



SEPS

the situation determines the solution

FOUNDATIONS - SEPS WOMEN'S PERSONAL SAFETY PROGRAM

Some people, especially if you have been the victim of violence, may find some of the subject matter contained in this article disturbing or traumatizing. If you are still in the process of recovering from violence and abuse, you may want to consult with a mental health professional before reading this content. The subject matter is also intended for an adult audience, and so if you are under 18, you should have an adult read the material first (parental guidance is advised for people under 18). This article addresses the subject matter head-on, so reader discretion is advised.

THE PROBLEM WITH "RULES"

We all have rules, concerning our personal safety, that we'd never do - e.g. we'd never let a stranger into our house, we'd never get into a stranger's car, we'd never walk down a dark alleyway, etc. In reality, we've probably done all of these things - sometimes without realizing we are doing them. We're very adept at convincing ourselves that our "rules" don't apply to a particular situation or person, and that adhering to them would make us appear rude and paranoid.

One "rule" that many of us would state that we adhere to is that that we'd never get into a stranger's car. Predatory individuals (rapists, sexual assailant's, etc.) understand this, and so would never present themselves as a stranger, instead re-framing the situation so that they appear to take on another, more familiar and safer role.

When we first decided to adopt the rule, that we'd never get into a car with a stranger, we probably had a particular scenario in mind; one where an unfamiliar car starts to trail us, as we walk along a street. At some point just ahead of us, the driver pulls over - maybe opening the passenger door - and asks us to get in. In imagining the situation, we may have imagined that they tell us are heading in our direction, and it would be no problem for them to give us a ride - we may also have thought of our response, telling them that it's ok, that we're not in a hurry, that a friend is picking us up shortly anyway, etc. This, in reality, is not how predators get people to get in their cars.

Firstly we have to evaluate, and possibly change, our definition of "stranger". A stranger is anyone you don't know, or have experience of, how they will act and behave in a particular situation, context, or scenario. You may believe that you "know" a work colleague, who has asked you out on a date, however you only actually know them in a work-related context - you don't know them in a dating one. In a dating scenario, your work colleague is, and should be treated as, a stranger. Your experience of them, and your expectations of how they act and behave, are limited to a very specific context: the work environment. You don't know how they will act, react, behave and respond in a different scenario, and so in every non-work related situation, they should be treated as a stranger. If your boyfriend's best friend turns up at your house at a time when your partner isn't home, and you've not experienced them in such a scenario, then they should be treated as a stranger.

So how do sexual predators get women to "voluntarily" get into their cars? They change the context in which they are viewed as a stranger. Imagine a scenario when you are at a restaurant on a date, which is going great, and the person you have met suggests that you both go on to another location such as a bar/club to continue the evening, and this is something you wish to do and so agree to it. As you are going to your respective cars in the parking lot, your date suggests that you should both take their car, as they don't mind being designated driver, etc. what do you do? Do you refuse, or do you accept? The person seems nice as well as responsible (they'll be designated driver), and the date is going great, so how should you respond without offending them? Is the situation a safe one, or an unsafe one?

The truth is, there is no easy way to tell if the person is a sexual predator, but they are a stranger - even if they're a work colleague. Would you ever get into a car with a stranger?

One Rapist's MO (Modus Operandi) was to rear-end lone female drivers in out-of-the way places. Our default behavior when involved in a car accident is to get out of our vehicle and inspect the damage - regardless of the actual situation we find ourselves in. Once out of the car, this predator would suggest that his victims sit in the passenger seat of his car, whilst they both filled out their paperwork. The car was stolen, and the confused/distraught victim would then be driven to another location where they'd be raped and assaulted. We may all say to ourselves that there are things we would and wouldn't do, but we never account for the situations when we would go against our better judgement - predators unfortunately do.

If you've ever gotten into a car where the driver was not somebody you know but was the friend of a friend, understand you have gotten into a car with a stranger. This doesn't necessarily mean you were in danger, just that you are prepared to flout a rule which you intended to keep you safe. We all do this. This is why simply following "good rules" doesn't work, and that instead we should learn to make dynamic risk assessments of situations we find ourselves in.

PREDATORY INDIVIDUALS

There are two types of violence that an individual may face: that which is pre-planned/premeditated, and that which occurs spontaneously. Spontaneous acts of violence occur when your actions and behaviors, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause someone to become violent e.g. you spill a drink over them, cut them off in traffic, etc. The aggressor involved, however predisposed towards violent behavior, won't have come to the situation looking to become aggressive and violent, but certain factors in the situation will have caused them to act this way. Pre-meditated acts of violence are committed by people who have planned to act violently e.g. muggers, rapists, etc. Pre-meditated acts of violence can be predicted because they follow a predictable path, and are committed by individuals with particular behavior patterns.

There are five basic characteristics of predatory individuals, and when we understand how different these individuals are to us, we can start to make sense of why it is good for us to avoid them. These are:

- 1. They believe they are justified/entitled to act in this way
- 2. They have no conscience regarding their actions/behaviors
- 3. They have little or no regard for the legal consequences of their actions
- 4. They have experienced violence before, and can deal with it
- 5. They have a plan that will allow them to get what they want

The fact that predatory individuals believe they are entitled to act violently, and have no conscience regarding this means that they can act without hesitation or any second thoughts. Compare this with the majority of people who question their right to act physically against another. Decisiveness is a key combat skill, and predatory individuals are generally decisive individuals who stick to their plan. The fact that they even have a plan puts us at an extreme disadvantage when dealing with them: they know what they want from a situation - do we? The legalities of their actions are far more important to their victims than they are to them - a rapist knows that society views forced sexual abuse as wrong, but they still commit such acts. The legal consequences to the assailant mean little. It is rare that you will be the first victim of an aggressor/abuser - they will likely know how individuals respond and react, and how to channel these responses to get a victim to acquiesce, comply, and give in to their demands.

THE PREDATOR PROCESS

All predators, whether motivated financially (muggers, street robbers, bag snatchers etc.) or sexually (rapists, molesters etc.) follow a similar five-step process:

- 1. Choose a Location
- 2. Select a Victim
- 3. Carry Out Surveillance on the Victim
- 4. Synchronize their Movement to the Victim
- 5. Interview/Assault the Victim

The fact that predatory individuals follow a predictable and definite process allows us to identify when we have been targeted as a potential victim, allowing us to remove ourselves from the situation and thus avoid a physical confrontation. If we can understand the decision-making process that predators use, and their behaviors and actions which precede an assault, we should be able to avoid becoming the victim of a violent assault.

LOCATION - PREDATOR SELECTION

Predators go where the prey is - this is their primary reason for choosing a location, and it will generally trump other locations that may be considered e.g. a dark, deserted alleyway, may pose less of a risk of the predator getting caught, however it is also less likely to have a steady stream of potential victims for them to select from. A mugger, who will yield around \$20 per victim, will want to be able to conduct multiple robberies in a relatively short period of time - this relies upon having a plentiful supply of victims.

It is important to understand why one criminal engages in one activity, and another chooses a different crime to commit. A burglar will typically net more cash than a mugger, however a burglar will not only need someone to convert their stolen goods into cash, but also the time to allow this to happen. A mugger on the other hand, doesn't need anyone else involved in the process, and will have cash immediately - though the risk of getting caught is quite high. The mugger is probably supporting a drug habit, and is conducting street robberies to get money for their next fix; this is why they want victims with cash. This means choosing relatively crowded locations, such as shopping malls, transit stops, etc.

We should understand that crowds do not by default offer us a safe environment. Often, our awareness levels drop when we are in populated areas, as we subconsciously rely on others to be our lookouts, and spot danger for us. The fact that everybody is working off the same assumption means that the general level of awareness is down - something predators are all too ready to take advantage of. Just because we are in a location where there are others, this doesn't mean that we're safe.

Knowing that predators choose a location to "hunt" in, and that they don't make their selections in the

same way as we might, should reinforce to us the idea that different locations, at different times, offer us different levels of security and risk. Our house/home may seem safe, however if we are holding a party or social gathering in it, especially if it involves people who we have yet had experience of in this context, i.e. strangers, we should demonstrate an extra level of vigilance, that we wouldn't if we were at home on our own in the evening with the doors and windows locked, etc.

VICTIM SELECTION & FACILITATION

Victim Facilitation, is a concept that considers that there are behaviors and actions on the part of the victim/target that attracts the attention of predatory individuals i.e. there are actions and behaviors that predators pick up on both consciously and subconsciously. This is not the same as "Victim Blaming", as a victim is never responsible for being targeted.

If an individual can be educated as to the particular actions and behaviors that predatory individuals pick up on, and eliminate them, then they will avoid being identified as a potential target. This is a core principle of our training. Below are some examples of Victim Facilitators that can be used to help explain/describe Victim Facilitation.

SUBCONSCIOUS VICTIM FACILITATORS

In 1984 Grayson & Stein conducted a now famous study on the non-verbal cues that predatory individuals look for or pick up on. They set up a video camera on a busy New York street and set the camera rolling, simply filming people walking by (they did this for three days, between the hours of 10:00 AM and 12:00 PM) - everyone was filmed walking in the same direction, and from the same distance. They then took the footage and played it to various incarcerated criminals (12 in total) who were serving sentences for assaults against people unknown to them (strangers). They were then asked to identify and classify who in the tapes they would class as "potentially easy victims", through to those who didn't appear to be victims at all, etc.

The tapes were then studied using Labananalysis (this is a system that codes/studies body movements according to 21 movement types that reflect physical athleticism and coordination, as well as emotional states e.g. when we are depressed and unhappy, we move in a certain way). Two analysts studied the tapes and were in 90% agreement about the conclusions they made about the people in the tapes' movement types.

It was found that victims, as compared to non-victims, had either a relatively short or long stride length compared to that which their body height would suggest. When they walked, their body weight would tend to shift either from side-to-side, or up and down - rather than in a fluid forward motion - and their arms would move in an uncoordinated fashion. Added to this, their feet would tend to lift vertically, rather than swing with the legs. Basically, their movement lacked "wholeness", which was

something that non-victims demonstrated.

These movement patterns of the potential victims can be seen as "gestural hints", that suggest a level of vulnerability which criminals can subconsciously identify e.g. somebody whose eyeline is pointed to the ground is likely to be sad or depressed, and when in such an emotional state, less likely to fight back and defend themselves - if you don't feel good about yourself and don't value yourself, you will be unlikely to fight and defend yourself.

CONSCIOUS VICTIM FACILITATORS

These are the behaviors and actions that criminals specifically think about and look out for. One Rapist's MO (Modus Operandi), was to look for female victims in supermarkets. He would identify his targets by looking for those women who apologized, when somebody else bumped or crashed their shopping cart into their own. His assumption was that somebody who apologized for something that was not their fault, would want to avoid confrontation at any cost, and would therefore be a compliant victim. Assailants don't want to target people who will fight back, they want those who will comply and acquiesce to their demands.

Often, predators will verbally groom their victims beforehand, testing out whether a person will stand their ground, or start to hand over control of a situation to them. Despite the way in which the media tends to present assaults against women as being totally random, conducted by strangers and occurring without any warning, the majority will begin with some form of verbal exchange or interview, where the predatory individual will assess their potential victim, to judge their level of compliance.

Conscious Victim Facilitators are the specific behaviors and actions of a person that either identifies or confirms to a predator the degree to which a target fits the profile of a victim e.g. avoiding confrontation, giving over control of a situation to somebody else, not standing their ground, etc. If a predator believes they have been identified and their target simply tries to "actively" ignore them e.g. pretend to make a phone call, look in a shop window, etc, this action/behavior will send a signal that the the target doesn't want to confront the person they realize has taken an interest in them, and this may as well be a "Green Light" for the predator to make their next move.

SURVEILLANCE

All predators who operate by stealth, after selecting their victim, will engage in a period of surveillance - they will want to make sure they have correctly identified someone who fits their demographic and profile, and who will not confront them or refuse their demands. If a predator is operating in a crowded location, they won't want to risk targeting someone who may decide to fight back, resist them, or generally draw attention to the assault.


The Great White Shark - a predator which is king of their domain, with no predators above them - engages in relatively long periods of surveillance (around 10 minutes) before they make their actual approach to attack. They will often make a trial or "dummy" run to make sure that they'll be successful when they actually attack. Human predators are no different - they will observe their victim to ascertain how alert/switched off they are, if they're still exhibiting victim behaviors and actions, etc.

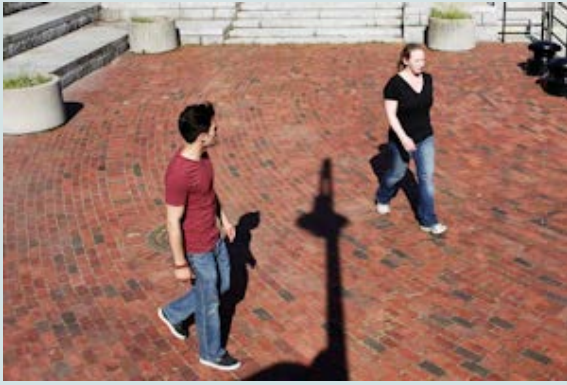
If you pick up on the fact that someone is watching you, showing interest in you, or you keep repeatedly seeing the same person - or cars - then work off of the assumption that somebody is conducting surveillance on you.

SYNCHRONIZATION OF MOVEMENT & PRE-VIOLENCE INDICATORS

Pre-Violence Indicators are those signals that a predator and/or assailant demonstrates and has to perform before they can assault a target. One Pre-Violence Indicator (PVI) that is common to all assaults is synchronization of movement. For somebody to assault you, they must tie their movement to yours - either by waiting for you, directly approaching you, following you, or intercepting you (at an oblique angle). If you can identify when a person synchronizes their movement to yours, and understand ways to prevent someone from doing this, you will be able to avoid a potential verbal and/or physical confrontation.

SYNCHRONIZATIONS OF MOVEMENT

Photo	SOM - Interception
	<p>Many assailants will not simply make a direct approach, either by walking directly behind you or approaching you from the front, rather they will set a course of movement that enables them to intercept you at a future point/position.</p> <p>The assailant/predator is watching people walk by, and as their victim/target moves past them, they start to move i.e. synchronize their movement to that of the target.</p>



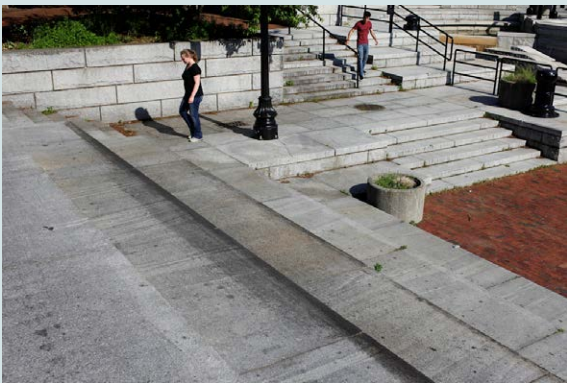
Rather than directly follow their victim, which may appear very obvious, especially in this situation where there is no crowd to disguise what they are doing, they will try to make it look like they aren't trying to actually approach their victim, but are heading in a direction of their own. Because they aren't directly heading towards their target, the victim may find it hard to ascertain whether the predator's movement is actually associated with theirs.



Only as the predator gets closer is it obvious that they are looking to intercept the victim, and by this time, they may have gotten close enough to start up a conversation or make an actual assault.

Photo

SOM - Tracking/Trailing



An assailant may decide to directly track or trail you. Even though you may not be able to see your assailant, your fear system will still be able to alert you to danger. Most people have sensed/felt that they have been followed at one time or another, and this gives us a good demonstration as to the way our fear system works, and how we become adrenalized.



There is an analogy that is used in Psychology to explain how we now understand fear and adrenaline. It used to be believed that, you saw a bear, you became afraid and so you ran; now we understand the order of events as follows: you see a bear, you start running, and because you're running, you recognize that you're afraid.

In the case of being followed, our auditory sense picks up on the sound of footsteps, either too loud, or too fast for the situation/context, we become adrenalized, and because of the adrenaline, we realize we're afraid.



Unfortunately, we often go into a state of denial when we recognize that we're in danger, telling ourselves that we're being stupid, that the person behind us is just in a hurry, etc.



Sometimes, they are simply in a hurry, but their movement pattern is one that also predicts danger and so we are best to take the possible threat seriously.

Photo

SOM - Waiting



If an assailant/predator knows where you are going, what time you will be in a particular place, etc., they will be able to get there ahead of time and wait for you. If your routine is predictable, then you make it easy for a predator to synchronize their movement to yours. Looking at public maps gives people an opportunity to ask you where you are trying to get to; making plans on your mobile phone in public can alert people to where you will be at a particular time, e.g. "I'll meet you in Starbucks on Main St in 15 Minutes", using your car's remote unlock to find your car in a parking lot tells someone where you are trying to get to.



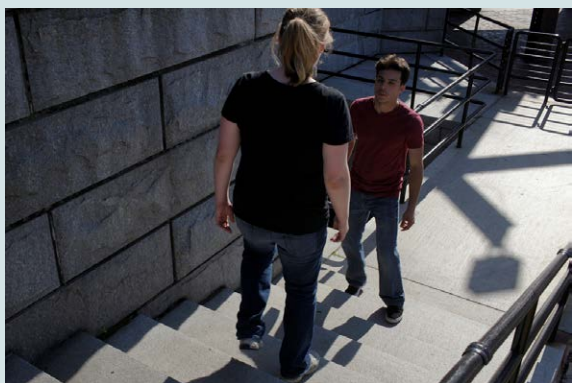
In this situation/scenario, a potential victim has used her car's remote unlock to find her car in the parking lot - a mugger/sexual assailant now knows where he can go and wait for her - he uses the rear tinted windows to hide behind (anyone who may observe him can see that he's not crouching or looking like he might pose a threat.) In some cars, the remote unlock not only unlocks the driver's door, but the passenger doors as well. In this case, he would be able to actually get in the car and wait.



Because the target has walked so close to the rear of the car, when she turns to the driver's side, she sees the assailant very late. If she'd walked a couple of feet behind the car, when she turned, there would have been a greater distance between her and her assailant - clearing corners with a wide angle should be applied to cars, as well as buildings.

Photo

SOM - Approach



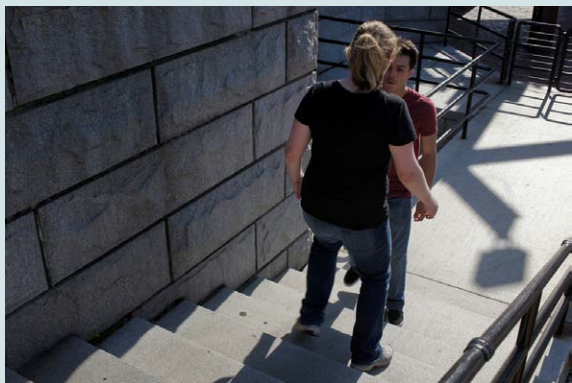
An assailant may decide to approach you directly - they will normally use the crowd to disguise their movement, as otherwise it is a very obvious way to synchronize their movement to yours.



They may not be concerned that you know they are mirroring your movements, and may do this in order to intimidate you and judge your response.



If you are walking in a crowd, it is a good idea to not just walk in a straight line, but to also set a course that sees you move from side to side - this will allow you to see if anyone is mirroring your movements.



If you move one way, and someone follows your movement, and this is then repeated when you change direction again, then you can be sure somebody is synchronizing their movements to yours.

If you can identify techniques and methods that predators use when grooming targets/victims, you will be able to identify a person's motives towards you during a verbal exchange/interview. Because there are these steps that an assailant must make/complete before they can assault you, violence targeted at individuals is largely predictable.

By limiting, reducing, and eliminating victim facilitators, whilst understanding and being able to identify the actions (and behaviors) an assailant has to take before assaulting you, you will be able to either avoid being selected as a potential victim in the first place, or identify an assailant before they are able to physically assault you - we refer to this as avoiding being on the Timeline of Violence, or stepping off it at the first opportunity.

THE TIMELINE OF VIOLENCE

Physical assaults, happen on a Timeline, with phases that precede an attack, and those that follow it. Violence never just happens, however fast an incident seem to occur. There are 5 Phases of Conflict, which the Timeline can be broken down into. These are:

- Non-Conflict
- Conflict Aware
- Pre-Conflict
- Conflict
- Post Conflict

The Non-Conflict Phase is one where there is no discernible harmful intent in the environment, so that a person is in a non-adrenalized state (heart rate regular, breathing normal etc.), when their fear system is activated and they become adrenalized and aware to the presence of danger, they become Conflict Aware. In the Conflict Aware Phase, it is not evident whether the harmful intent in the situation is directed at you, or someone else, etc. The potential threat is general not specific. When the threat becomes specific, a person enters the Pre-Conflict Phase. If the incident becomes physical (which may not be inevitable), then the Conflict Phase is entered. When the physical confrontation ends and either the assailant departs, or the target does, then the Post Conflict Phase begins.

WHAT TO DO IN THE CONFLICT AWARE PHASE

When you first become adrenalized (the hair on the back of your neck stands up, your heart raises, you get "butterflies" in your stomach, etc.) i.e. when your fear system alerts you to danger, you will go into a state of Denial. This is the body's natural way of coping with highly stressful and emotional situations (such as when you are in danger). Often, when you are first alerted to danger, you will tell yourself that you are imagining it, being stupid, paranoid, etc

The truth is that your fear system is extremely adept at recognizing potential threats and alerting you to danger. If you have ever had the "feeling" that some body is following you, it is because your fear system, working subconsciously, has picked up the sound of someone's footsteps that match a movement pattern that a predatory individual might use e.g. they are walking at exactly the same speed as you, or moving faster than would be expected in the situation you are in. There could be an innocent explanation, such as the person behind you has suddenly realized they are late and have sped up their pace, etc., however their movement pattern matches that of someone who is preparing to assault you and so your fear system alerts you to danger.

You must exit this state of denial as soon as possible and make a **Dynamic Risk Assessment**, determining whether the situation contains "high risk" or an "unknown risk" (there is no such thing as "low risk" - as this can only cause you to lower your guard). If you cannot discern what the actions the people within your environment were that triggered your fear system, or what it is within your vicinity that has made you feel uneasy, you should attempt to control your adrenal response through Tactical Breathing, and evaluate your environment in a calmer and more methodical state, attempting to identify if anyone has synchronized their movement to yours.

TACTICAL BREATHING

Controlling your breathing is a great way to control your adrenal response and stress levels. Tactical Breathing, sees you breath in for a regular count, hold the breath for a regular count, and then breathe out for a regular count. For example, you might breathe in for a count of two, hold for a count of two, and then breathe out for a count of two. You should couple tactical breathing with Scanning.

SCANNING

In high stress situations, you will start to suffer from tunnel vision (this occurs so that you can focus on the threat directly in front of you without being distracted by things and people around you). This response is appropriate when you are only dealing with one potential danger, and when you can identify the threat, however in most "modern" situations it presents issues e.g. what if the person you are dealing with/talking to, who is a legitimate threat, isn't alone, or has accomplices in the environment who can come to their assistance, and you are so tunnel focused on the person in front of you that you fail to notice them?

Scanning, and looking around you will not only help you identify potential threats in your environment, it will also help deal with the problem of tunnel vision. As you scan, your eyes will naturally focus on objects/people at different distances and depths of vision, which will cause your field of vision to widen. This will allow you to gain a better understanding of your environment, and identify any potential threats in the shortest possible time.

WHAT TO DO IN THE PRE-CONFLICT PHASE

The difference between the Conflict Aware stage and the Pre-Conflict phase is that in the Pre-Conflict phase, the threat or danger that your fear system identified is both real, and directed towards you e.g. the footsteps you heard behind you belong to a person who means you harm.

In reality, the majority of assaults on women (whatever the motivation) start face-to-face and involve dialogue. The media may like to report on the assaults, where a woman walking alone at night, etc. is attacked from behind, "without warning", however these types of assault are in the minority, not the majority - in reality, most assaults begin with a verbal exchange.

Violence can be categorized into two basic types: Spontaneous Violence, and Pre-Meditated Violence.

Pre-meditated violence occurs when an assailant and/or predator comes to or orchestrates a situation where they intend to cause someone harm. A mugger who hangs around shopping malls and train stations, etc., with the intent to rob people of their possessions with the threat of violence, is acting in a pre-meditated way. Spontaneous violence occurs when something in the situation causes a person to become violent i.e. they didn't come to the situation with the thought of becoming aggressive and violent. A person who becomes aggressive and potentially violent because someone spilt a drink over them, or who becomes violent after having a parking space they were waiting on taken from them, didn't come to these situations with thoughts of violence, rather someone's behaviors and actions within the situation have caused them to become so.

The first question you should ask yourself when dealing with an aggressive individual, is, "is this situation a pre-meditated one or did it occur spontaneously?" If it is pre-meditated, then your assailant is working to a script that has definite outcomes that are expected to play out e.g. a mugger expects to leave with your purse/wallet, a sexual predator is expecting to rape you, etc. it is unlikely that they can be talked out of, or dissuaded from these outcomes - you may be able to disengage from these situations, but it is unlikely that you will be able to convince them of another acceptable outcome. In spontaneously violent situations, the person who has become aggressive probably has no defined outcome in mind. If you spill a drink over someone and they become angry, they are probably not sure of the outcome they are after, and so you may potentially be able to de-escalate the situation (De-escalation is covered in Module/Lesson 7).

As well as there being pre-meditated and spontaneous acts of violence, there are proactive and reactive behaviors that lead to these acts of violence. A person who behaves in a proactive manner, plans their acts, a person who is reactive responds to the situation they are in, and then either erupts spontaneously, or plans their assault based on the situation.

If you are in a nightclub or bar and refuse someone who offers you a drink or a dance, and they deem your manner to be dismissive and disrespectful, they may then plan to assault you later. Although the planned assault would be a pre-meditated act of violence, in the aforementioned incident, it stems from a reactive behavior.

If you are not able to de-escalate or disengage from a situation, you will enter the Conflict Phase.

WHAT TO DO IN THE CONFLICT PHASE

This is either where a verbal confrontation moves to a physical one, or where your assailant starts the assault without any verbal exchange (these types of assault are not common).

There are four ways that physical assaults can start:

- Blitzing
- Ambushing
- Grooming
- Slow/Fast Burning

Blitzing, is where an assailant launches an assault without engaging you verbally. These are the types of assault where an assailant simply attacks you, the Pre-Conflict phase is usually short and simply involves direct movement towards you. Ambushing is when somebody engages you in conversation, as a means to get close enough to assault you e.g. by asking you for directions, for money, etc. Grooming, is a more subtle method, that involves getting you to "voluntarily" hand over control of a situation to the predator, and to a certain extent getting you to trust them (Grooming is discussed fully in Module/Lesson 1). Slow & Fast Burn situations are those where a person becomes aggressive and violent over a period of time within a situation e.g. after having a drink spilt over them, they may not become resort to physical violence immediately, but may take some time to become emotional and aggressive enough to physically assault you.

Your goal when physically assaulted is not to necessarily incapacitate or "beat" your aggressor, it is simply to stop them doing what they want to do to you. If the assault is sexually motivated and the person wants to rape you, your job is to prevent them from doing this. This is the purpose of the self-defense techniques that we teach in our classes.

WHAT TO DO IN THE POST-CONFLICT PHASE

The Post-Conflict Phase is that where you have to deal with the resulting consequences of the assault, both practically and emotionally. It may involve you applying your own first aid or getting to a hospital, etc. It could also involve working with the police and law enforcement agencies to apprehend your assailant, and/or going through a period of counseling, etc.

Our program does not focus heavily on these aspects, and merely makes suggestions as to the things you may want to do after being the victim of an assault or threat.

The strategies that our program teaches for dealing with assaults and threats looks to minimize the trauma levels that are experienced in the Post-Conflict phase. Emotional trauma occurs when you are subjected to a highly stressful and emotional situation within which you have no control. Our attempt is to teach strategies and tactics that put you in control of every situation you face.

SEPS (Situation Effective Protection System) is a framework, for understanding how violent situations occur and evolve, along with the motivations behind them, so that it is possible to predict, identify and avoid them. The system was created and developed by Gershon Ben Keren and Andy Rallings. This handout is part of the SEPS free women's personal safety program developed by Gershon Ben Keren. For more information and other course modules, please go to www.womensselfdefense-seps.com.

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