



Your Brain: During and After an Attack

In the April edition of this journal, we explored the role of reality-based training in preparation to survive a deadly force attack. This month, we consider prevention and treatment of psychological trauma occurring during and after a critical incident. This sets the stage for next month's final article, which is a study of how these mental and emotional factors come into play when we must defend in court a decision to use deadly force.

"An unexpected traumatic event can unravel a person's beliefs about the world in a heartbeat. It may take years for the person to integrate the event into the fabric of their understanding of how life operates. Trauma can also raise doubts about the self. Issues of responsibility, safety and control are often the residue of a crisis." More at [this link](#).

This month, Art Mize, police chaplain and an ordained Baptist pastor, gives an interview that helps explain why survivors of interpersonal violence so often sustain significant emotional trauma. Mize has worked as a licensed mental health counselor for about 20 years and has a special interest in trauma treatment. In the following interview, he explains the mechanisms of post violent event trauma and some of its treatments and preventions.

eJournal: Why do people suffer such mental and emotional trauma after a physical attack?

Mize: When people are traumatized, there is a loss of the assumptive world. The assumptions they made

about the world just didn't work. They think, "I'm not safe, I wasn't able to overcome this, I couldn't control the situation the way I thought I should." Sometimes when we examine those beliefs, they seem a little silly, but the

beliefs are stored in the brain and we operate on them every day. We had faith that the world was going to operate in a certain way, and all of a sudden it didn't.

eJournal: Is loss of control the factor that creates the trauma?

Mize: It's a large part of it. If people were in control of the situation, the trauma would not occur ordinarily. People who've been traumatized had a loss of control of their response or how things play out and sometimes it's nobody's fault at all, nor should they reasonably have been able to control the situation.

For example, there's a burglar alarm, so one cop pulls up to the front of a building and another to the back. Standard procedure: they're both doing what they should do. A shot rings out from the other end of the building and an officer finds his partner dead. Now, he is living in guilt because he thinks he

should have protected him. That is not logical, and people wouldn't tell him that he did something wrong, but the incident is "freeze-framed" in his mind as a negative belief.

In addition to this negative belief and that loss of control, a certain amount of emotion gets stored with the memory of the event as body sensation. Sometimes people will feel this in their heart area or their stomach or a place in their body that is associated with that event. They will feel it just like the event is happening again.

eJournal: That sounds like a flashback. Is there more to it than physical sensation?

Mize: Yes, there will be heavy emotional states and the negative beliefs about the self wrapped up in the physical sensations. There may be and usually is a mental picture of the event involved. That is where the name "freeze-framing" comes from.

eJournal: How long do these symptoms normally last?

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Mize: A lot of people might have acute stress disorder two or three hours after a shooting, but after three or four days they might not have those symptoms because it is beginning to work itself out and they are beginning to calm down. There is some amount of freeze-framing in a trauma and how long that stays is going to determine whether or not it is acute distress disorder, which occurs from the event out to 30 days after, or if it turns into Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which is the same symptoms 30 days, or beyond.

The whole business of PTSD is wrapped up in that freeze-frame idea. The traumatic event is a moment in time that is frozen for you and it doesn't thaw. You can't convince yourself otherwise of the conclusions that were made [in the moment of the freeze-frame]. And this is the hard part, because the rational mind may know differently and everybody around you may be telling you differently, but in your mind, the memory is frozen in that form.

eJournal: Is negative self-image the source of the injury?

Mize: Self-image is a good way to put it. The high falutin' terms used are a negative self attribute or negative cognition. It is a mistaken idea about myself, about who I am. It is an identity thing. Sometimes, in those extreme emotional responses, we can go back to old lessons we were taught and they'll impact what's going on now. Watch out if you've been given a lot of negative messages in life: that stuff can come back and the brain may connect with those negatives at a moment of crisis.

eJournal: Earlier you used an example from policing. Do concepts from police and military apply to private citizens?

Mize: A human brain is a human brain! Some of the leading trauma therapists and researchers are saying we need to get away from thinking that sexual abuse trauma is different than gun fight trauma is different than attacked-in-the-alley trauma!

The process is potentially going to be the same for the Special Forces person, a housewife, a carpenter, or a police officer. The challenge for police and military is the *repeated* encounters that have a component of interpersonal human aggression. For civilians, traumatizing events tend to have more of a surprise element. The thing that I think civilians are more likely to have happen (though it can happen to anybody) is the "deer in the headlights," "this can't be happening," kind of experience that is absolutely a prescription for trauma.

"A key idea in trauma thinking is freeze-framing, in which the brain captures a moment in time, complete with a picture of what happened and the strong emotions and negative interpretations of the event. When an event freeze-frames, the brain can't take in new information about the incident."

What's going to make the difference for any of those people is mindset, preparedness, training, and stress inoculation, a lot of the things that the Network and its members have already worked with.

eJournal: What happens in the brain that governs what we do in an emergency?

Mize: It is going to begin with perception: the sensory system is taking input into the thalamus and the thalamus will distribute the information to various parts of the brain.

Some of it goes to the prefrontal cortex—the thinking part of the brain, but the most important part is going to be channeled through the amygdala, a very primitive, almost animal part of the brain that determines a lot of very gross, black and white kinds of factors like, "This is dangerous, or this is not dangerous."

The amygdala makes gross determinations and then signals are sent on to other areas of the brain where finer discriminations can be made, *unless* the amygdala says,

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"There's danger here, if we don't do something we're going to die. Let's put everything into fighting the enemy."

When that happens, the amygdala will signal the other parts of the brain and you'll end up with an adrenaline dump into the system. Then you're going to get rapid heart rate and higher blood pressure because the veins constrict as blood is being channeled into the large motor system, away from anything in the body that isn't needed for primitive combat. The system's getting to the point where it could throw a punch or swing a club—all this large muscle stuff, but you're not going to be able to thread a needle at that point.

eJournal: We also hear about both visual and auditory tunneling. What's happening there?

Mize: What's going on is a process called "sensory gating." There are a lot of details that are going on around me that I don't need to know, so my brain is hyper focused and it's shutting out other things.

My brain is becoming highly sensitized to my main survival sense, which is my vision. As part of that, my vision narrows to help me not be distracted. I don't need to hear anything because I can see it. I certainly don't need any touch at this point, so I'm going to lose tactile. Adrenaline is going to keep me from feeling insults in the tactile system, too.

Now, at night, for survival reasons the brain wants to go more into auditory. The trained person learns to trust what they're hearing, and they learn to see in the dark a little better, too, but that's a whole different story. Basically if we can see an enemy, we're going to sensory gate to vision. That's why we get tunnel vision; that's why we get auditory exclusion.

eJournal: It is a two-edged sword that could cause you to miss multiple assailants. Is it possible to break out of hyper focus when the amygdala is dominating?

Mize: The question is how much of the prefrontal cortex is still operating. It is important to point out that everybody is going to be different. A lot depends on the person's physical and mental condition. Sleep is a huge factor, as

is anything else that affects the prefrontal cortex. If you haven't slept for two days, your prefrontal cortex is going to have a hard time staying on line whether you're in a life or death situation or not. Food and hydration, those things have been proven to affect it, too.

There is a lot of evidence that people will freeze during some part of a traumatic event but they can overcome the freeze and get back in the game. They might be

confused, as part of their mind might be saying, "This can't be happening," even while their training is kicking in, and they draw a weapon and use it and run away or do what ever it is that they need to do.

There are breath techniques to calm the amygdala and slow the emotional flooding of the prefrontal cortex—the thinking brain—so it can stay more on line. It doesn't mean that your mind is going to become a still pond, but in the midst of feeling terror you may be able to keep a reasonable amount of the brain function and make high-

er-level choices beyond [grunts comically], "Thor run," or "Thor hit."

eJournal: Can the brain reason and draw conclusions during an attack?

Mize: The brain wants to make sense of things, and while it may delay a *little* bit, that delay may be just two or three seconds. And then, when the shooting is done, the brain has to explain what happened, thinking, "This is

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horrible! What does it mean?" It may connect into an old belief, like the police officer who was not at the back of the building because he was supposed to be at the front, but his brain told him he failed in his duty because of something that had been drummed into his mind over and over again.

What's the logical explanation when you're really upset and very emotional and you're reasoning from your emotional brain? The explanation becomes, "I'm a bad person." That's the standard.

eJournal: *We decide that right then and there?!*

Mize: It can happen within seconds, or it can happen later. People are real vulnerable and ignorant neighbors who read what happened in the newspaper may shame you by saying, "You shot a man who only had a knife." If you've been involved in a shooting, you really need to pick and choose to whom you talk, not only from a legal standpoint, but also from the emotional support standpoint. You don't want people going, "You know, he really only had a knife and he was six feet away! Why'd you shoot him?"

eJournal: *Going back a minute, it worries me when you say that the brain may seek explanations during the fight. Could we control that?*

Mize: Try to get control of body response before trying to think. At that point, don't try to use the brain to solve any problems. It is not functioning normally. Calming the amygdala down as much as you can is of foremost importance. Do either square breathing or belly breathing: steady, deep breathing all the way down in the belly. Even if you've got a complicated post-shooting situation you can always draw a deep breath and let it out slowly even if you are holding a gun on somebody or you need to say something to a police officer.

eJournal: *Do you think we can remember to do that immediately after a crisis? How?*

Mize: You have to practice it so it is almost automatic. With clients who have anxiety disorders, I have them practice nine squares in the morning, nine midday and nine in the evening. It helps to condition the brain and relieve stress. You want to associate stress and stress relief with breathing. If you don't, you'll never think of it at a time like a shooting.

Practice breathing [drills] in connection with shoot-

Square breathing: A four-part breathing pattern used to control stress and panic. Square breathing is related to or has been called autogenic breathing, tactical breathing or combat breathing. (See eJournal Nov. 2008, page 4 and http://www.killology.com/art_onkilling_anxiety.htm)

ing exercises, and associate the breathing with shooting. I make sure I'm really breathing a lot on the firing line, even if I'm just going to the local range for casual shooting.

eJournal: *Breathing exercises could help get through the police contact, booking into jail, or whatever followed a self-defense*

shooting. What about seeking sleep to, as Bill Lewinski has written, "coalesce the memories" and help make sense of what happened? Can you really sleep after a deadly force encounter?

Mize: Sleep after a traumatic event is pretty important. Lawrence Blum, PhD (author of *Stoning the Keepers at the Gate* and *Force Under Pressure*) writes about waiting a day or two [before giving a statement] to have a couple of night's sleep to let the brain begin to let go of that freeze-framed perception if it will. If the brain can begin to let go, [additional details] may be stored somewhere and can come to your consciousness.

eJournal: *Does it matter if it is natural sleep or prescription drug induced?*

Mize: It would be best if it were natural. Antihistamines might be good: they're not all that disruptive to regular sleep patterns. Trazodone would be a good thing: it's an old anti-depressant that was not great as an anti-depressant, but it's a great sleep medication because it is not addictive. People ordinarily will turn to alcohol, but the alcohol will cut out the function of the hippocampus. The hippocampus needs to be on line to work with the memory, but alcohol cuts it out just like that [snaps fingers].

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If somebody needs a drink or two the night that an incident happens, that's pretty understandable. It's just that the more that you drink, the more you're going to interfere with the consolidation of the memory. Watch out for benzodiazepines—Valium, Librium, Xanax—they're very much like alcohol in their effect and they cut the hippocampus out.

eJournal: *What's happening with the hippocampus?*

Mize: At the risk of overstating it, basically you get either the amygdala or the hippocampus storing the memory of the traumatic event. The amygdala is highly emotional, random, and fragmented in the way it deals with stuff. The hippocampus on the other hand has the ability to be logical. It can be sequential and can deal better with unified wholes.

The amygdala will put memories away like this: "That was awful. It was terrible. It goes in that drawer" [mimes slamming a drawer shut]. The hippocampus has several file drawers and it can store memories like, "Well, that was awful. It didn't feel good. However, I did what I was trained to do. I saved my life and the lives of my loved ones. The police officers said they didn't see any problem with what happened. My attorney was encouraging. I wouldn't have done that if I'd had another choice, but I didn't." And that's the way the hippocampus can put it away.

The reason you want to calm the amygdala down before or during the event is so you can strategize. Afterward, it is important to do breathing or some technique to relax the body and the brain so that the event is stored differently.

eJournal: *What happens if we don't process the traumatic event?*

Mize: Usually you have depression or anxiety, one of the two. Hypertension is a big one; sometimes gastrointestinal stuff, but it seems the circulatory system is really impacted by PTSD. People in the warrior professions tend to have higher incidences of heart disease.

Sleeplessness is a huge problem. I've talked with soldiers who are sleeping three or four hours a night and they don't think anything of it because they've been doing that for 30 years. They can't think during the day and they can't track stuff, and they can't plan ahead.

"The hippocampus a more sophisticated system than the amygdala, and is unemotional, coherent, sequential thinking, puts things in perspective, and it can store memories in an organized, logical and useful way."

eJournal: *Long ago, we would have said, "That guy was shell-shocked," but you identify it as a specific and possibly treatable effect of trauma.*

Mize: It is real treatable. It's sad when it hasn't been treated for a long time and people kind of get used to it. It becomes their cross to bear. For some people, that is their life and they can't get around it. But I do think there are people who could do otherwise.

I can't blame anybody for not doing treatment. Every time traumatic memories come up—and the brain keeps bringing them up because it wants to heal—it is so incredibly painful that they have to push it down again and distract from it. So they've gotten in that habit and in doing so they convince themselves that it is too big to

handle.

On the other hand, the right therapeutic process can make the traumatic memory not so hard to deal with in the first place and then once some of it's resolved, you get the idea that, "I can tough it out and be hurt by it this one time knowing that I won't be hurt by it again." Until you have hope that going through the hurt again is going to do some good, it is hard to do.

eJournal: *Earlier you defined differences between PTSD and acute distress disorder based on duration. Where, along that timeline, should we seek professional help?*

Mize: My bias is that if I walked up to you at the scene of a shooting, I would work with you. That comes from some interventions that have been done in hospitals in Israel after bombings and terrorism. They're receiving treatment called Emergency Response Protocol and it's out of the eye movement desensitization and reprocessing ([EMDR](#)) material.

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eJournal: What can you tell us about EMDR?

Mize: There are a lot of theories about EMDR. It works because the eye movements tend to calm and ground the person and hold them in the present, because it is a present task. What we are fighting against is the past intruding—even though the past was only 10 minutes ago, or an hour ago, or a day ago or two days ago. It keeps intruding and it takes over or throws off the brain because there is too much to deal with. Right away the EMDR allows the person to activate the past [traumatic memories], but it also keeps them in the present while they do it.

eJournal: Is EMDR faster than traditional solutions?

Mize: If we were so fortunate as to have somebody for whom this was the *only* trauma in their life, after we go through a history and make sure the therapy is appropriate, we could have that person in pretty good shape in a week or two if it was a crisis and we needed to stack the sessions up.

Then again, sometimes people can't stabilize because of their need for resolution work. With drug court, we found we couldn't keep people sober because of their trauma. So we'd stabilize them for a certain amount of time, and then to do EMDR with them as a focused treatment and it worked out really well.

eJournal: In closing, how can we prepare to cope better during an attack and protect against serious aftereffects?

Mize: In general, keep your brain healthy, which is basically eating your vegetables and getting enough sleep and exercise. It is awfully hard to have healthy brain func-

"Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) is a form of psychotherapy that was developed to resolve symptoms resulting from disturbing and unresolved life experiences."

—from Wikipedia. More [info here](#).

tion when the rest of your body is in bad shape. Sleep, hunger and thirst could really hurt you [during a traumatic event]. Sleep is the one that creeps up the most on people in our society. There have been an awful lot of studies that show a real degradation in performance both in terms of thinking ability and motor skills due to lack of sleep and they are talking about people who are getting six hours a night. We are a pretty sleep-deprived culture.

eJournal: Shooters love to go to famous shooting instructors to learn tactics, but you are talking about a far more elemental preparation.

Mize: The occasional trip to Thunder Ranch won't hurt anything, but when you get out of the car and you're walking to your house or to where you work you've got to remember that an attack can happen there. Preventing the surprise is the really important thing. Don't drift off into a worldview that says, "I'm totally safe," though that doesn't mean that you have to be paranoid and crawl from the car with your Glock combat knife in your teeth, either!

The key is good old **Condition Yellow**. You're just aware of what is going on and you're mindful of the fact that you might have to respond to a threat. In places where you go routinely, it becomes easier if you do a little mental rehearsal. What better thing do you have to do as you're walking to your car than to wonder, "Where are some trouble sites around here? Where would I go? Where's the cover?" You don't have to do that every time, just often enough to have some plan in your mind to counteract that deer-in-the-headlights response.

eJournal: These are complex topics and we have only scratched the surface, but Art, we really appreciate your time and the easy-to-understand explanations you've given us. It helps us understand more of the issues and in the future, that could be vital for a Network member. ●

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Marty Hayes

President's Message

Last month, I mentioned that I was attending the second trial for Larry Hickey, the fire-arms instructor who was forced to shoot two of three people who were attacking him in his driveway. The first trial resulted in a hung jury, 9-3 for acquittal. The State of Arizona, through the Pima County Prosecutor's

Office, decided to take the case to court again, hoping for a better outcome. I guess they thought perhaps the first jury was an anomaly. Well, the result in this trial was also a hung jury, 8-4 for acquittal on the charge of aggravated assault on one of the two, and 10-2 for acquittal on the other.

I had hoped to write a full report about the trial and its result, but with the prospect of the State trying Larry a third time (yep, that is a possibility), and the off chance that I could be used again in some capacity in a third trial, I had better keep the details to myself. What I did come away with, though, was the unmistakable impression that not only was Larry Hickey on trial, but so was the whole idea of an armed lifestyle. When I am free to do so, I will write about why I came to this realization.

One bright spot of the week I spent in Tucson was to watch two attorneys and one legal assistant from the Pima County Public Defenders Office work their hearts out for Larry. Their passionate legal defense was what we could only hope for from a public defenders office, and it gave me a new respect for the idea of having the public defender represent you. What they didn't have to work with was a lot of money for experts and consultants, which left some gaps in the defense. (Gaps that will be filled if there is a third trial). Again, I hope to be able to share the particulars of the case soon.

On other matters, we now have Network Affiliated Attorneys in half of the states of the union, and are working towards the goal of having at least one attorney in every state and every major metropolitan area in the country. To that end, on behalf of the Network I recently joined the well-

respected National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. This is a nationwide organization with over 12,000 attorneys throughout the country, and I will be attempting to work through them to secure the attorneys we need to fully flesh out our Network Affiliated Attorney list.

The good news is that as we grow, we continue to get attorneys contacting us to join, which I believe is the best way. I know some of you are frustrated with not having an attorney's business card in your wallet, and I feel your frustration. We get many calls a week regarding the attorney issue. In fact, the **"Boots on the Ground"** program was a direct result of attempting to create a bridge program between members having to go it alone, and having your legal representative there immediately after a shooting incident.

And, speaking of shooting incidents, in my local rural community of Onalaska, WA, we recently had a homeowner shoot and kill an individual who was ostensibly going to break into a home. From the news accounts, the homeowner (who apparently was still building the home and slept in a trailer next to the house under construction) had discovered that his home had been burgled earlier that day, so he sat up that night and waited to see if the thieves came back. Well, a man and a woman came into his driveway at 9:30 that evening, sneaking around the outside of the home with flashlights. The homeowner, hearing the people outside, opened his garage door. When he was confronted by two people shining flashlights in his face, he began shooting, killing the male.

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Was this a justifiable killing? Washington state case law and Washington state statutory law is somewhat in conflict as to whether or not this will be seen as an act of justifiable homicide. Further complicating the issue, this is an election year here in Lewis County, WA, with both the local prosecutor and the local sheriff up for re-election. The sentiment of the local population here is in great sympathy for the homeowner, and I cannot help but think that this will weigh heavily on the minds of the local politicians as they decide how to handle the case. The homeowner had not been charged with a crime yet.

One of the reasons I live where I do, is because we are such a rural, conservative community. Take this same set of circumstances in any number of anti-gun communities, and the homeowner would be in jail right now, facing a 1st degree murder (or at least manslaughter) charge.

I write about this incident because first, it is fresh in my mind, and secondly, it points out a perfect example of the type of incidents that end up making case law. If the homeowner is arrested and tried, he will undoubtedly claim self defense, which then shifts the burden of proof to him to explain to the jury why he felt his life was in danger. If the jury feels that he had a reasonable belief that his life was in danger, then he should be acquitted. But, if they can't honestly come to the conclusion that his actions were reasonable under the circumstances, he would be found guilty.

Further complicating the issue is the murky law here in Washington State regarding this set of circumstances. With murky laws sometimes come unintelligible or flat out wrong jury instructions. From what I have seen studying self-defense cases in which verdicts were overturned, the appeals often times hinge on flawed jury instructions. Once an appeal is heard and ruled upon, the ruling of that three-to-seven member appellate court then becomes the law for that particular jurisdiction, until the legislature either clarifies the law or a higher court overturns the appellate court ruling. *State of Arizona v. Harold Fish* is a perfect ex-

ample of this phenomenon. A Google search of that case will result in hours of fascinating reading.

The moral of this story, at least at this point, is to make sure that if you believe your life or the your loved ones' lives are in danger and you need to use deadly force in self-defense, BE SURE that you can articulate the facts of the event with sufficient clarity that a dispassionate jury of 12 non-gun owners would understand why you reasonably believed your life was in danger. And, for God's sake, don't go looking for trouble, as did the homeowner in my home county.



Author seen giving an interview at the 2009 NRA convention.

Next month Vincent and I will be representing the Network at the National Rifle Association convention in Charlotte, North Carolina. We enjoyed the event last year, as we met many Network members and enrolled many more. If you are planning to attend, please be sure to drop by our booth (number 1938) and say hi even if we are knee deep

in discussions with many of the thousands of NRA members who will be attending. Just break into the conversation, and say, "Excuse me, I just wanted to say hi, I am a Network member from ____." Not only will we be glad to meet you, but also it can't hurt for others to see current members dropping by the booth.

That's enough for this month. I hope by next month we will have an update on the Hickey case, as I expect I'll know by then whether or not he is going to be tried a third time. I'll also have a report of my impressions of the NRA Convention. ●

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J. Vincent Shuck

Vice President's Message

Foundation Growth

As background for our new members, we try to conduct an online auction of donated items from our corporate sponsors at least once each year. All proceeds from the auction, typically run on GunBroker.com, go into the Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Network established to support members. Last year, we auctioned a unique, custom-made Galco shoulder rig. This year's auction is shaping up and will have a number of exciting items.

Galco (www.usgalco.com) has stepped up again and has donated a holster handbag. The Pax is designed in cooperation with author and self-defense authority, Paxton Quigley. Perhaps not an item that most of us guys need, but this is perfect for the lady Network members who carry in a handbag. Of course, guys, there's nothing wrong with providing the spouse or lady friend a gift! The end user will appreciate this stylish, soft leather handbag specifically designed for concealed carry.



Who doesn't need ammo? We have two (2) cases of ammunition from CorBon (www.corbon.com). One case is the 9mm Luger +P 115 grain JHP and the other is the .45 ACP +P 165 grain JHP. 500 rounds per case, which should give you plenty of practice ammunition to test your blaster and enough leftover for any bump in the night.

Finally, we have three items from Safe Direction (www.safedirection.com). This company distributes great ballis-

tic panel safety equipment designed to capture an unintentional discharge. We will offer the Academy Pad, designed to fit into a standard three-ring binder, the handgun-rated



composite board and the rifle-rated composite board. The composite boards are for use in your gun cleaning room or dry fire practice area and can be attached to a wall.

Collectively, these items total about \$2,500 in retail value and will be available for your bids in the near future – watch for a posting alert.

As a reminder, Foundation funding is provided by an allocation of 25% of all Network membership dues and renewals and 100% of all corporate sponsorship contributions. The purpose of the Foundation is to encourage firearms safety and education and to provide legal defense support to lawfully armed citizens who are faced with court challenges due to exercising their right to self defense. The Foundation will provide an initial \$5,000 fee deposit to the member's attorney if the member has been involved in a self-defense incident. The fee deposit gets the legal defense immediately underway, with representation during questioning and arranging for an independent investigation of the incident. Also, Network members, by virtue of their membership, are entitled to case review by one of

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the Network experts and have access to contact information for Network-affiliated attorneys and expert witnesses. Beyond that, distribution of monetary grants to help with legal fees is at the discretion of the Foundation's Advisory Board, comprised of Massad Ayoob, John Farnam, Tom Givens, Dennis Tueller and the Network President and Vice President.

During the short two-year tenure of the Network and Foundation, we have grown the fund to over \$40,000. This year's auction and other contributions will continue the fund's growth.

NRA Annual Meeting

As noted in the President's Message, Marty and I will be at the NRA meeting this month in Charlotte (www.nraam.org) sharing information about the Network and recruiting new members. I will also spend some time visiting fellow exhibitors and looking for items that can be included in future auctions. If you attend the meeting, be sure to stop by the Network's booth to say hello.

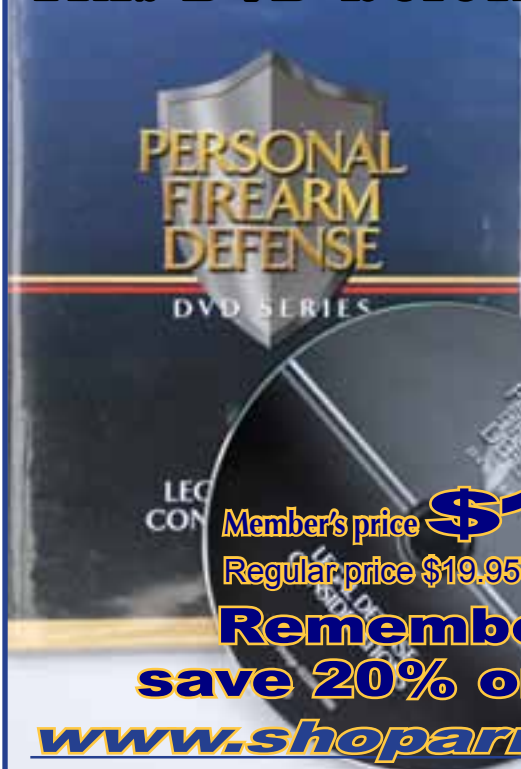
Concealed Carry Laws

Last month, Arizona joined Alaska and Vermont as the

third state to allow people to carry a concealed weapon without a permit. By eliminating the permit requirement, the Arizona law allows individuals 21 or older to forego background checks and classes. The bill was supported by police unions representing rank-and-file officers but opposed by some police chiefs who expressed concern that the law will lead to more accidents. I don't know about you, but I don't believe civilians have cornered the market on needing gun safety reminders. In fact, the last time I had a muzzle pointed at me was when the police officer serving as the instructor for the class I was attending violated this core safety principle during a demonstration. When I called him on it, he pointed out to me and my fellow classmates that "...it wasn't loaded."

In Iowa, the Governor signed a bill to change the Hawk-eye State from "may issue" to a "shall issue" concealed carry state. The new law requires sheriffs to issue permits to carry a concealed weapon to all applicants, unless they are subject to certain specific disqualifiers. The law also allows the state to recognize all valid permits from other states held by nonresidents, thus, after January 2011, we will be able to add Iowa to our list of states where we can legally carry a concealed weapon. ●

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Personal Firearm Defense series host Rob Pincus interviews Network President Marty Hayes

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Affiliated Attorney Question of the Month

We are delighted that, with the support of our affiliated attorney members, we can continue this column designed to introduce our members to our affiliated attorneys.

Network members have reported having trouble finding an attorney with whom to consult in preparation against the possibility of having to use a gun in self defense. Attorneys who are not affiliated with the Network seem puzzled that anyone would want to discuss matters like the law and what to expect from police and the courts in advance, and they say things like, "What? Are you planning to shoot someone?" or they decline to meet with the gun owner because they are busy with more pressing cases.

Hoping that practicing attorneys could give us some insight into this frustrating problem, we posed the following question to the Network Affiliated Attorneys:

How can our members go about finding and developing a relationship with a good lawyer in areas where the Network does not yet have an affiliated attorney?

James B. Fleming

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Your question demands some serious thought. It is very unfortunate that some of our Network people have encountered the types of responses from attorneys that you have related, in trying to responsibly address such a serious issue. However, the fact of the matter is that the law, like any other field of endeavor, attracts talented, bright people, and it also attracts people of a much lower caliber. The key, for anyone seeking legal counsel on such an important matter, must be to identify not only a knowledgeable professional, but one capable of creating a relationship of trust and confidence with the client.

I often tell self-defense students that, in seeking legal counsel, they must ask two basic questions as a starting point. First, "If I call you at 3:00 a.m. to tell you that I have had to use deadly force to protect myself or my family, will you come to where I am, right now?" Second, "If you do come, will you know what to do when you get here?" This situation demands that the answer to each question be a solemn, unconditional, "Yes." Obviously, the attorney must

be extremely well versed in the practice of criminal defense work. But, the truth of the matter is that not all criminal defense lawyers are suited for this work, because the self-defense case demands much, much more. It requires a through working knowledge of the dynamics of the self-defense encounter, legal, physical, emotional and psychological. And it also demands the wisdom and the humility to understand where the attorney's knowledge and experience stop, and the expertise of the trained, experienced self-defense expert begins.

Truly, lawyers "practice" law in the same manner that doctors "practice" medicine. It is a never-ending learning process. But, luckily, *learn* is what lawyers do best. Learn the law, learn the process, learn the client, learn the opposition, and learn the facts. What they cannot learn, what must be intrinsic to the personality of the self-defense lawyer and demanded by the relationship between the attorney and client is the willingness and ability to fight for the client. To weigh in, for the long haul, in the most emotionally and physically challenging experience that either of them will ever encounter.

I don't *think* this is true; I know this to be true, because I've been there. It's brutal, exhausting and frightening to defend the innocent. Much more so than the defense of the guilty. And the stress of knowing that an innocent person is leaving their life, their future and that of their family, in your hands, is one of the most gut-wrenching, emotional experiences any human being will ever deal with. It absolutely, unconditionally and irrevocably demands that the attorney bring his or her "A" game to the task from night one, until it's over. That, and the ability to stand alone in the sleepless night, stripped of all your arrogance and pride,

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staring out into the darkness, asking yourself over and over again, if you have what it takes to protect this client from all the harm that is coming his or her way, and being able to finally swallow hard and clench your fists and say simply, "Yes." Because at that moment, there is no one else to bullshit and you know in your heart that you either mean it, or you don't.

So, I encourage members to bring this message to their first meeting with the attorney. The meeting should be on the attorney's dime and the attorney's time. You, as the client, are worth that level of respect. If they are not willing to do the meeting on these terms, walk away. If he or she can read this, through to the end, and then look you, unblinking, directly in the eye, while shaking your hand and say, "I can do that," then, and only then, you've got yourself a lawyer.

Mitchell Lake, Esq.

Carswell Law Office, LLC
924 Noble Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06608
203-336-1111 – espada129@aol.com

I think you have to look at WHY people are running into a brick wall before asking what they can do to avoid it or go over it.

What I believe is that most people have such difficulty formulating the questions they should be asking an attorney, that they come across either as complete idiots, or homicidal loons when they start phrasing questions like, "What happens after I shoot someone, and the cops get called?" It's a bit of a non sequitur and it is very off-putting, especially for an attorney who usually doesn't get asked that question. Hell, it would be off-putting for ME, and I usually scare the shit out of other people!

What people first need to do is understand that they need to inform the lawyer about why they are in his office asking about a shooting—especially one that hasn't happened yet. It's critical to give some context as to why you need or want the requested information. After all, shooting someone between the eyes can be murder...or a lawful use of force. It's ALWAYS context!

As for YOUR context: you are getting, or have obtained a carry permit, and you want to do the proper due diligence in determining when it is and is not lawful to use force and in the event you do use force, what can you expect? Oh, and if you happen to need an attorney...what would that entail?

"How would I contact you? How would I pay you? Would an attorney like you be available in the event something unfortunate occurs?...OH, you would be...well. That's wonderful!...Got an after hours contact number? Great! Thanks...Hope I never have to use you for something like this, but as we all know, due diligence is the key to success!"

That's how you talk to a lawyer you want to hire for a use of force case!

People, this isn't a gun issue. This isn't a rights issue. This isn't a political issue. You are interviewing for criminal representation, to see if he understands use of force laws, if he can adequately explain them to you, and if you feel, based on your interview with him, he is a good advocate for you. That's it.

Keep your conversation in the appropriate context and on topic, and you will find it's a lot easier to accomplish this task.

Kevin L. Jamison

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www.KLJamisonLaw.com

I use a system in which I charge \$100 a year to be a "registered agent." We have a consultation and I open a file on the person. If the worst thing happens I have a place to start in arranging bond etc.

This question generated so many responses that we will continue the topic into the June edition of this journal.

We appreciate the contributions our affiliated attorneys make to the Network, including their interesting responses to questions posed in this column. Contact information for our Network affiliated attorneys is available to members who are logged in to the website at www.armedcitizensnetwork.org/attorneys.

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Affiliated Instructor Question of the Month

One of the Network's great strengths is its affiliation with firearms instructors and attorneys. With the goal of introducing more of these professionals to Network members, in this edition, we are delighted to continue the *Question of the Month* feature.

This month's question for the Network Affiliated Instructors was in two parts:

When you were starting out and new to guns, what book or DVD had the most influence on you as you became a practitioner of armed self defense? Why?

In the last several months, what book or DVD has either made you rethink the issues surrounding armed self defense or renewed your convictions about guns and self defense? How and why?

The Gun Guy®

Rick Jennings

<http://www.gunguy.net>

Although I was starting out many years earlier, the book I found of most interest in the beginning was *In the Gravest Extreme* by Massad Ayoob. I believe it is a great first step for those considering armed defense to become aware of the possible ramifications associated with the use of lethal force.

The best instructor's works I have found are the books by Gabriel Suarez (*The Tactical Pistol* being one), *Principles of Personal Defense* by Col. John "Jeff" Cooper and, more recently, DVDs featuring Clint Smith.

Gun For Hire, LLC

Anthony P. Colandro

Belleville, NJ

<http://www.gunforhire.com>

When I was starting out with guns the first book that made the greatest impression on me was *In the Gravest Extreme* by Massad Ayoob. After reading his book I was almost afraid to carry a gun. When you read Massad's graphic perspective on the pros and cons of gun ownership and the possible legal ramifications that go with it you realize that carrying a gun is not for everyone.

Even though this book is over twenty years old it is still relevant. Over the past 19 years of teaching professionally

I have seen so many fads and trends come and go, and every day there seems to be a manufacturer coming out with the "new, best thing."

I decided to reread and revisit the book *The Snubby Revolver* by Ed Lovette. Everyone who carries concealed should read this book. With the revolver we have the pure, simple, easy-to-operate unit that is as close to idiot proof as one could ask for at three in the morning. As us revolver guys say, "We would rather have five for sure." As more and more people carry concealed I believe that for many of the casual carriers, the revolver should be considered their first and only choice to help prevent accidental discharges as well as jams and malfunctions. I strongly recommend both of these books for anyone considering a gun for self defense.

Firearms Safety Training, LLC.

Claude Werner

Atlanta, GA

<http://firearms-safety.info>

The book(s) that had the most influence on me forty-ish years ago were *No Second Place Winner* by Bill Jordan and *Sixguns* by Elmer Keith. They were written by men who weren't armchair theorists, but rather had lived life at the fringe of society and weren't afraid to tell their experiences and those of others. And they told them from the first or second person point of view, not that of someone who told someone who told someone who told the author.

The DVDs that have had the most effect on me lately have been the after-action videos of the force on force classes I have helped teach. A wealth of information is in them about what people actually do under stress rather than what they think or say they will do. While the key emotional drivers of duty, honor, bonding, and loyalty are missing from force on force, there is still a great deal of information to be gained from watching it through the eye of the camera.

The videos of Personal Defense Training's *The Test*, in which I participate, are not distributed outside the student base of each particular class. The only commercially available DVD that I can recommend is produced by David Kenik and Ralph Mroz <http://www.armedresponsetraining.com/shoot-NOS-preview.html>.

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Mad Duck, TTC

John D. Farquhar
West Elkton, OH

<http://www.madduckttc.net/>

Well, when I was starting out 20 years ago, I guess it was the book *The Ayoob Files*, in particular the Steve Cheney shooting. I guess I was of the opinion that I knew how to shoot and could handle anything. Reading the book opened my eyes to the fact I really didn't know a lot, and really needed to learn a lot.

It got me on the road I am today, it caused me not only to study the craft of the gun, but a layman's perspective on anatomy, psychology and physiology as well as the legal aspects of self defense.

The one book that has influenced me recently more than any other is Lt. Col. (U.S. Army Ret.) Dave Grossman's book *On Combat*. I always keep a copy handy, and use a lot of his material in my classes. I'm still convinced that I need to continue to learn as much as I can, so that I can pass that knowledge on.

KR Training

Karl Rehn
Austin, TX

<http://krtraining.com> – rehn@krtraining.com

When starting out, it was *Shoot To Win* and *You Can't Miss* by John Shaw and Michael Bane. Back in the late 80s I was doing some recreational shooting at an outdoor range on the same day as the local IPSC club match. I wandered over and asked one of the shooters about competing. That led to one of the club members generously volunteering some time to teach me the basic gunhandling and shooting skills necessary to shoot a match. He also loaned me those John Shaw books to read and use as a training reference. Other books that came along later, particularly Brian Enos' book on *Practical Shooting* and J. Michael Plaxco's book *Shooting From Within*, were important, but the Shaw books were the first ones that really defined for me what "combat shooting" was.

Recently? *Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes* by Amanda Ripley. It's a fascinating book that explores the factors (mindset, training, equipment, actions) that led to individuals surviving situations where many others died. The situations include 9/11, natural disasters, the school shooting at Virginia Tech, hotel fires, and other ma-

jor incidents.

The stories and interviews in the book do an excellent job of reinforcing concepts most armed citizens have already figured out: those that believed that something bad could actually happen to them, and took action to prepare and train on their own, who didn't panic and followed their plan, were the mostly likely to survive. Those that used "it'll never happen to me" and "professionals will come to my rescue" as their emergency plans often did not survive because there was not sufficient time or access for professionals to reach the scene. Because it addresses a wide variety of incident types, it's a great book on personal preparedness and survival to share with friends, family and co-workers who might be turned off by a gun book. For gun people, this book shows how our commitment to armed defense can and should be applied to a wider range of just-as-likely and just-as-dangerous situations as a violent criminal attack.

Guardian Firearms Institute

Ken Owen
Nicholasville, KY

www.guardianfi.com

My response to both questions is one and the same, *In The Gravest Extreme* by Massad Ayoob. When I first read his book it made me seriously look at the responsibility and ramifications of the use of a handgun in self defense. I re-read his book periodically because each time I do it drives home that same response. I never want to become complacent.

We appreciate the many contributions made by our affiliated instructors of which this shared wisdom is only one part. We hope this column helps you feel you know more about our affiliated instructors. We further hope our members will contact these professionals when they need training, and refer friends and family members to them, as well.

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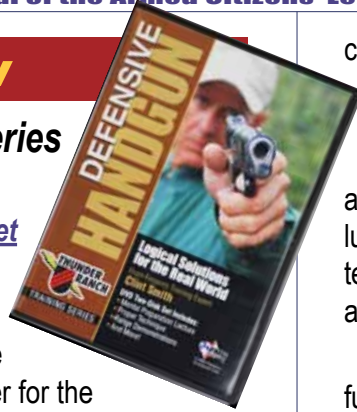
Most students of shooting and self defense have heard or read the name of Clint Smith, a renown trainer for the past 30 years, who has influenced thousands of this generation's armed citizens through classes, magazine articles and recorded lectures on DVD.

FMG Publications, the folks who publish *American Handgunner*, *GUNS Magazine* and more, has produced a series of nine lectures by Smith, including *Defensive Handgun: Logical Solutions for the Real World*. The two-disk set begins with a 48-minute lecture by Smith that has the friendly feel of a sit-down discussion with a respected mentor. The second disk contains a 42-minute presentation on the range.

Smith opens his topic by asking viewers to check what they learn in the presentation against one word: l-o-g-i-c. When teaching a class, he asks students to write the word "logic" in large letters across the top of their page of notes. Everything you learn about guns and self defense needs to pass the logic test, he teaches. For example, a proponent of one technique may say it is best because it is fast. "I've never seen a stopwatch in a fight," he rebuts, questioning whether a technique valued for its speed alone passes the logic test.

As we train for self defense, there are two questions we can't answer, Smith states, moving into the next segment of the lecture. Here, he urges viewers to understand that we "don't know what the threat will look like. If hands are not visible to me, I have to consider everyone a threat," he explains. Disparity in size, strength, and numbers are other issues that increase the potential for threat, he continues, offering several examples. Alone, none justify shooting, but he outlines factors known to frequently play into an attack, noting that they justify being "leery" of the unknown potential for threat.

These comments lead into a segment on justification for using deadly force, and Smith stresses the need to be able to communicate why we took defensive action, giving examples of information one may need to communicate to a jury, as well as messages Smith eventually intends to



communicate to a jury through the responding police officer. The police rarely stop crime, he explains, but they actually document what happened, and this is the basis of his advice about interacting with law enforcement after a shooting. His suggestions, given with explanation and illustrations, include: secure the gun and your safety, then tell responding officers, "I was in fear for my life; I want him arrested; I'd like to speak to my lawyer."

Later in the program, Smith urges again, "Be careful! There's someone coming to see what is going on! The police may not necessarily know you are the good guy... Don't go to door with a gun in your hand. Set it down or holster it so responding officers can see your hands," he teaches. "I want you not only to win the battle; I want you to win the war," he explains.

Topics change quickly in the lecture, and next Smith outlines factors that influence what you do in a self-defense shooting. These include the target, the distance from the threat and duration of the fight. Of distance, he suggests that most incidents will occur from muzzle-contact out to seven or eight yards. He gives good illustrations of concerns that present themselves at various distances, and explains creating distance, keeping the gun "between you and the threat," and using protective cover.

Of time and duration, he suggests that time will last as long as your ammunition holds out, and recommends carrying extra speedloaders or pistol magazines. Remember, most fights are won by the last round fired, he adds. Shoot no faster than you can hit, he advises, noting, "I don't need for you to shoot fast, I need for you to shoot well." You are going to be held accountable for each bullet, he adds. "Shoot to hit the target," he emphasizes.

Train to magnificence, Smith urges. In a fight, you'll probably be mediocre, but if you are mediocre on a daily

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basis, then in a fight you'll be really poor. "It will be very hard to acquire new skills during a fight. You'll have to fight with what's on board," he points out. It isn't how much ammo you shoot in practice, "It is how well you fire the rounds you do fire at the range," he adds.

In this lecture, as in his intro classes, Smith discusses aspects of the target, including size, mental and physical considerations and more. If an assailant is highly determined or does not respond to being shot, while continuing to fire is recommended, "Does it make sense to shoot faster?" Smith asks rhetorically. "The problem is not whether or not the [aggressor] dies, it is whether or not they stop," he adds. The aggressors have not read the books on terminal ballistics, they may not know they are supposed to fall down, he quips.

Smith outlines negative and positive attributes of the handgun, explaining that a handgun only allows us to extend distance and defend ourselves, so if he knew there was going to be a fight, the handgun is not his first choice. Still, a concealable handgun does open up options, and you can choose whether or not you want to introduce a gun into a problem. For example, he explains, we wouldn't fight if someone just wanted the car keys, but if the threat is against one's wife and children, a different choice makes sense.

The best example of good training is never having to use it at all, Smith proposes in a segment on avoiding dangers. In it he recommends developing verbal communication skills and command presence. Act like you know what you are going to do, and most predators will not mess with you. Maintain good physical condition, carry a gun, and carry a knife. Develop improvised weapon skills, he concludes, adding that feeling unarmed is mostly a lack of thought process on our part.

In discussing mindset, Smith cites Jeff Cooper's color codes, defining each with good every-day explanations and examples. He suggests at some point in a fight everyone will eventually be willing to fight, debunking our prejudice that some folks won't resist. The question, he says, is whether or not you will fight soon enough. He analyzes factors contributing to winning or losing a fight, and recommends prioritizing how we practice based on where we spend time and are most likely to need to defend self or family. Run "What If" games about what could happen in your most likely circumstances, and be sure to consider what to do if things don't go as planned, he recom-

mends, considering potential pitfalls and planning what it would take to resolve problems. Mental preparation is the first deciding factor in getting through a confrontation, he stresses.

This flows smoothly into a discussion of tactics, shooting skills, equipment selection and even luck. He outlines target indicators, concluding, "People shoot you because they see you, and they see you because you let them." He gives a good discussion of cover, and then concludes the lecture reiterating his advice to test everything just taught, as well as the range material in the second DVD, against his standard of logic.

The second DVD, running just over 40 minutes, begins with a discussion of safety rules and how they apply not only to gun handling on the range, but to defense operations, too. "These were intended for fighting, but we use them on the range, because they work," he explains. Grip and stance, loading and unloading, ready positions, holstering, trigger pull, draw stroke, aiming points on the human target, tactical loads, scanning, searching, movement while shooting, weapon retention, shooting from the ground, order of engagement for multiple targets, multiple shots, clearing malfunctions, and one-handed shooting and other one-handed operations receive a fair bit of attention. Smith closes with admonitions to be smart, think smart and avoid confrontations.

By the end of the two-disk presentation, Smith has covered an impressive number of topics in a length and format that should prove manageable for even the busiest person. It serves as a good review for training junkies, and a good introduction for those new to defensive handgunning.

This two DVD set retails for \$49.95 and is sold exclusively by FMG Publications. There are nine such DVD programs available at the [Thunder Ranch website](http://ThunderRanch.com). ●

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Gila Hayes

Editor's Notebook

Original Intent

Despite all the years that have passed since a gun owner could go to Gunsite and learn about shooting and self defense from Col. Jeff Cooper, many continue to cite his color codes when teaching and writing. Inevitably, each rendition takes on the reflection of he or she who has reiterated it. While looking for a webpage to which I could link for an explanation of Condition Yellow as cited by Art Mize in this journal's lead interview, I ran across [commentary](#) on the color codes written by Cooper in January of 2005, less than a year before his death. I guess I started reading because it seemed so impressive to me that in a society where people can't wait to retire, as an octogenarian, Cooper was still guiding the thinking of people who have guns as a part of their safety planning.

But back to the color codes. Color-coding is ubiquitous. If you fly on commercial airliners, you will encounter stricter security when perceived threat levels climb from yellow to orange. On Forest Service signs, a color wheel communicates the likelihood of forest fires. Even ski runs are marked with green, blue and black symbols to indicate terrain difficulty. Finally, Condition Red has become a nearly universal code for danger.

Cooper's use of color codes took a different tack. The codes he taught do not indicate threat levels. In Cooper's words, *"The Color Code refers not to a condition of peril, but rather to a condition of readiness to take life."* He went on to acknowledge human reluctance to kill, noting, "To press the trigger on a human adversary calls for a wrenching effort of will which is always difficult to achieve and sometimes apparently impossible." Alternatively, he noted, "In Yellow you say to yourself, 'I may have to shoot today.' I may actually have to press my trigger on a human adversary, but I don't know who or where," he wrote.

So great is the human abhorrence for taking life, that in avoiding danger and bloodshed, we err in failing to mentally prepare for the possibility that we may become a victim of violent crime. We urge people new to the gun for self defense to decide if their ethics and morality allow killing another human in defense of innocent life. We fail, how-

ever, to point out that it is necessary to revisit that decision from time to time, to keep the will to fight fresh and strong.

Americans are continually beset by self-righteous know-it-alls parroting sound-bites like, "There is *always* an alternative to violence," and biased reporting in which use of deadly force by private citizens is only reported when it is a criminal act, not when it saves an innocent life. Beset by so many negative messages, we must consciously avoid the mental pollution that sways so many into a wishful state, in which it is hoped that through good luck they will not be victimized or that someone will rescue them.

Challenge *your* assumptions regularly. Examine your convictions frequently. Be sure your principles are strong and that if you have no options other than shooting in self defense, your unshakable convictions stand ready to support your decisions before, during and after the incident. Take time to recognize your positive contributions, and weigh them against the devastation wrought by criminal predators. Vow to only use deadly force when no alternative exists, but concurrently promise yourself that you will preserve your own precious life if it is imperiled.

Your convictions that you have a right to take an attacker's life so you can live is part of the inoculation against the trauma discussed in this journal's lead interview. ●



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We look forward to your participation in the Network as part of a family of armed citizens who passionately care about the right to armed self-defense, and want to protect themselves from the legal nightmare that sometimes accompanies a lawful act of self-defense.

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CREDIT CARD CHARGE AUTHORIZATION

I, _____ hereby
(Clearly print name as it appears on credit card)

authorize Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC to

charge \$ _____

on my VISA or MasterCard (circle one)

_____/_____/_____/_____
Account Number

Expiration Date ____/____

CVV Code ____ 3 digits on back of card

Full billing address for credit card account:

(Street Address or Box Number)

(City)

(State and Zip Code)

(Signature authorizing charge)

Please mail to the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC,
P O Box 400, Onalaska, WA 98570 or fax to 360-978-6102.