and well-being and safety and security are the key aspects of this book. The aim is to build a strong foundation of lower level knowledge, skills, and capabilities so that you can focus on the higher levels unencumbered by doubts and be prepared to deal with any issues that life may present. **A strong foundation is always the best way to build.**

The objective of this book is to create a base of knowledge and understanding, together with providing you with the skill sets you need to ensure that it's not just about surviving—it's about thriving. It's about being able to live your life the way you want to and in a safe manner. In many cases, this level of enjoyment cannot be attained because of the blinders we have on—often without even knowing that we have them on. This is especially true when we consider our own cognitive biases and the related mental shortcuts⁵ we have developed to cope with our complex world. In practical terms, because of our biases and mental shortcuts, we experience a lack of awareness and become easy targets for people with ill intent. We can no longer apply what's known as the *ostrich syndrome*, where we stick our heads in the sand and hope that everything around us won't go wrong, and, if it does, that it will become someone else's problem. We need to ensure that we have the capability to take the necessary actions when called for so that we become a key player in ensuring that our world is a safer place, not just for us, but for our children, too.

Action does not necessarily mean that you must become an expert in self-defense and combative skills. While learning to defend yourself is a valid life skill, and one I believe every person should develop, the reality is that developing just a few key abilities can result in a direct enhancement of your own and everyone else's safety and well-being.



⁵In order to understand these biases, I strongly recommend reading the work of Daniel Kahneman and Dan Ariely. See bibliography and recommended reading for more information.

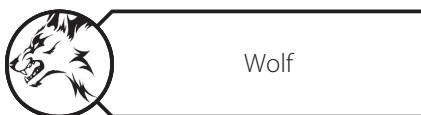
These abilities start with self-knowledge and situational awareness and include the ability to:

- observe your surroundings;
- evaluate and understand what may cause harm or be a threat;
- assess the behavior of the people around you;
- determine whether there is any ill intent or anything suspicious or out of the ordinary;
- have the knowledge, foresight and confidence to remove yourself from such situations or, in the worst case, manage incidents if they occur;
- to report what you have noticed or experienced to the relevant authorities; and
- possibly most importantly, to maintain a robust mental state of resilience and be able to bounce back from things as required.

The above skills can make a massive difference toward the well-being, safety and security of not only yourself, but all those around you.

Our goal should be to invest our effort and energy into the avoidance and prevention of situations that might cause harm or damage. This is directly opposed to focusing solely on survival and reaction—both of which remain critical skill sets, but are reactive in nature. The

reality is that if we allow situations that might cause harm to escalate to a point where we have to rely on these critical skill sets, our chances of walking away from such situations unscathed are slim to none. The essential point is that we all have a responsibility to work towards a safer and better world. **My objective with this**



book is to create a platform to provide you with the skills and knowledge that security and risk professionals have gained after many years of training and experience. All too often, these professionals take for granted that everyone possesses these skills and knowledge. This book strives to make the skills and knowledge available and accessible to everybody so that everybody can potentially switch themselves on when necessary and become active contributors to a safer world.

Dave Grossman, well-known author and researcher, presents a conceptual view of people today where he subdivides society into three main roles, namely sheep, wolves and sheepdogs.

The sheep are the people going about their everyday life, not wanting to be hassled or inconvenienced by security and safety concerns.

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ONES.**

Their safety and the safety and well-being of those around them is generally not a primary concern of the sheep. The second role is that of wolves, who prey on the sheep due to opportunities or their own sociopathic or psychopathic tendencies. Although there is no doubt that there are some really evil people in this world, in many cases these wolves may not have direct nefarious intent. Some are preying on the sheep based on their circumstances, such as criminals who justify their actions based on need

and risk (e.g., stealing to eat). It should be noted, however, that no matter how “noble” their reasons for preying on sheep are, they may still cause significant harm to the sheep. Some examples of clearly defined wolves are terrorists or career criminals. In many cases, criminologists have found that wolves may have justified to themselves that what they’re doing is right from a psychological, ideological or religious

perspective—even if it means blowing up a school bus full of children. No matter how these wolves rationalize their actions, from our perspective their justifications can never validate them harming other people in pursuit of their ideology. What makes things more complicated is that wolves often masquerade as sheep, or even as sheepdogs, which makes early identification and action a lot harder.

Lastly, there are the sheepdogs. Sheepdogs protect the sheep from the wolves. Generally speaking, sheep don't like sheepdogs because they look like wolves. However, when the wolf comes knocking, the sheepdog is often valued above all else. The premise of this book is for you to find that little sheepdog inside yourself. The sheepdogs who have made a career out of protecting the sheep, such as those in the military, law-enforcement and related agencies, cannot be everywhere at the same time. Because wolves are cunning, chances are that when you are confronted with a wolf, those who are traditionally looked at as the sheepdogs may not be there to rescue you or your loved ones. Whilst you might tend to think of releasing your “inner sheepdog” only in violent situations, such as an armed robbery, situations such as these are not necessarily the only situations that might require your inner sheepdog to be released. Think of situations like a fire breaking out in your home, being involved in a motor vehicle accident, or a child drowning in a swimming pool. All of these situations will require you to dig deep and find the inner resolve to help those in need under immense pressure.

Another example may be basic cybersecurity. You might invest in the very best virus protection, firewalls and various other tools for your devices, but if you click on suspicious email links sent from an unknown source, *even if it is from your mysterious wealthy uncle living abroad who would like to give you a million-dollar inheritance*, you may end up infecting and disabling your entire machine. In other words, spending money on protection is not beneficial if we do not apply an integrated approach and it is not helpful to simply believe that because we have taken basic measures we are no longer at risk at all.

A fundamental shift is required to first identify and acknowledge the sheepdog in you (even if you are diametrically opposed to violence),

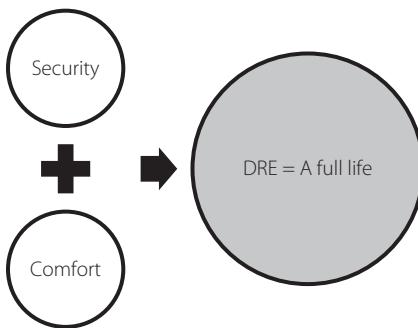
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and, second, to release it as and when needed. This is the foundational purpose of this book. It's imperative that you make the shift from relying on others to protect you and your loved ones to accepting that responsibility for yourself. We are very aware of the fact that the balance of being more aware of your surroundings, if unchecked, can lean towards being paranoid. **Being paranoid is just as ineffective as not being aware at all. The goal is to enjoy life to the fullest whilst at the same time being more aware of what's going on around you.** I believe that

the one cannot exist without the other, i.e., you can't truly squeeze the most out of life if you are paranoid or unaware. This book will attempt to assist you in this regard, but you will have to find and continually adjust the balance for yourself. We call this balancing act Dynamic Risk Equilibrium ("DRE"). Living in fear of what the wolves might do, and allowing that fear to dominate your life, actually translates to the wolves winning. It's crucial that you find a healthy balance between being prepared and enjoying life. The following simplistic diagram of the DRE may help you find this balance.

We can interpret the diagram as follows:

The more security aware you are, the more comfort you sacrifice. Or, alternatively, the more you cling to your comforts (e.g., taking a shortcut home, even though the shortcut leads through a dodgy part of town),



the more you sacrifice on security. Both have a direct effect on you living a full life.

The more security awareness and balance you establish in your life and the lives of your loved ones, the more you will achieve comfort in the process. The converse is also true. The more you cling to your creature comforts at the expense of your own and your loved ones' safety and security, the more your ability to live a life marked by relative safety and fulfillment will suffer. Only you can make the decision on what your ideal balance will be. It is important to remember, too, that, as the name highlights, DRE is dynamic and needs to be monitored and adjusted all the time.

Acronyms and Key Terms

- 3PC-S—Three Point Check System
- ARM—Adrenal Response Management
- Awareness Toolbox—The set of tools which enable us to be aware and observant without being paranoid.
- Baseline—The process of determining what is normal so we can identify what is not normal or what is suspicious.
- BDA—Before, During and After
- COI—Capability, Opportunity and Intent
- CPR—Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- DDDRR—Detect, Deter, Delay, Respond and Recover
- DRE—Dynamic Risk Equilibrium
- ICE—Intercept, Control and Escape
- OODA—Observe, Orientate, Decide and Act
- PIAs—Planned Incident Actions
- PINs—Pre-incident Indicators
- PPRR—Planning, Preparing, Responding and Recovering
- Presilience™—The focus on the prevention and preparation stages of PPRR.
- RHFC—Run, Hide, Fight and Communicate
- RI—Risk Intelligence
- SOP—Standard Operating Procedure
- WoPM—Whole of Person Mode

CHAPTER 1

Foundations

Why this book

Thank you for taking the time and energy to read this book. I congratulate you on taking the initiative to ensure that you grow your knowledge and skills, or enhance your existing skill sets, to improve your quality of life and enhance your resilience capabilities. This will be achieved by learning how to embrace your natural instincts and focus on eliminating negative fears and perceptions which often bombard us. The core concept of what I am striving to achieve with this book is to provide you, the reader, with the base knowledge that specialist risk, security and associated professionals apply, in a simplistic and practical manner.

I have found, based on the experience I've accumulated in my career stretching over two and a half decades thus far, that it is very important to learn how to live with, manage and overcome fear and negative perceptions. This insight was gained by training *thousands of everyday people in personal security awareness and self-defense, training law-enforcement personnel, soldiers and security specialists, protecting presidents, celebrities and high net worth individuals, as well as providing advice to governments and major corporations*. The starting point to achieve this means not denying or avoiding issues, but learning to understand and overcome these issues and threats which modern day life presents. As Nelson Mandela said:

*“The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but
he who conquers that fear.”*

Experts such as Geoff Thompson, who has written many books on the topic, and Gavin de Becker, whose book *The Gift of Fear* goes a long way to teaching people about intuition and how we should trust our inner voice. Such books are very useful and recommended sources (please see recommended reading section at the end of this book for a full list). One of the things that we have to remember is that fear itself is a survival response, triggered by our subconscious, based on information and stimuli collected from our surroundings. Inevitably, fear triggers our fight-or-flight response and in extreme circumstances could trigger our associated freeze or panic responses. **A core point that we need to remember is that fear, in itself, which triggers our fight-or-flight responses, has for thousands of years kept our ancestors safe and helped to keep our species alive. However, what is important for us in today's modern era, with its abounding complexities, is to ensure that we manage fear effectively so that we can have the quality of life we want.** This means we need to have the ability to sort through the information and stimuli that we are bombarded with every day and understand what's real and what's not real from a threat and associated action perspective.

Knowing real fear is quite a different reality to believing that something may go wrong or watching the television and having some sort of panic or fear response. I grew up in South Africa during the apartheid era, which was a period filled with violence, uncertainty and fear, and those who were there know that the situation was exceptionally volatile. My first self-defense instructor was a gentleman by the name of Vernon Rosenberg, who was an active police officer and an acknowledged innovator of practical combat systems. He was my primary instructor from ages 10–15 years old and he truly had me believing that attack was not only imminent but highly likely and could be coming at any time. This was something that led to a bit of paranoia on my side and in many cases led to me being overly prepared and not necessarily enjoying everything that I could during my teenage years. Despite this paranoia, falling asleep with gunshots in the background was a common reality

and one we all became accustomed to as we lived in an area not far from one of the major township locations, Alexandra in Johannesburg (referred to colloquially as Alex). *As a side note, our businesses charity (the Take Action Foundation) has run several successful development and upliftment projects, of which we are very proud, in the same area.* As a child, I was very sickly and there were certain doctors who said I would never be able to exercise my entire life. Fortunately, I got into martial arts at a young age and was able to go from strength to strength. It wasn't always easy and there were many, many challenges, but by the time I finished high school and had spent a year traveling around the world training with numerous well-known martial arts masters, I had two second-degree black belts in different systems and a first-degree black belt in a third system. I was an established member of the South African Taekwondo team and had been involved in numerous high-level international competitions and actually started running my own martial arts school at the age of 14.

One of the first contracts I secured after returning from a year of traveling abroad and training was training bodyguard companies and specialist security operators. In exchange for doing their self-defense and unarmed combat training courses, I undertook all of their close-protection training. After about a year of training in these areas, when I had qualified in all the various skill sets, I commenced working as a professional bodyguard. It was a very interesting and challenging period and it was fraught with many challenges, where, in many cases, dealing with male egos and actually physically proving what I was teaching was a regular occurrence. This led to very early lessons in how to put bullies in their place and how to understand ways to motivate and empower other people.

Whilst the stories and examples of fear and related learnings are plentiful, let me share a quick anecdote. It was around the mid-1990s, and before I had undergone comprehensive bodyguard training. One night, while living in South Africa, I was lying in bed about to fall asleep and I heard a noise. It sounded like a riot across the street.

As mentioned, we lived in an area that was not far from a township location where much of the violence was occurring. Thankfully, I was home alone at the time, so I grabbed my firearm and a flashlight and I went to look over the wall. I could hear the noise, which sounded like close to 100 men screaming and shouting, but could not see anything. I could hear gunshot sounds, but because it was night and sound travels, judging distance was not easy and I could not tell how close the actual threat was. Police were on their way; you could hear the sirens coming. However, realizing that they may take some time to arrive, I went back inside and retrieved additional ammunition just in case. I remember thinking to myself, I don't have time to run and I don't have enough ammunition if everybody jumps over the wall. What am I going to do?

I sat there that night and really considered the realities of having a plan and having a helpful, proactive response. From that time, while I already had a dedicated background in martial arts, I believed that there was a need to develop better skills and apply more effort to the way that I was able to respond and plan, in order to eliminate that fear of what would I do if the worst case happened and enable myself to act in an appropriate and effective manner.

Another key influencing event occurred several years later, still in South Africa. This event was a further trigger point for my search and journey into empowering, advising and educating people to be safer. Indeed, this event was a changing point and, unfortunately, sometimes, in order to learn big lessons, we must be willing to pay big prices. The event I am describing is the murder of my stepfather, David Larsen, in the late 1990s. Whilst my father (Robert) had been held at gunpoint on several occasions, he seemed to have handled these events well and I was quite young, so it did not directly trigger the sheepdog response in me. However, at the time of my stepfather's murder, I was 21 years old, a professional martial arts instructor and a trained bodyguard. I spent my time teaching self-defense, providing close protection and focusing on my academic and business studies. It would be fair to say that, tactically, I was on the top of my game. One Sunday evening around 9:30 p.m., the

telephone rang and it was my mother. She was on the way to the hospital with my stepfather, who had just been shot in the head in an attempted vehicle carjacking as they were leaving their house in Johannesburg.

My immediate response was to grab my “go-bag” and kit, which included items such as a firearm, spare magazines, knife, pepper spray, tactical flashlight and various other tools which were readily available (and legal) in South Africa, and rush to the hospital. When I arrived at the hospital, I realized there was nothing I could do to assist and quickly went to the scene of the attack (outside my mother’s house) to try to see what I could do there. When I got to the scene, I almost ended up having a shootout with what turned out to be two plain clothes policemen who claimed that they were investigating the crime scene. From my perspective, all I saw were two men with their heads in the car helping themselves to whatever items they could locate of value and, to this day, I believe they were more intent on stealing whatever was left in the vehicle than actually investigating the shooting. I had drawn my firearm and had it pointed at them before they were able to draw and point at me. It was one of those very tense and emotional times which literally could have meant life or death. I’m very grateful to this day that I had received very good training in terms of properly assessing situations before making critical decisions (even under intense stress, when it counts the most), as, thankfully, no shots were fired.

In the madness and panic of that night, where it turned out that the bullet that killed my stepfather penetrated the headrest and only missed my mother’s head by roughly an inch or two, it dawned on me that it truly didn’t matter how skilled, competent, capable or effective I became as a fighter and protector if I could not protect those who needed it when they needed it. It instilled in me a deep-seated interest in developing and understanding personal safety and security and learning how to share critical knowledge in such a way that I could pass that understanding on in an effective manner.

I formed my own business in 2001, and we have trained thousands of people, in close to 20 countries, in at least one of our personal safety,

security awareness and related programs. We have been credited thousands of times with saving lives based on the knowledge and skills we have provided. The techniques and methodologies outlined in this book have, over many years, been developed, modified, adjusted and validated, and have been applied by thousands of people successfully. However, it does not actually matter how many others have used the knowledge; **the key to benefiting from all the knowledge and information in this book is to make it your own.** If it doesn't make sense in the way I have explained it, if the words that I've used don't resonate with you, feel free to change and modify as you see fit so that it does makes sense to you. Adapt the contents and systems to concepts and principles that you may better understand and apply them as you see fit, because the real truth is—**it is all about you. If you ever end up in a situation where something terrible happens to you or a loved one, wouldn't you like to have the knowledge and understanding to protect yourself and those you love? If so, you have picked up the right book ... read on.**

Building a base of understanding

A base starting point in the journey of becoming a switched-on and ready member of society is knowing how to ensure that we do not

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FAVOR!**

become victims. The core concept of this is understanding why people become victims in the first place. We tend to believe that because the vast majority of us grew up in societies that engender a respect for the rule of law, respect for people's physical existence and human rights that we therefore have a clear conviction of what is right and wrong. We somehow,

through a process of transference, instantly assume that everybody else should have the same paradigm, and if they don't, they're wrong.

The harsh reality is, whether right or wrong, there are many people out there who don't have the same moral and judicial respect and values that we believe all people should have. We, therefore, have to understand that sometimes bad things do happen to good people and that there are people in this world who would kill you for your watch or money or even because they believe that their religion is right and yours is wrong. Whilst it is a noble cause to drive human rights, education and morals to try and achieve a global minimum standard, in my experience we have a long way to go.

Over the last two decades of training thousands of people and protecting some very exposed people, we have had a lot of experience that has shown us that, probably 90% of the time, harmful situations could have been avoided or even prevented from happening at all. In most cases, all that was needed was a proactive approach which focused on thinking and planning ahead, as well as taking the relevant steps to make the victims hard and unattractive targets to people who would cause them harm. We have found that there are roughly 5% of situations which we often refer to as "the wrong time, wrong place" situations, where no matter how well you prepare, you may be caught in something that is out of your control. Another 5% are attacks or situations perpetrated by highly trained professionals which may be very hard to avoid and/or prevent, and where no matter who you are or what you've done, you may be targeted. However, a 90% chance and probability of avoiding something negative happening to you is a very good chance.

If we are truly capable of predicting bad things that could happen, and then are able to take the steps to prevent them from happening, why is it that so many people get caught up in negative situations? We have found that generally there are a few reasons for this. The very first one is ignorance. People don't like to talk about things that involve safety and security because it means we have to look and consider the worst parts of human behavior and psychology. We have to consider

all the negative and bad things that may happen to us and we have to accept that there are people out there who would perpetrate these bad things. As a result, we tend to avoid thinking about it all because it's uncomfortable to do so, and thus we remain disempowered in being able to minimize the likelihood of our worst fears occurring.

Leading on from ignorance, the next big reason people become victims is negligence—where we actually do know better or we do know

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what we should do, yet we tend to just be lazy or we honestly believe that these negative things won't happen to us. By interviewing many people over the years, we have discovered that it's usually a combination of ignorance mixed with negligence and a healthy dose of denial that makes people the most attractive targets.

Many years ago, in South Africa, we had a woman who phoned our office and wanted to attend one of our “Vehicle Hijack Avoidance” training courses. Talking to her on the phone and assessing her motivation for wanting the training, we learned that she had already been hijacked four times. Enquiring further, we asked how she was hijacked and how the attacks happened. She responded, “Oh, they hid behind the same bush every single time.” Amazingly, she had not realized that by not making any changes she remained an attractive target, hence the multiple incidents. At no cost to her, we advised her to cut the bush and possibly install some lighting. When we asked her why, if she had experienced the same method of attack every time, she hadn’t changed her behavior, she simply said that she did not think it would happen again, and that “these things don’t normally happen to people more than once.” As such, she could not believe it would happen again, but was now very worried. As you can see, this was a significant dose of ignorance (not understanding how attacks happen), negligence (not taking base measures to remove the likelihood of the event occurring