



Defense Training: More than Bullseyes

by Gila Hayes

Self defense entails an overwhelming number of challenges. While the most pressing priority is physical survival, getting through that challenge is itself complex and includes disengaging from or engaging the threat, overlain by both physiological and psychological responses to threat.

Not long thereafter, the armed citizen must deal with responding law enforcement (and later with the criminal justice system), and they may have contact with witnesses and later must cope with reactions of family, associates and society. Missteps along this path have wrought physical, emotional, legal and financial havoc on the unprepared and the unfortunate.

Alerting Network members to these pitfalls in hopes of mitigating some, the eJournal embarks this month on a series of interviews with experts in self defense, psychology and an expert witness who often goes into court for clients involved in self defense emergencies.

These topics are extremely complex so while this series will cover several months' publications, let's start by discussing preparation for physical survival and a related article explaining how reality-based training serves to buffer some of the psychological effects so often plaguing the survivor of a violent attack. This month, John Farnam will discuss the art of training for survival, and James Strickland, Ph.D. will explain the science behind it.

Pursuing details about reality-based training, we spoke at length with our Advisory Board member and long-time firearms instructor, John Farnam. For decades, through Defense Training International (DTI), Farnam and his wife Vicki have provided defense training to private citizens, law enforcement and military personnel. DTI pistol classes are a lot more than learning to shoot well on a target range, because in addition to shooting skills, DTI integrates scenario-based force on force into their classes.

Through the complex challenges of a force on force program, much is learned about tactical weaknesses, skill deficits and body alarm reactions. Let's switch now to an interview format, and learn about this kind of training in John Farnam's own words.

eJournal: Haven't your classes always included some force on force?

Farnam: Yes, it is what we call scenario-based training. It is role-playing and it has its limitations. Still, I try to include a little of this even in my live fire courses, where we'll practice disengagement drills, just using gestures, verbalizations and posturing or positioning. I think scenario-based stuff is a vehicle through which we can provide students with experiences that we can't provide in any other way.

How complete this is, how thorough this is, how much this mirrors what would really happen, I don't know. I hope we never know, but we do the best we can.

eJournal: Well, it's better than saying, "We can't replicate real life, so let's just not try."

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The Science Behind Training

John Farnam emphasized that effective training is a vital survival preparation. Looking for the "why" behind that advice, we sought the scientific explanation of why repetitious training experiences as those recommended by Farnam can override the all-too-human reaction to panic, which he asserted, "Is not acceptable."

I spoke at length with Network affiliated instructor James Strickland, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist whose doctoral thesis studied the

effects of expected positive, negative or neutral outcomes to deadly force decisions made by subjects who had no training upon which to rely. He

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Farnam: Definitely. We have to be training constantly and for all the pistoleros out there who've gone to all shooting courses, if you've not done any scenario-based training, now is the time to do it.

eJournal: *I have heard that you now teach a class that is entirely force on force. What is happening with the new program?*

Farnam: Steve Camp ([Safe Direction](#), Adisson, IL) has a dedicated force on force facility, so now we're doing at least a couple of force on force programs a year.

eJournal: *What is the duration of the new wholly force on force class?*

Farnam: Two days. It takes a progression. We start by shooting our Airsoft guns at paper targets to make the connection with them in the student's mind. They get the chance to see how they work and how to use them. They're not exactly like real guns, but they're pretty similar.

Then we set up a scenario where they confront three-dimensional dummies and sometimes they shoot and sometimes they don't. Finally they confront actors. At first only the student has an Airsoft gun and the actors only have the mock-ups. I tell the students, "You're the only one who is capable of launching an Airsoft." In other words, you're not going to be shot, so that helps them ease in to it. Finally, the second day is filled with scenarios where both the actors and the student are equipped with Airsoft and everybody has the opportunity to get shot.

I find that you have to ease them into it progressively. You can't just start with everybody getting shot the first day. They get overwhelmed and there is too much to keep track of.

eJournal: *What steps do you take to keep the program safe?*

Farnam: We have a number of safety steps in place. The big risk is to get Airsoft guns mixed in with functional guns. All Airsoft guns, of course, have orange at the muzzle, and in addition, we wrap a piece of tape around them, including around the grip, so when you holster them, you can tell what they are.

Most of our students have concealed carry permits and carry guns normally, so we presume when we get there they are armed with at least one pistol and other weapons: OC, knives, black jacks, and batons or whatever else the student might go to automatically without thinking.

As we get into the Airsoft portion we make sure that we've got control of the functional weapons. We assign a room and the students go in and they divest themselves [of their weaponry] and then we search them and proceed with our program.

Again, a number of safety steps are in place. The big issue comes when students have to leave. When they come back, we have to stop what we're doing and get them safely back in the program. When people are coming and going like that, it becomes very dangerous. So we have to tell students, "You can leave anytime you want, but you can't come back."

People reading this have to understand, this is *not* risk free! What we're doing is relatively mild compared to a martial arts course where people have physical contact with each other, but it is not risk free. There is no such thing as risk-free training. I tell the students in advance, if there is a point at which

you are not comfortable with what we're doing, you just have to tell me and you can sit it out and watch other students do it.

eJournal: *Realizing that this is an Airsoft shooting class, what about defenses in which we would be going hand to hand, if it were real life?*

Farnam: Toward the beginning, we'll have the student imagine that one of my instructors holding a blue training pad is a person approaching aggressively. I'll have the student use verbal commands and shine their flashlight in the face and say, "Get away from me," and if they do have some contact there, it's just with the pad and doesn't hurt anything.

Next, the student walks by a martial arts striking dummy and I have someone behind the dummy pushing and saying, "Hey, I need something." I want my student, again, to use the flashlight and say, "Get away from me." And then he walks by another dummy and I have one of my

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Farnam demonstrates on a striking dummy. Photo courtesy of Steve Camp.

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instructors reach out and try to grab his arm. I want my student to shove the dummy away and strike them with a palm-heel to the chest or strike them with a knee or something. That can be done with fairly low risk because the dummies are made for that and my instructor, of course, quickly withdraws his hand.

Then they go into a deadly force situation where they have to draw the gun and fire their Airsoft gun at the paper target, all in the same scenario. That is to get them used to the continuity of the force we go through: verbal commands, flashlight, posturing, and then we escalate to deadly force, so they see that it is a process, not just an event.

We have to process information that we're getting and make decisions, always being prepared to escalate or de-escalate—it can go both ways. That's how we do it, so there's no actual physical contact between the student and instructor, but there is some physical contact between the student and the striking dummy.

eJournal: *In the second day, when the students go up against the staff, how do you keep it realistic without physical contact?*

Farnam: We tell students the actors may become aggressive and look as if they are going to attack you physically when they are playing their roles, but you can rest assured that they won't. We're not going to hurt you.

While the scenario is, in a broad sense, scripted, we never know how it is going to go and if it gets out of hand, we just stop it.

I do not have students being actors one moment and then participants the next. I have a cadre of actors that are my instructors. I tell my actors that I want you to draw out certain responses from the students. I want you to tempt them with certain things and see what they do.

eJournal: *So the actors don't have a firmly fixed script they stick to?*



*Student listens intently as Farnam suggests alternative tactics.
Photo courtesy of Steve Camp.*

Farnam: We're testing the student, we want to see what he is going to do, what we can draw out of him. I've had students urinate in their pants, I've had students break down and cry, and I tell them ahead of time, "If this happens to you, just understand it's perfectly normal. You may be surprised, we may be surprised, but you only think it is abnormal because you don't do this very often. It is your body responding in a normal way to an abnormal set of circumstances. So when this happens we're just going to let it happen, and when you're comfortable, we'll start again and we'll get past it."

eJournal: *From those physical manifestations, it sounds like you are arousing the students' fight or flight reactions and they are showing some realistic responses.*

Farnam: That's good, because we need to draw that out of them and because they need to see what they are going to do.

Still, the question always comes, "Well, if the bad guys were real, how sure are you that it is what you would do?" Well, we're not and we never will be sure! We get as real as we can within the confines of risk management and that is as far as we can go.

My challenge is a little bit different than the challenge of people who do military training; I don't teach a bunch of 20 year olds. I have people who are in their 60s down to teenagers in these courses. They're all my students and they need to be trained.

eJournal: *Still, you do seem to be introducing them to that fight or flight response.*

Farnam: I'm satisfied we're on the edges of it. I'm not at all convinced that we draw out everything that might

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happen. I think we tease the edge of it and at least give the students a closer idea of what might happen. The question becomes, "Well, that's all fine, Farnam, but what would *really* happen?" Well, I don't know and with any luck, we'll never know!

eJournal: Do students sometimes over-think the scenario?

Farnam: There's no doubt! Among professional golfers there is a game-ruining affliction called the yips. Since golf yields a more generous income than shooting, this has been studied by high priced psychiatrists and they've assigned fancy names to it [**dystonia**]. It usually happens when the golfer is putting, and it generates a putt that goes 20 feet beyond the cup because the golfer, no matter how well trained he is, feels the pressure of the TV cameras and all these thousands of eyes watching him and all the ills the flesh is heir to and he starts to magnify every perceived imperfection and in response starts over-correcting to the point where when he finally hits the ball it is invariably too hard and it goes way, way beyond the cup. This is an affliction that, in the golf world, is talked about all the time

I think our version of this is over-analysis, the magnifying of every perceived error to the point at which you are constantly over-correcting, instead of just letting it flow. In all the martial arts, when you are a seamless whirlwind of motion, you are unbeatable. When you are a dithering, hesitating, overanalyzing nincompoop, you are going to get killed. That is our version of the yips.

All the students do it and there's no doubt, every student needs to have it pointed out to them, "Did you see what you did? You're hyper-analyzing everything. You're more concerned about what you think I want to see than you are about running the drill. You've got to start flowing or you're going to be stiff and stilted and you're going to dither."

That's it in so many words, but sometimes it is a hard lesson to learn.

eJournal: If a student is very cerebral and "knows" all the tactics, but doesn't yet have a solid, fighting mindset, how can he or she perform well in the scenarios?

Farnam: It's a matter of doing it [the skill] over and over and over again, and having mistakes pointed out and having the student be contrite and go back and tweak his plan and do it again and over again. What we usually do is we have the same scenario but we just make variations on the theme, over and over. Pretty soon some of these errors start falling by the wayside, and the student starts getting confidence in himself, and thinking, "I think I can stay on top of this and I don't think I am going to let this overwhelm me the way I did the first time."

There are a lot of common mistakes we have to keep pointing out: standing in one place too long, looking at your fingers instead of getting your head up, being distracted by something that's not important, drawing your gun too soon, drawing your gun too late, failing to use verbal commands, all kinds of things.

The only way, I think, to make real progress on this is by just doing it over and over again and having all these little imperfections pointed out. "OK, that was better, but..." "OK, that was much better, but..." and after two days of this the students

are actually looking pretty good. They all say the same thing, "Thank God I didn't get in a gun fight before I did this class!"

eJournal: After some force on force classes you leave feeling that you failed at everything, but I'm hearing that you give students opportunities to go back and master the skills, and walk away feeling more confident.

Farnam: Yes. In the training we do—live fire, force on force and everything else—the real learning occurs when you fail. Very little is ever learned from success. At the end of every drill, you should feel stupid and frustrated. You

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Farnam, right, supervises an Airsoft exercises involving a couple who are rapidly moving to get out of harm's way. Photo courtesy of Steve Camp.

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should make lots of mistakes, because when you make mistakes, you learn. Little is ever learned from success, so I will tell you at the beginning, "I'm going to give you opportunities to fail a lot, and we'll mix in just enough success to tease you to keep you going, like a slot machine, you know, but when you're doing very well, that's my signal that you need a tougher challenge."

We tell them at the beginning, we're not here to have fun, we're not here to be entertained. You're going to fail a lot, you're going to get disgusted with yourself, you're going to get disgusted with us, you're going to argue with us, and all that is perfectly normal. Let it all out, because that is why you are here. And while all that is going on, learning will take place. It's risky and it's painful.

eJournal: *How negative are some of the lessons in force on force? Do you ever tell students they did something that would have gotten them killed?*

Farnam: Yep, all the time, but maybe it wasn't survivable. Maybe Michael the Archangel would have come in here and had the same result. You might do it exactly right and still get killed.

Students have got to know that good tactics don't mean taking no risks. Good tactics mean taking the best risk. There is no no-risk way to do this!

eJournal: *If you had to pick the most valuable lessons from force on force training, what would those be?*

Farnam: Practice your verbalizations. The best weapon you're carrying is your mouth. Practice those tape loops combined with movement. That will end most gunfights long before they become gunfights.

Next, I would say no matter how desperate the circumstances, when you decide to shoot, you have to shoot with precision. Most juries I've been before will tolerate sloppy shooting about as well as they will tolerate drunk driving. You can't have it.

eJournal: *Isn't that asking a lot of someone in the grip of a full body alarm reaction?*

Farnam: Panic is a luxury we cannot afford. We have to stay in control and do the best we can. As philosophical as it sounds, we have to accept that it may not have a happy ending. When we train SWAT teams, the first thing we tell them is, "Get happy endings out of your mind. No matter what happens, this will not have a happy ending." This won't have a happy ending either, no matter what you

do, but when you live through it and if you don't go to the penitentiary, that is about as happy as we can get.

eJournal: *I guess that is why we call it reality based training, because you are not setting students up to believe they can win every fight.*

Farnam: [Laughing] Yeah, or that the police are going to come and pat you on the back and say, "Congratulations!"

eJournal: *At what level of skill should an armed citizen consider getting into a force on force class?*

Farnam: There's a good question. My answer would be, I would take advantage of force on force training at any time you possibly can. When a program is available, I'd go to it. Even when you consider yourself a novice, when the opportunity presents itself, it may not be the perfect timing in your progression, but I'd go to it anyway because you don't know when another opportunity is going to come along.

eJournal: *True, plus you don't know when you might need those lessons to survive a real threat, either.*

Farnam: Bingo. This is something that haunts all instructors, who ask, "Did I teach enough? Did I teach enough fast enough, to prepare the student for the challenge that may come sooner than any of us think?"

eJournal: *Well, John, thank goodness that you are teaching these classes and that this kind of training is available to folks of all walks of life. I compliment you! Where can we learn more about your class?*

Farnam: It is on the DTI [website](#) or folks can [email](#) me. We originally scheduled one class in the spring and one in the fall, but there was so much demand that this year we added another one and so [the next class](#) is 22-23 May.

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Science of Training—Continued from page 1

plans to do a follow up study exploring the influence of training on deadly force decisions.

Drawing on his professional knowledge as a psychologist blended with experiences as a student and instructor of defensive firearms, James offers a number of valuable insights into how training and experience mitigate panic. His thoughts on these and related concerns follow in his own words.

eJournal: *I've read that in a critical incident the human can either reason well (cognitive processing) or can react physically with speed and strength, but not both together. Is that right?*

Strickland: When we use reasoning and judgment, we're using the outer cortex of our brain. Our judgment is in our frontal lobes. Then, there's a system in the middle of the brain called the limbic system—the lizard brain—that simply reacts. When stressed, we react using the lizard brain: it is simply a stimulus response.

What happens, is through using the outer cortex, we actually train the lizard brain. We determine if something's bigger than us, we're going to run; if we're bigger than something, we may stay and fight.

eJournal: *What do you mean by training the lizard brain using the outer cortex? If we have to learn through experience, we may die before we learn much!*

Strickland: Exactly! So here's what we do. We use what is called generalization. We use imagery like Olympic athletes do. Sometimes, the human mind has a difficult time separating reality from fantasy. Try thinking about some of the tragic things that can happen, and you'll find that your heart is beating faster and you're sweating, but it is not actually happening. So, you can use imagery or you can use force on force as when I went to Gabriel Suarez'

class. It was the first time I ever put gun sights – albeit those of an Airsoft gun – on another human being. Up until that point it had only been silhouettes.

eJournal: *It was eye opening, wasn't it?*

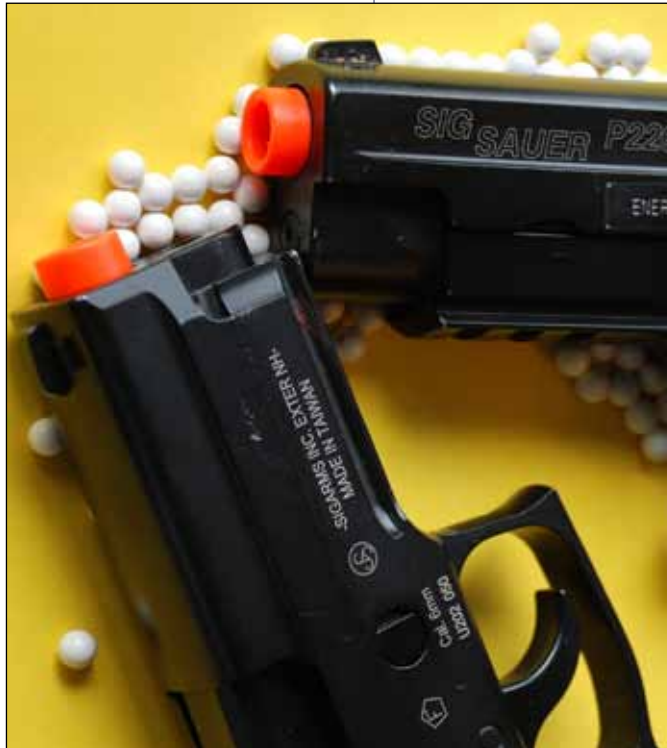
Strickland: It was an amazing, in-the-moment adrenaline experience. And those kinds of experiences have what we call ecological validity—that is how closely the experimental imitate's reality. Force on force is the best. You're pitted against another human being, going one on one, two on one, three on one, and you realize just how serious it is.

eJournal: *During force on force training did you experience some of the physiological stress symptoms like an increased heart rate or tunnel vision? Could you give us an overview of physiological responses common to participants in a deadly force incident that also show up in force on force training?*

Strickland: Certainly. You have the tunnel vision. The threat is right there. We noticed in the force on force, that so many people were getting hit in the gun hand that it was uncanny. People weren't getting head shots or shot in the chest. The gun hand was getting hit because they were so intently focused on the gun that they were shooting at the gun, not the person holding it.

Auditory exclusion—absolutely, I didn't hear much of anything. In fact, when the instructor discontinued the exercise, he had to use a whistle a couple of times to get people to stop. It wasn't only me, because I was watching the others, too. So I know I experienced auditory exclusion and so did the others.

I think Massad Ayoob described it best as "cortical perception," because your ears don't necessarily close down and go deaf on you, but what happens is that you have a limited number of resources and certain bodily systems shut down.



This brace of heavily used Airsoft pistols from Sigarms may have been initially expensive, but have proven durable, function well, and have given many hours of force on force experience.

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eJournal: *What about increased heart rate, tremors, breathing harder?*

Strickland: Yes, I noticed when the exercise was over I was sweating, I was shaking and when I was done, I could hear my heart beat in my ears. They say digestion stops, you get vaso constriction, and I know a number of these effects happened during force on force training.

eJournal: *We've read reports from survivors describing other effects, too. For example, some say they felt as if some of their actions were automatic, that they didn't consciously decide to get behind cover but rather found themselves there.*

Strickland: In situations of high stress, you really don't have time to think, you only have time to act. If the only way you know how to act is how you've trained then you can go on autopilot following the training criteria. Training is the antidote to freezing.

I remember hearing a story on the History Channel that illustrated this point. They trained the crew of the Enola Gay to properly arm the atomic bombs in flight. They made them do it until their fingers bled, because they were creating neural pathways.

Talk about stress! They knew when they were coming in range they would be in fear of being shot down and that they would be dropping a bomb. They knew what this bomb would do—they had seen it in tests. It was very stressful. During that period of stress, it was absolutely important that they carry out their mission, and they fell back on their training.

The military uses exercises to simulate combat. Initially they may go out and be scared, but with successive engagements of the enemy, to a certain extent they become desensitized to the effects of the fight or flight mechanism. They're able to actually function in a lethal encounter.

Once you adapt and habituate, you no longer interpret these things as being foreign. You're acquainted with them, you know how to operate with them, and you fall back on your training.

It's like driving. Sometimes you get in your car and



Strickland and instructor checking a qualification target. Photo courtesy of James Strickland

drive to the location and don't know how you got there. That's what I'm talking about. I've taken up playing guitar in the past few years, and during just the past year, things that I had to do very deliberately when I started, now I don't even know what my fingers are doing. They literally do it on their own. When you do something over and over and over again, you don't have to think about it.

So when you create the neural pathways, you have these behaviors fully entrenched and you don't have to think. And that is done simply to conserve mental energy. There are so many stimuli out there that you have to relegate habituated tasks to automaticity in order to be able to function.

eJournal: *And that is in daily life—imagine the stresses of a critical incident! It underscores the importance of having the tactical responses engrained so you don't have to think about them consciously.*

Strickland: Absolutely. That's why for the law-abiding citizen training is not all about going to the range and practicing accuracy, and being able to draw smoothly. When you're out on the street, you need to be asking, "If this happened, what would you do?" Those mental games need to be played so you have the experience. Then there is reading: I have a shelf full of books about real-life stories of self defense.

eJournal: *And that is not just relaxing reading! That is mental preparation.*

Strickland: Absolutely, it is mental preparation like the

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Olympic athletes do. They picture themselves doing what ever it is they're doing, from two perspectives. One, which is called "first person," from inside themselves looking out at the actual event, and another viewpoint in which they watch at themselves doing it, which we call third person. One is that they are actually in their body, the other one they are a spectator.

eJournal: And do you use both approaches as you prepare yourself for survival?

Strickland: Absolutely.

eJournal: When humans experience mortal fear, epinephrine and other hormones are released that influence decision-making. Does preparation like a force on force class prevent the release or do we just cope better in spite of it?

Strickland: In proper training, we have, what I would consider a heuristic, which is a big fancy word for a criteria or a guideline for how to do something. In terms of somebody who has no training, they may simply panic and shoot when they are not justified. So in the absence of knowledge, panic can and often does ensue. Through the use of exposure and desensitization, people who are trained get used to stress.

When the US Airways pilot Chesley Sullenberger landed his airliner in the Hudson River, as a result of his decades of experience as a pilot and his constant training in the cockpit both live and in flight simulators where they put you through the tests of a number of system failures, he was able to draw on his experience, he was able to remain calm and make the proper judgments. He was able to go through his mental checklist of what he should do and was able to land that plane unbelievably safely.

eJournal: To use Sullenberger as an example, does the trained person avoid a state of hyper arousal in a high stress event, or would you guess he experienced body alarm reaction during that emergency?

Strickland: I would say that he certainly *did* because it is a stressful event. There's something called the [Yerkes-Dodson Law](#) in psychology that posits that too little anxiety or too much anxiety is harmful to performance. Optimal performance requires a moderate amount of anxiety.

So with that in mind, the pilot did enter a state of arousal, but what kept him from too much anxiety was his training. So he's like, "OK, engines failed. What do I do next?" He knew through experience and training what the protocol was. That is the heuristic: the protocol.

Certainly a deadly force encounter is a high stress event. Even if you have a lot of training, you are still going to experience arousal. But it is your training that determines whether you panic and your anxiety goes off the scale and you can't function.

These [body alarm] effects can be a double-edged sword, but I believe they were ultimately intended to be survival mechanisms. But like anything else, taken to an extreme, they can have deleterious effects.

eJournal: Because of the complexity of the subject, I'm concerned that someone might only hear about the loss of control that happens under life threatening danger and set up a self fulfilling prophecy that they won't be able to respond effectively.

Strickland: Medicine and psychology mention the inoculation effect, as does Massad Ayoob. Training gives you a benign form of the symptom so we practice it, and then when the real situation comes up, you're well aware of it. You realize, "Oh, this slowing of time is tachy psyche, so it's normal and nothing to be concerned with. Let me just focus and take care of business." That is the idea behind the inoculation effect.

eJournal: Thank you for explaining how all that works so our readers can take steps to better prepare themselves.



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Marty Hayes

President's Message

It's been a month since implementing Boots on The Ground, and I am heartened to have received dozens of messages from our members applauding this addition to our member benefits. (Click on the link to download the journal with the article announcing our [Boots on the Ground](#) program. If you are a Network member, log in to the Network's

[website](#) and then there is more information [at this link](#) about how to access these services.) Following an announcement of this new benefit, a member asked some questions, which we promised to address. Here they are:

"What would be your recommendation on determining, in advance, whom to contact if I ever had a need? Do I "pick" a Network Attorney or other attorney ahead of time?"

If I was to choose an attorney ahead of time, how do I go about finding a "good one?"

When I get an attorney chosen, do you recommend that I contact that person in some fashion to let them know who I am and check to see if it is "OK" to contact them in an emergency and maybe how to reach them at the time of need?"

This series of questions all centers around finding and having an attorney ready to go, so let's address that issue. While our long-term goal is to have referral attorneys for our members to develop a relationship with, we still have a lot of work to do to fill that list. We have added several attorneys over the last several months, so check your state to see if we have added any. If not, or if you would like an attorney closer than the ones on the Network's list, the fol-

lowing should prove helpful.

I believe a person should have associations with many professionals—doctors, accountants, attorneys, for example. I would take the same approach in finding an attorney that one does with finding a doctor, dentist or accountant. Referrals from friends, co-workers and others are the best way. Surely, if one has 10 friends or co-workers, at least one of those people will have a referral for a good attorney. You might ask that friend to help make an introduction.

If you cannot find an attorney through your own network of friends and co-workers, look towards your gun clubs, gun shops and state gun associations. For example, my local gun rights organization, Washington Arms Collectors, has several attorneys who advertise in their monthly publication.

Once you find an attorney, you absolutely should contact him or her and set up an appointment to meet. I would call that attorney, and in talking to the receptionist, ask her what it would take to just meet with Mr. "Smith" and get to know him a little, so you can develop a professional relationship with a local attorney. If the receptionist balks at this, then politely thank her for her time and move on. Or, if you really want this attorney, write him a letter outlining your conversation with the receptionist, and re-iterate your request. Finally, once you find that attorney, discuss the Network with him or her, and see if they want to be listed as a Network Affiliated Attorney. If they are interested, let me know through email!

Update on Larry Hickey self-defense trial

You may remember back in December, 2008, we sent an e-mail to our members detailing an incident involving one of our friends in the industry, a firearms instructor (who was not a Network member), who had been involved in

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a shooting and subsequently jailed pending trial. At that time, I asked for help from our members so Larry could find legal assistance. I want to update you, and report that your donations are being used in a good effort. Last October, I participated in Larry's trial as an expert witness, and while Larry was not acquitted, he at least was not convicted. The outcome was a hung jury, 9-3 for acquittal. You would think that would be enough to convince the prosecutor that he had a real dog for a case, but no, they decided to prosecute again. On April 3rd, I head back to Tucson, AZ, for "Hickey II".

I am not testifying in this trial, so I am at least free to reference it in my column. Instead, I will be helping the defense team in trial management issues, and we have obtained another expert to explain the ballistic evidence (along with other issues). I will be free to comment more when this trial is over. The purpose of this update is to reiterate that if the prosecution wants to try you, logic, reason and common sense doesn't matter. You will be going to trial.

Training is important

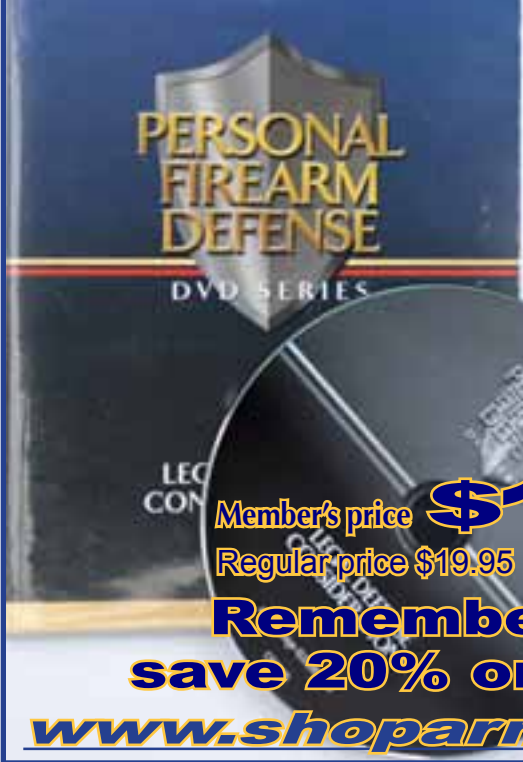
In this edition of the eJournal, our lead story deals with force-on-force training, and reading it reminded me of

something I have been wanting to mention for a while now. It is vitally important that EVERY MEMBER of the Network obtain training in gun safety, use of deadly force and decision making. It is equally important that your training comes from reputable instructors who can testify in court about your training. Just as importantly, you must document that training. In "Hickey I," training was a key issue in the trial, and we expect it to be key again in the second trial.

Even if you have taken the steps to educate yourself on gun safety, defensive handgun use and the laws regarding deadly force, you still should take a class or two from an outside instructor, so you can assert that you spent your own money and time to educate yourself. Take copious notes, and save those notes. Put those certificates in safe deposit boxes or your fireproof gun safe. If you don't know of an instructor, look in our Affiliated Instructor section of the website, and you should be able to find one close by.

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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. Our goal with this column is to demystify aspects of the legal system for our readers.

No one plans to be in a self-defense shooting, though our members have anticipated that interaction with prosecutors, judges and maybe even juries, is inevitable should they ever be involved in one. This month, we asked the Network's affiliated attorneys the following question:

“What do you think are the top three preparations self defense gun owners reasonably can make in hopes of limiting trouble with the criminal justice system should they ever be forced to use a gun to defend against a violent criminal?”

Thomas Cena, Jr.

Attorney at Law

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To the extent the following question can be answered “yes” from the point of legal scrutiny, the person involved will be best prepared: “Am I or some other innocent person (in fact)* reasonably in fear of losing my life or being profoundly injured?”

Preparations:

1. Competence. To know how to safely and effectively employ the weapon is of utmost importance. Practice and training are really necessary for this.

2. Situational awareness. No matter how right you may be when involved in a lethal force incident, you may have trouble establishing the correctness of your actions from an evidentiary point of reference. To avoid this, be aware of your surroundings and avoid the risk, to the extent you can, of having to take action.

3. Attitude. Maybe this is the most important. Never act or speak, while armed, in a manner where you could be seen as an aggressor or an “escalator” of a critical incident. Respect, courtesy and declining to respond in kind to rude behavior (for instance, in driving situations) need to be recognized, practiced and cultivated to this end.

*You really can't afford to be mistaken here.

Penny S. Dean

Attorney and Counselor at Law

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1. Have prior, documented training.

2. Even if you can lawfully own firearms and have any prior violations or misdemeanors, have them annulled, sealed, expunged or whatever your/the state law of conviction allows.

3. Do not wear inappropriately provocative t-shirts, have provocative bumper stickers or say things such as “We let Smith and Wesson Handle That.” I am not saying you cannot wear pro-gun or 2nd A T-shirts, or have bumper stickers of the same, “Fight Crime Shoot Back” is OK but **not** “Kill them all and let God sort them out.” Think of what an evil anti-gun DA could do with that, and decide if a good defense attorney could counter it. There is no counter for “We kill ‘em all and let God sort them out!”

Debbe J. von Blumenstein

Attorney at Law

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1. Never say never. Be prepared. Think ahead; think: “If it happen to me what would I do first, second, next?” Mentally practice how you would respond immediately after a shooting. Who is your trusted person you need to call to be there with you and to make telephone calls on your behalf?

2. Have an attorney on board, before a shooting. It's like insurance, you hope you won't have to use it but you'll be dang glad you have it when the worst happens.

3. Spend time getting to know how the law, legal system, courts and attorneys work. Spend time in a courtroom. Experience it first hand without being the defendant, so you are not shocked when you discover it is not like *Law & Order*, *CSI*, or my favorite, *Boston Legal*.

Besides being a lawyer who practices as a trial attorney foremost and especially with weapon charges and self defense, some of my greatest lessons come from my dad's experience of being a gun fight survivor when he shot a would-be robber with his .38 Chief's Special against the criminal's sawed off shotgun. I was next door at the time and was with him immediately during the aftermath.

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These lessons and advice come from both experiences, as a lawyer and daughter of one who had to use deadly force in self defense - and survived - and survived in the legal fray afterwards by getting past the grand jury with a finding of a righteous self defense shooting.

Jon H. Gutmacher, Esq.

200 N Thornton Ave., Orlando, FL

407-650-0770 – <http://www.floridafirearmslaw.com/>

You ask what are the “three top preparations” a gun owner can make in hopes of limiting trouble with the criminal justice system if forced to use deadly force. The answer is not easy.

First, elect officials who are pro-firearms and pro-self defense if you're truly serious about protecting your rights. These are the people who make the decisions whether to prosecute, and how to handle your situation. The local prosecutor, sheriff, chief of police, and judges are critical. You are entitled to know where they stand – and make that known to the other members of the community you belong to. If you let an anti-gunner in, don't be surprised when they come after you.

Second, understand that the police officer that responds may be the critical link to what happens afterwards. Police are “victim” oriented. If they think you're the “victim” they're usually on your side. If they think otherwise you're in big trouble, and nothing is going to keep you from being arrested. Thus, if you are in a self-defense situation it is imperative that you've called 911 before the incident goes down if that's at all possible. That will usually establish you as the victim.

Be careful what you say, in the sense that you should always advise the police you believe someone is trying to break in, attack you, or is about to, even if you're not positive. You should always advise them that you're scared, and if asked you should always advise that you think the culprit may be armed as that's usually the way it works out, anyway. (“I don't know for sure – but I think so. I'm really afraid – hurry!”) If you are asked if you are armed, a basic and simple, “Yes, I have a handgun,” is a sufficient answer. Don't go into detail, or start saying you're going to shoot the SOB if he comes in. If you sound too anxious to use the gun – it will work against you later.

Third, if you've used the firearm and are still alive after the encounter your responses to the police are critical. You will be nervous no matter how well prepared you thought you were. You will have forgotten some of the most important parts of what just happened. And you will absolutely screw things up if you talk too much. With rare exception, you should advise the police only the following:

- It was self defense.
- I was in fear for my life (i.e.: I thought he was going to kill me).
- I didn't think I had a choice.
- I'm really nervous and shook up, I'd like to talk to you more but I really think I want to have a chance to calm down and talk to a lawyer first.

The only exceptions to this list are:

- Tell them if you saw a weapon in the attacker's possession, or thought you did.
- Point out places where the culprit broke in, injured someone or damaged something.

These additions should be extremely brief, and to the point as in, “I thought he had a firearm,” “He had a knife,” “He broke the door in over there.”

Remember, if a police officer wants a further explanation, or is challenging your story more talking is not going to help you it's only going to get you in deeper trouble. Shut up, tell him or her, “I'm sorry, but I really think I need to speak to an attorney before I say anything else,” and leave it like that.

Finally, get to an attorney who really knows this stuff as soon as possible after the incident. If he or she doesn't own a firearm, go elsewhere, no matter what their reputation is!

And, no, we don't mean seeing the attorney on the weekend! No decent attorney is going to be able to get anything done on the weekend of a shooting, nor will they want to. But have an appointment within three business days, or less, of when the incident occurred.

If you were injured or things were busted, take digital photos – lots of them, more than you could possibly need – and then make sure they came out by looking at them! Nothing is worse than two weeks later seeing a client who was injured and either the injuries are almost gone or the photos were too blurry to be any good. Likewise, try to have you and your witnesses write down a detailed chronological summary of everything that occurred before you start forgetting it. You'll find that if you do this over a couple of days – two or three times a day – each time you do it, it will become more correct and more detailed.

Those are my suggestions if worse comes to worst. Hopefully, that will never happen.

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 linked at the Members page at www.armedcitizensnetwork.org.



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. Last month, we asked our affiliated instructors to share their experiences with disabled shooters, and the response was so large that we continued it on to this month's journal. Here is what we asked:

What is your most memorable experience teaching a student who came to you to learn how to shoot despite physical limitations?

Denny Magnusson

Certified Pistol Trainers
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Easily my most memorable experience was recently when I had a Minnesota test where shooting to qualify is part of the course. My student was 60-year-old male who was in a wheelchair and had a bad case of MS. He shook so bad, I didn't think there was any opportunity for him to qualify, but he kind of fired between tremors and by taking his time, actually shot a decent score.

He couldn't get out of his chair and had a holster he bought from the *Sportsman's Guide* attached on the strong side of his chair. His weapon was a .38 Ruger LCR and he fired 158 grain Federal self-defense ammo.

We spent quite a bit of time together and his eyesight was good. He really had to work at controlling his rate of fire so the recoil didn't take him out of the process. Altogether, he fired 30 rounds, and all were on the paper on a B27 target. Had we done timed or rapid fire, there would have not been any way that he could have accomplished that feat, but by taking his time and actually firing between shakes, he did fine.

He had been harassed by some young gangbangers while at Mall of America a little while back, and it alarmed him enough to make sure he would not become a victim because of his handicap. It was quite a challenge. He tried shooting my Sig 229, but the recoil (.357 Sig) just wouldn't allow for that.

Another man was confined to a wheel chair and felt quite vulnerable since he was a night cashier at a conve-

nience store. His handicap ended at the knees where his legs had been blown off by a mine in Kuwait while in the Marine Corps. Other than he wasn't able to be mobile, he could shoot quit well. Again recoil was a problem so he had settled on a Ruger .32 Magnum in a SP101 and could handle it quite well. He, too, had rigged up a holster in his wheel chair mounted in the crossdraw position. He did not want to be taken advantage of because of his handicap and so he carried legally.

Both men passed the course with better than 70%, which I thought was remarkable. The extra time I spent with both men was quite rewarding.

Craig Harper

Rangemaster
Memphis, TN

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Two years ago, I had a young lady as a participant in the Tennessee Handgun Permit class who had lost the use of her legs. While she generally used a wheelchair to get around, she did have some mobility with crutches. Her motivation for learning to shoot, becoming armed, and obtaining a permit was much the same as many students: fear. And like many, she had a specific incident that prompted her enrollment in the class. While in her motorized wheelchair, some young thugs taunted her and threw rocks at her as she passed by. While she escaped unharmed, it frightened her. Additionally, she lived in an area where crime was rising. As a single female who lived alone in an apartment and with greatly reduced mobility, she had good reason to be concerned.

What was remarkable about this lady was her sheer

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determination. I offered her the option of shooting from a chair during the range portion of the class. She refused, opting to stand "like everybody else" with the aid of crutches. To shoot with both hands, she propped herself against the firing booth wall. That became tiring for her after a while, so she finished the course of fire shooting dominant-hand only. Not only did she shoot a perfect score for the state-required qualification test, not one shot strayed outside the "A" zone.

But she wasn't satisfied to simply meet the minimum qualification for a permit. She returned to purchase a pistol and accessories. She then trained with me to be able to shoot from her wheelchair and while on crutches. She was concerned about falling if attacked, so she asked me to arrange training that allowed her to fall, then draw and fire while sitting or from her back. The sight of this lady intentionally allowing herself to fall to the floor, quickly present her weapon from whatever position she was in and get excellent hits on target was inspiring. With each repetition, I had to help her get back into her chair or on her crutches. She insisted on so many repetitions, I was tired from lifting long before she was!

I think about her frequently. It was inspiring to see someone so determined to overcome a disability and to take control of her own safety. And I complain when I have a headache!

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Joe Toluse, Boise, ID

<http://www.defensivestressfire.com/>

A few years ago I had a teaching experience where a Viet Nam vet came to my Defensive Handgun program. He was a corpsman (Navy) attached to a Marine infantry unit and had been shot through the upper right arm which caused his right hand to be disabled.

While doing the two-handed drills he was able to support the Glock 19 that I loaned him with his left hand and could kind of hold the pistol and pull the trigger with his right hand. When we got to the one-handed drills I told him that he could use both hands for the right-handed drill but I would want him to use his left only for that drill. He looked at me and informed me that he would do the right-handed drill one-handed as it was supposed to be done, and he did it. It wasn't pretty, but he was determined and his attitude was that he might have to use only his right hand in a life-

saving situation some day and he would prove to himself he could do it.

This gentleman was my baseball coach when I was in the fourth through sixth grades. Back then he tried to teach us that if we wanted to do something we had to work hard to do it; that things that are worth doing are worth doing well; that we must push past our comfort zone. He has been a good friend for these many years and it was an honor to have him on my firing line.

Another experience that touched my soul was an elderly lady that took my Defensive Handgun program. It was a miserable day with hard wind blowing sand in our face all day: cold in the morning, sun in the afternoon and no shade. At the end of the day we were getting ready to shoot the qualifications when her husband said she wasn't feeling well and probably wouldn't be shooting the qual with us. I went to see if she was alright or if there was something I could do for her. It was then I learned that she was a cancer survivor with a bad heart and diabetic and that she hadn't eaten enough to keep her blood sugar up. In the morning intro I always ask if anyone has any medical conditions I should know about and ask if they will please let me know so that we can make arrangements for their safety and comfort. When I asked her why she hadn't said anything to me she told me, "I don't like to complain." I moved her into a secure spot and got her some food and drink, told her to rest and get her blood sugar up and relax. She could come another day to shoot the qual. As we were lining up to shoot she came out to the firing line and said she was feeling better and wanted to finish with the group she started with. I kept a real close eye on her to make sure she was alright while she shot and was safe on the line. Again, it wasn't pretty, but she had more guts and determination than some of the guys I've seen out there.

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I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience these two people on my firing line, as well as the many other fine people who allow me to share what I have learned from the fine instructors I have had the pleasure to train with. It is a pleasure for me to teach and learn from the people who come to my programs.

John D. Farquhar

Mad Duck Training
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The most recent that stands out was a young lady with Multiple Sclerosis, that had never shot before. We started with a .22, and got her on target, tried some other calibers, and went back to the .22. She said it felt great not to have to be afraid anymore.

David Nash

Shepherd School
Dickson, TN – <http://www.tngun.com>

I had a student with a prosthetic hand come to one of my handgun carry permit courses. I had spoken with the student on the phone prior to the class and knew he was a new shooter, but I did not know he was an amputee.

I did not do anything differently during the class portion of the class, as I teach both dominant and non-dominant hand grips. Something I do prior to live firing is to designate a “downrange” area and have the students line up with their firearms and dummy rounds and have them load, unload, and dry fire their handgun while explaining any specific mechanical functions of their pistols. When his turn came up I asked him if he was naturally left-handed as his prosthetic was on his right arm. He said no, but he was comfortable using his left hand.

The student and I were able to discuss the procedures for loading and firing with one hand, as well as how to operate the gun with his left hand. We were able to work out a procedure that was effective for the student while safe for the others on the line.

What struck me about this situation was not how determined and competent the student was, but how being able to confidently deal with a non-typical situation increased my credibility with the other students. It turned out to be a “teachable moment” on why you should learn to use your non-dominant hand without me having to do anything extra.

As I look back on that class, it was one of my better classes, and one of those moments that I stay in this field to have.

Anthony P. Colandro

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Last summer I received a call from a woman in her forties that was suffering from an inoperable brain tumor and was slowly losing her muscle strength and she wanted to learn how to shoot a gun to defend herself. She was single, living alone and using a wheel chair and was also very susceptible to germs so we had to teach her in a controlled environment.

I set up a private appointment for her and you would not believe the results. We tried a variety of firearms until she settled on the Ruger LCR. She did not have the strength to pull the slide back on a semi-auto, so the Ruger with its light trigger was just the trick. After the safety training was covered and we moved on to the shooting, you would not believe the results. From a wheelchair two handed shooting positioned at twenty-one feet from the target she was holding groups the size of a fist, quite impressive.

Since our lesson last year she has purchased her own LCR and is still shooting great. It is just a testament again that the handgun is the ultimate equalizer in trained hands. The entire training session was quite gratifying for me and my staff.

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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Book Review

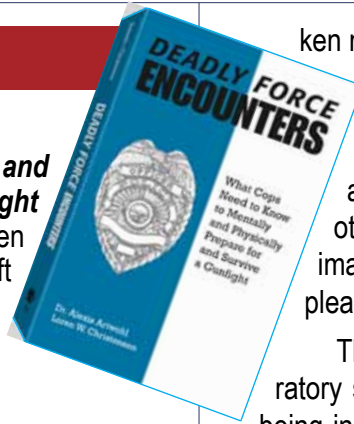
Deadly Force Encounters:

What Cops Need to Know to Mentally and Physically Prepare for and Survive a Gunfight

by Dr. Alexis Artwohl and Loren W. Christensen
Published by Paladin Press, 272 pages, soft cover, price \$25

ISBN 9-780873-649353-90000

www.paladin-press.com



Reviewed by Gila Hayes

The Network's role in members' survival after a self defense shooting concerns the legal system, but there are a number of facets to getting through a shooting, and how those are handled that influence how the criminal justice system responds. The more we understand what happens to the mind during a critical incident, the less likely it is that our survival mechanisms will cause serious trouble during the aftermath.

This month we'll review *Deadly Force Encounters*, written by a retired Portland (Oregon) Police Bureau officer and a police psychologist, using examples from law enforcement to teach what can happen during and after a life-threatening attack. A lot of reading material is available about human stress reactions, but when we narrow it down to life-threatening events, focused on non-wartime defenses, available data inevitably comes from law enforcement.

In preparing the *eJournal's* current series on physical, emotional and legal survival, I reread *Deadly Force Encounters*. When interviewing one of the professionals who will be contributing to the series, I asked if more current literature was available for research. "*Deadly Force Encounters* is still the best resource," he responded. With that in mind, let's take a look at this authoritative book.

Although the target audience of *Deadly Force Encounters* was law enforcement, I estimate that at least three-quarters of the book is applicable to private citizens, though the reader must dig out the underlying principle, then determine what situation in their life is analogous. With that attitude, we can learn much from this book.

For example, naive people exist on either side of the thin blue line who think violence won't enter their lives, then, with that assumption shattered, are shocked initially by the attack and later by reactions of those around them. Woes befalling those involved in shootings can include withdrawal from friends and family and subsequently bro-

ken marriages, suffering when the incident is misstated in the press, false accusations in criminal or civil court, as well as a number of reactions that also have nothing to do with policing, stemming as they do from physical survival. From these and other reactions, arise painful questions about self-image that can either be devastating, or, while unpleasant, be understood as the price of survival.

Throughout the book, the authors present preparatory steps shown to alleviate much of the trauma of being in a shooting. Though the examples are from law enforcement, they are instructive for the private citizen. Hurried readers may choose to skip right to Chapter 5, entitled *Fear* which explains physiological survival mechanisms. It contains important definitions and explanations of the "automatic physical reaction to a perceived threat that will result in predictable physical, emotion, perceptual and cognitive changes..." all given in easy-to-understand language. These reactions include increased heart rate, tremors, fast and shallow respiration or hyper ventilation, dizziness and nausea, sweating, dry mouth, urge to urinate or defecate, reduced sensitivity to pain, to name a few.

The authors identify perceptual changes that may include loss of peripheral vision sometimes with extraordinary clarity inside that limited view, hearing distortions, time slowing down or speeding up, viewing the event as though out of body, and immobilization or temporary paralysis. They also cite reports of going on autopilot, reacting instinctively, as well as intrusive thoughts, and memory gaps or distortions.

Examples, often in an officer's own words, put a human face on the stress reactions. For example, one tells of feeling a bullet hitting his body during a gunfight. In the aftermath, he found he had not been shot, despite the convincing sensations he had experienced during the incident.

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In another example, an officer is certain he sees a large glass wall shot out, but later finds it intact. These experiences might make a person question their mental fitness unless they understand biochemical changes in the brain when facing threats to life.

It all sounds pretty bad until the authors reassert that fear and the physiological effects it produces are good survival tools! Echoing information in James Strickland's interview in earlier pages of this journal, they offer an exercise called stress inoculation training as a powerful tool to harness fear. This section distills police survival training and is applicable to anyone who anticipates that they may someday have to counter a violent attack. The reader is urged to "understand and accept the effects of fear," and the authors offer skills to mitigate and channel responses to sudden danger.

Preparation includes good health, the authors stress, plus training so you know your skills are up to the task. "The actual threat is not nearly as important as the level of preparation. The more prepared you are, the more in control you feel, and the less fear you will experience. It's important that deadly force training be as realistic as possible and that it programs you to win," they urge. Components of training should include legal survival, mental survival and mental imagery, they continue, and the pages that follow teach how to use mental imagery.

Training for deadly force encounters is the topic of the next chapter, and it will confirm much of what John Farnam notes in the lead interview of this journal. Here, the authors identify critical components that they dub the four "Rs"—Realism, Repetition, Review and Responsibility. Of the second, they note, "The vast majority of officers who have been in such incidents say they gave little or no conscious thought to most of their behavior and that they reacted as they were trained to do. It takes a certain amount of mental and physical repetition for behavior to become automatic." Later, however, comes this warning, "The more complex a motor skill behavior is, the more likely it is to be forgotten or bungled under extreme stress." The rest of their observations are equally on point.

In Part II of *Deadly Force Encounters* the authors detail a number of police shootings. These examples study what happens after a shooting. Physical symptoms identified mirror those given in the chapter about what to expect from adrenaline and related hormones released into the bloodstream. Emotional aftermath can include heightened emotions, intense preoccupation with the event, second-

guessing, elation that you are still alive, anger, irritability, hypersensitivity, paranoia, self-consciousness, vulnerability, anxiety, worry, fear, sadness, despondence, a sense of loss, numbness, a robot-like calmness, alienation, confusion, feeling overwhelmed, disorientation, inability to concentrate, and memory impairment.

The authors define Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, something many defense gun owners have already heard a bit about. PTSD, they emphasize, applies to longer-term suffering, extending beyond the first month after a shooting, and can include intrusive, persistent reliving of the event including flashbacks, nightmares, memory loss, detaching from others, sleep disruption, irritability and anger, difficulty concentrating, hypervigilance and more. Effects on day-to-day life are well defined, and again, while some are police-work specific, it doesn't take much to apply the examples to the lives of private citizens.

Part 3 of *Deadly Force Encounters* opens with the worrisome assertion that "the single most important factor in recovery from traumatic events is the way in which the person is treated after the incident." Much of what follows, except advice about working with mental health professionals, specifically addresses law enforcement agencies. Advice that I think merits further individual research beyond this book include qualifications of counselors as regards treating self-defense shooters, confidentiality and what they would do if their notes were subpoenaed, and more general concerns about not discussing legally-sensitive portions of the event with friends or relatives who could be compelled to relate in court what you said.

Several of the book's final chapters will not have the wide applicability to the private citizen, though by now, hooked by the wealth of detail and knowledge in earlier chapters, I'd bet most private citizens reading *Deadly Force Encounters* at least skim the pages. ●

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Editor's Notebook



Gila Hayes

How to Use the Internet

There are plenty of books with titles like *The World Wide Web for Dummies*, and such, but few address the question about how we actually use information gleaned off the Internet. A while back, I had occasion to review the educational

DVDs made by Massad Ayoob, and in so doing, was transported back to the days when I initiated my study into self defense and deadly force. Over 20 years ago, I was a student, first in Ayoob's LFI I class, and I subsequently participated a half dozen additional classes he instructed, later going on to host him as a guest instructor and sitting in on as many of those sessions as time allowed. After all these years, the foundational value of that early instruction still influences me. In watching the recorded lectures, I was impressed again with how Ayoob's classic lectures continue to guide armed citizens today.

The reasonable man doctrine, competing harms, disparity of force...it's all there in his books and DVDs, along with a lot more. I find myself weighing Ayoob's serious and straightforward instruction against the onslaught of advice, opinion and purely wishful thinking propagated on the Internet from which armed citizens are also drawing conclusions about their behavior prior to, during, and after using their gun to defend themselves or their families from criminal violence.

Few things are more fascinating than to scrounge through the Internet on one gun-related topic or another and see all the opinions. Some of what I read on the Internet about guns and self defense make me wonder if cadres of anti-gunners are busily posting dangerous, illegal or ill-advised information in hopes of finishing off Americans' rights to own guns once and for all!

In comparing the Internet's voluminous body of opinion and sometimes outright misinformation with Ayoob's prodigious collection of books and recorded lectures, I came to the realization that the real value of the Internet is not as an informational source, but rather as a great sea of thought-provoking topics useful in sparking further inquiries into a nearly endless array of subjects. Instead of

seeking factual information online, use the Internet for exposure to a variety of points of view. From those opinions, the Internet surfer may formulate additional questions and lines of inquiry in pursuit of a more thorough understanding of the topic about which they are reading. Then, independent of this great panoply of diverse opinion, the individual must form his or her own convictions, deciding what is right and just for them, not for an anonymous Internet poster.

Be sure your convictions are based on verifiable information! Whether browsing the Network's website or doing a Google search and following the links for information about shotguns for home defense, training a guard dog, what caliber works best for personal protection, or any other topic, be sure to cross check facts before you accept them as gospel.

Few true authorities will advise, "Believe this because I said it is so." The best sources of information - whether published on the Internet, in magazines, in books, on DVDs or from an instructor in a classroom - back up their statements with corroborating sources. If you're betting your life and, as our affiliated attorney Debbe Von Blumenstein says, your liberty or your livelihood, on information, take the time to make sure the facts you've been presented are, actually, factual!



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The eJournal of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC is published monthly on the Network's web site at <http://www.armedcitizensnetwork.org>.

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The Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC receives its direction from these corporate officers:

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We welcome your questions and comments about the Network. Please write to us at info@armedcitizensnetwork.org.

Armed Citizens' LEGAL DEFENSE NETWORK, LLC



How to join

Print this application form and FAX it to 1-360-978-6102 (if you are using a VISA/MC), or mail it to P.O. Box 400, Onalaska, WA, 98570 with your check for \$85 for a 1-year membership (add \$50 each for additional memberships for others in your household—must reside at same address) or a 3-year membership for \$225. If you have any questions, please call 360-978-5200.

When your application is accepted, you will receive three DVDs concerning the lawful use of deadly force for self-defense. Additionally, you will become immediately eligible to have any future case of self-defense reviewed by one of our Network experts at no charge, and may apply for a grant of financial assistance for any litigated self-defense cases initiated after membership application (please read <http://www.armedcitizensnetwork.org/benefits.html>). You will also receive a membership card with your user name and password for the member's Internet forum and other areas of the Network web site restricted to members only, as well as your coupon code for the 20% discount at the Network's on-line book and DVD store.

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.

APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

Full Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ - _____ - _____

Email _____

How did you hear about the Network? _____

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

With my signature, I hereby attest that under the laws of the United States of America, I am not legally prohibited from possessing firearms, that I am 18 years of age or older, and that I legally reside in the United States. I understand that any grant of benefits is limited to lawful acts of self defense with no additional criminal charges (unlawful possession of concealed handgun, for example) associated with the incident.

Applicant's Signature

Please Print Name

(1) Additional Household Member Applicant's Signature

Please Print Name

(2) Additional Household Member Applicant's Signature

Please Print Name

MEMBERSHIP FEES

\$85.00 Individual Membership

\$225.00 3-Year Individual Membership

\$50 Each Additional Household Resident per year

Name(s) _____

Charge my card Check enclosed

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

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(City)

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