



Nancy Hightshoe Seminars

LifeSkills

By Nancy Hightshoe

LifeSkills: The Belt and Suspenders Philosophy of Risk Management:

Staying “Out of Harm’s Way”

The best way to manage a risk is to see that it doesn’t happen in the first place. Use the Belt and Suspenders Philosophy of Safety. With both a belt and suspenders, if one system fails, the other takes over. Keep that concept in mind as you plan for your safety and that of your family, friends and colleagues!

The numbers of many reported crimes in America have dropped. However, the holidays offer constant opportunities for criminals – who are eager to take advantage.

In our professional lives we are focused on deadlines, changes and catching those oh-so-illusive opportunities. In our personal lives, we are all way too busy! This busyness encourages us to be more rushed, more stressed and less aware. Most of us are not paying enough attention to staying safe – which is becoming a greater challenge, as criminals become more sophisticated and better at targeting their prey.

In this issue of LifeSkills, I’m sharing fundamental rules and some tips for Staying “Out of Harm’s Way”

Rule #1: Remember that criminals are predators. Don’t underestimate them. Crime is their job. Many have prepared as thoroughly as any other professional.

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“The Lady Was A Cop”

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Nancy Hightshoe is an accomplished speaker, coach and consultant. She is an expert in:

- Professional and Personal Effectiveness
- Safety, Security and Survival.

Nancy’s Background:

- Business and Life Strategies Coach
- Police Officer, Detective and Entrepreneur



There's a life-saving phrase every rookie cop is taught: "Don't play it cheap." In a general sense, this simply means don't assume that all situations will work out well. Like sharks, criminals are clever and cunning. Most crimes are planned. Trust your instincts.

Learn to think like a predator - which leads us into...

Rule #2: Be Aware!

Where are you at risk?

What situations are your children and loved ones at risk?

In terms of white-collar crime, where is your business at risk?

Rule #3: Your Belt and Suspenders...Develop habits to reduce your risk.

Your goal is to think about your risk factors and reduce them.

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's critical to practice perfect safety habits...even in the little things.

The following suggestions are especially critical when you are busy and distracted.

*** Pay attention!** Know what's going on around you. Know who is paying too much attention to you, your children, purse, wallet or laptop (2,000 laptops are stolen every day in the United States!).

*** Malls and other parking lot locations** (theaters, the symphony, leaving parties) – avoid parking garages if possible.

- Park in a busy, well-lit location preferably near a door.

- If alone, walk out onto the lot with a family.

- If you feel threatened or concerned, ask Security to walk you to your car.

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- Has spoken throughout the United States and in 17 foreign countries

- On-camera expert for St. Louis NBC affiliate

- Represented a Fortune 100 corporation as their media spokesperson

- Master's Degree in Human Relations and in The Administration of Justice; Bachelor's Degree in Psychology

- Designed one of the first Personal Assault Investigative Units in the country

- Cleared 85% of her felony assault crimes cases (national average is 49%)

- Recognized POST-certified continuing education instructor (Police Officers Standards and Training)

- Named to the *World Who's Who of Women*

Nancy's Commitment and Philosophy

My background in personal courage

- both as a police detective and entrepreneur

- is reflected in all my presentations.

* **Identity Theft** – you already know not to give out personal information, especially your social security number, and do shred your financial documents. In addition, pay special attention to your credit cards when shopping and travelling. Make certain you get **your** card back. If possible, keep an eye on your card so no thief makes a copy of it.

* **Carjackings** occur most frequently as the “soon-to-be former” owners are approaching their automobiles on a parking lot OR when a vehicle is stopped on the street. Be particularly aware at the high-end shopping centers. Their security is generally excellent. However, if you are a predator and wanted to steal a car, where would you go?

- Have your keys ready. Get in. Lock the door immediately. Pull out of your parking space. Don't sit in the parking lot reorganizing your notes, etc.

- If a thief demands your vehicle as you are approaching it, throw the keys in one direction, while you run in the other direction. (This is particularly challenging for men who, too often, try to hold onto those keys...and get shot.)

- If you have a child in the car, throw the keys while saying, “You can have the car. Just let me grab my baby!” (Your baby could be 15...but he or she is certainly your baby at that moment!)

* **Robbery** – “Your money or your life.” Throw your money in one direction. You run in the other direction. Women have a tendency to stand there and hand over the money. Then he asks for her purse, then her jewelry...you see where this is going. Throw the money and run!

- Run even if he has a gun. His chances of hitting you are less than 4 in 100. The more distance you put between yourself and the robber, the better your chances are.

* **Your Safety** – Most critical: Trust Your Instincts. If a situation doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. In most of the assaults I investigated, the victim felt “The Uh-Oh” Feeling, but ignored it because she didn't want to appear silly or paranoid or, heaven forbid, rude. (This is particularly important for people in the helping professions – those wonderful individuals who tend to be caring and compassionate rather than wary and suspicious!)

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My philosophy of personal responsibility and purpose resonates throughout all of my programs.

Each seminar participant comes away with new skills and ideas on how to approach every challenge with creativity, resourcefulness and tenacity

- all qualities even more essential for success in today's world.

Future issues of *Life Skills* will include a wide range of topics from Nancy Hightshoe Seminars.

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- Learn to visualize “What would I do if...?” Have a plan. For example, if you’re being followed while driving where would you go for help? (Answer at end of newsletter). **

- Carry a cell phone with the hot button set to automatically dial “911 - Send” when you hit the “9”. Be prepared to let the dispatcher know your location.

- Also carry a personal alarm (which can be purchased from: www.defensedevices.com)

- Check the ideas under “Children”. The suggestions work as well with grown-ups as they do for the young ones!

*** Your Children** – know where they are - always. The little ones (under 6) need to be within sight and control of an adult who has responsibility for them. (How many children drown every year when they are out of sight?)

- When you’re shopping or sight-seeing, tuck a card in each child’s pocket with your name, home phone and cell phone. If you’re out of town, include both hometown information and how to contact you on that day. This is also good advice for travelling adults who are out jogging, etc. without wallet or purse or other ID.

- Keeping track of teens is a definite challenge. (Remember, what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger!).

- Teenaged girls have the highest rate of abduction. Teenagers are often involved in alcohol-related incidents (auto accidents, victims of assaults). Without scaring your children, discuss these issues with them. They are old enough to make responsible safety choices when they understand the dangers and their options.

- When at the mall or out with friends, always use the Buddy System – 2 or more individuals together reduces the chances of assault by 50%.

*** Protecting Your Home** – since more than a third of all assaults against women occur in and around the victim’s residence, home security is essential.

- Lock your doors! More than half of all burglaries were through unlocked doors and windows!

- If you operate a business from your home, use a post office box or a service such as Mailboxes, Etc.

- Make sure your home looks lived in. Go outside to check the positions of doors, shades and drapes. Use timers and/or motion detectors on lights.

- Leave one or more “Burglar Radios” turned on where a potential intruder might listen to see if anyone is home. Set your radios on talk stations.

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**** The three places to seek help** if you're being followed while driving are: police station, fire station and hospital emergency room (which has armed security). When walking, biking or roller-blading, you want to go where there are people. When driving, you have more options. Go where someone can really help you!

* Share this information with your family, friends and colleagues. 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 other women in their lives

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!

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