



Nancy Hightshoe Seminars

STAYING SAFE CAN BE LEARNED

Following are thoughts from my OUT OF HARM'S WAY personal safety programs.

Rule #1: Be proactive! Plan ahead!

We will make suggestions in each holiday newsletter about the safest course of behavior in specific situations - shopping, traveling, etc. You will soon learn to recognize the situations when your pre-planning is important. Slipping into your proactive mode will become second nature to you even after the holidays have passed.

Plan your route and the stops you need to make. Think about the best places to park. Get organized before you leave your office or home when you are best able to focus. You don't want to be sitting in your car organizing your errands. It's too easy to become the victim of an assault or a car-jacking.

Rule #2: Be Aware! During the holidays, you are more vulnerable.

You are carrying more cash and more credit cards than you usually do. (Making you a prime target for a robber or purse-snatcher.)

You are distracted, tired and way too busy! You are shopping and preparing for your own celebrations. You're attending business events and get-togethers with family and friends. Many are traveling. In a word, you are STRESSED!!! And so is almost everyone else you are dealing with which only adds to your stress.

When we're stressed, our thoughts are scattered. The first thing that goes is our sense of humor, followed rapidly by our patience and then, frequently, by our awareness and good sense.

Plan ahead! Stay aware! Your goal is to think about your risk factors and reduce them.

Rule #3: Trust Your Instincts

This is the most critical element in Staying Safe. If a situation does not feel right, it probably isn't. In most of the assaults I investigated, the victim felt The Uh-Oh feeling, but ignored it because he or she didn't want to appear silly or paranoid or, heaven forbid, rude. Pay attention to those feelings!

Keep in mind: Many very serious crimes begin as lesser crimes. For example, the carjacking which escalates into a homicide; the home burglary (to steal those holiday gifts or the family silver) which escalates into an assault on the homeowner. This is the reason it is critical to practice perfect safety habits even in the little things.

(Page One of Two)



Rule #4: Contact the Police

If you see suspicious persons or suspicious activity, contact the police! Even if there isn't a crime occurring, the responding officer can fill out a FIR, Field Interrogation Report, to help keep track of who is hanging around.

Remember Son of Sam, who murdered six victims and seriously wounded seven others in New York City. He wrote taunting notes to the police berating them and saying that he couldn't be caught.

Of course, he was! Because of a PARKING TICKET!!!

You never know where the next clue will come from.

These suggestions are by no means an exhaustive list. But we hope these tips will encourage you to continue to learn more about the skills and safety information you need to stay safe. Our goal is for you to practice these skills until they become just one more set of good habits!

* Teach this information to your family, friends and colleagues - or forward *LifeSkills* directly into their email inbox. You may prevent a tragedy.

Be sure to include the men in your life. Men are as concerned about safety as women are - particularly the safety of their children, wives, co-workers and others in their lives.

There is NOT an assailant behind every bush! However, excellent safety habits are like carrying insurance. You hope you never need it, but good to have just in case.

Stay Safe!