

The Science of Self Defense

The Network goes to Force Science Institute

by Marty Hayes, J.D.

In February, I had the good fortune to be accepted into and attend the world renowned Force Science Institute Certification Course. This training had been on my radar screen for at least 10 years, and I had even applied once to attend, although at that time, they were only accepting law enforcement students. I have been following the research of Dr. William Lewinski for years and have used some of the research myself in expert witness work I have done (more about this later). A couple of years ago they opened up the course to non-law enforcement personnel who have a legitimate need for the information, such as private investigators, experts, firearms trainers and attorneys. It is my understanding that there is a screening process if you are not law enforcement, and I have no problem with that requirement. Realistically, both the cost of attending and the time and effort it takes to complete the course pretty much makes enrollment self-screening. Only serious students of the art of self-defense are likely to apply.

The Force Science Institute is run by Dr. William Lewinski (pictured above), a former professor of psychology at the University of Minnesota (Mankato) where he started the Force Science Research Center as a part of his police psychology program. After publishing a number of ground-breaking studies about law enforcement uses of force, primarily deadly force, he eventually retired from teaching at the university level and opened the Force Science Institute. He now spends his time offering training to law enforcement use of force trainers, expert witnesses and criminal justice personnel. This year, he is offering about a dozen courses



nationwide, and each course will likely see a hundred or so participants. He also works on expert witness cases for law enforcement personnel being charged criminally or sued civilly after a use of force incident, where the case requires a scientific explanation for the actions of the personnel involved.

Additionally, the Force Science Institute is still conducting scientific research, strictly controlled, documented, and peer reviewed. These studies enhance the body of knowledge about dynamics of violent encounters and the aftermath.

While I was not in a position to survey the other students who attended the course I was in, I

was able to look at a bunch of name tags. It was my impression that most students worked as law enforcement trainers and administrators and are professionals who want the education to better assist with use of force investigations. I also discovered I was not alone as far as representing the Network. Three additional members of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, Inc. were in class with me: Steven Baker, Network member and firearms instructor who also is a private investigator, along with two of KRTraining's instructors, Tracy Thronburg and John Daub. We three sat together during the five days of classroom work, and I was keenly interested to hear Daub's reaction to several of the issues discussed, as his recent use of force incident (read more at <https://americanhandgunner.com/the-ayoob-files/home-invader-the-john-daub-incident/>) was clearly in the forefront of his mind.

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Also present was attorney and Law of Self-Defense owner Andrew Branca. If you have spent any time in this industry, you will likely have come across his work, either on social media or by taking one of his Law of Self-Defense training courses. It was good to pick his brain about the course and some of his thoughts on the training after hours.

So, if you were to attend this course, what should you expect?

First, expect a professionally-run, week-long seminar. As one who routinely puts on training events, I recognize the tremendous amount of work involved in making a seminar come off successfully, and this course certainly did—from the professionally designed nametags, to the excellent workbook supplied for the course, to the venue (Doubletree by Hilton) complete with coffee service for all five days. I tend to be fairly Spartan in my needs, but it was nice to spend a week in a little more luxury than I am accustomed to, and I appreciated how creature comforts made the attendance of all 40 hours of classroom time go a little smoother.

The curriculum and the level of training matched my expectations, which were pretty high. I was pleasantly surprised with the extremely high quality of the presenters, many of whom had lots of letters behind their names indicating advanced degrees or came from careers that gave them practical experience in law enforcement. Additionally, hearing presentations from many different instructors broke the intensity of the lecture material into digestible blocks.

If you attend a Force Sciences Institute class, you can also expect to be challenged intellectually. The depth of the subject matter rivaled that of my law school education, with one glaring difference. In law school, most of the work was done independently of the course lectures, with a tremendous amount of reading to be done between classes. In law school, students were expected to know and be able to regurgitate the knowledge when tested. In the Force Science course, virtually all the material you were expected to understand was presented by the lecturers. Thank

goodness they supplied an extensive 349 page workbook to supplement the material—in which you were expected to take notes and use for your material review prior to testing.

Unfortunately for me, I ignored this protocol and decided to take notes on my computer, in keeping with how I have attended classes for years. My workbook is not written in, and that was a big mistake. I should have put the computer away and just made written notes in the workbook; it would have made the learning much easier. The workbook consists of the PowerPoint slides that the lecturers use to present the material and makes for a good resource for later use. So, heed my warning: if you attend this course, use the workbook for note taking.

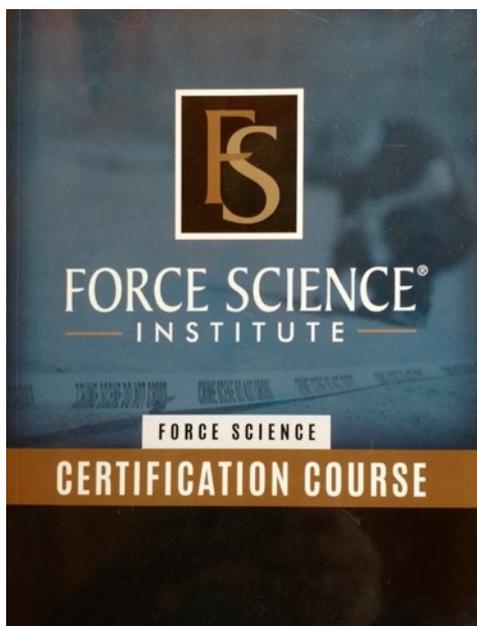
That summarizes the impressions of a student taking the course. What about the actual subject matter? I will try to answer, blending my own experiences as an expert witness with the material taught in the course.

My first recollection of using the Force Science studies for cases I

worked on as an expert was when I used the ejection pattern research done by Dr. Lewinski in 2010. <http://www.activeresponsetraining.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/ShellCasingStudy.pdf>. Given my own experience as a firearms trainer, with having seen several million cases being ejected from firearms, I have a good base of knowledge to discuss in court what happens to cases after they are ejected from a firearm. Still, it is nice having an authoritative, scientific study to refer to in an expert report or in court, which I have done several times.

In addition to this study, Force Science has done groundbreaking work in studying reaction time issues. This comes into play when a defender fires a shot at a threat whom he is facing, thinking that his life was in danger. When the investigation is complete, the evidence shows a bullet hole in the back of the deceased. How can this occur? Well, the time it takes for the “fire now” signal to reach the trigger finger from the brain is about a quarter of a second—which, interestingly, is about the time it takes for a person to

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turn 180 degrees. The armed defender could perceive the threat, then focus on the sights and fire the gun. At the same time, the subject turns and ends up taking the bullet in the back. Most of the time when a homicide victim is shot in the back, the person who put that bullet there is arrested for murder. This is the fate of both law enforcement officers and armed citizens.

An additional and very important phenomenon exists in which a person is shooting in a high-stress encounter, shoots several rounds at a threat, and doesn't stop shooting soon enough to prevent wounds in the side or back. Lewinski's early study on the "stop shooting" phenomenon has kept many, many officers out of legal trouble, because his research scientifically explains those one or two extra shots. This phenomenon was in play in the Spencer Newcomer defense, which I worked on as an expert and is detailed in a three-part interview with Newcomer and his attorney, published last year. See <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/anatomy-of-a-self-defense-shooting>, <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/en/the-anatomy-of-a-self-defense-shooting-pt-2> and <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/en/the-anatomy-of-a-self-defense-shooting-pt-3>.

As time marches on, the Force Science Institute continues to conduct other much-needed research projects, all intended to shine the light of scientific scrutiny onto subject areas where that light is much needed. One such area concerns the post-shooting aftermath issues, which affect both law enforcement and the private sector.

Should the average armed citizen attend this Force Sciences Institute course? Probably not, as in reality, there is very little material covered that could be used by the armed citizen in either setting up strategies for self defense, or in his or her own defense in court. Should the private investigator, firearms instructor or defense attorney attend this course? Absolutely! All of these fields involve the study and analysis of shooting incidents and entail trying to make sense of some very complex issues. Many times, these issues need to be explained in court—most likely by an investigator, firearms instructor serving as an expert, or by a defense attorney. For professionals in these lines of work, I strongly recommend pursuing this educational opportunity. More information can be found at <https://www.forcescience.org/>



President's Message

by Marty Hayes, J.D

A month ago, we were just getting worried about the novel coronavirus, and boy, can a month change a whole lot. A month later, one cannot turn on the computer or other news source without being

constantly bombarded about COVID-19. Of course, I am telling you nothing new.

I want to use my space here this month to inform you of the Network's response to the pandemic and share my thoughts on this subject.

First, my thoughts.

When the presence of coronavirus first hit the news, it was not a big deal. After all, the prognostications were much less severe than a bad flu, and so personally, I felt everyone was over-reacting. Now, I am not so sure, but certainly am keeping an open mind that this could fizzle out without some type of mass death toll resulting from the virus.

The media has either done an incredibly good job of keeping us informed, or on the other hand, has blown the issue completely out of context, resulting in the current worldwide panic. I suspect the truth is somewhere in between.

I also cannot dismiss the idea that the whole media response is a conspiracy to make President Trump vulnerable to losing re-election. I am reminded of Clinton consultant James Carville's 1992 political phrase, "It's the economy stupid" when assessing the prospects of re-election to office. President Trump has certainly done

a good job growing the U.S. economy in his first term in office.

As I write this, the federal government purports to be getting ready to send each American a thousand dollars or more, to offset the economic fallout of the economic distress. While on the surface this seems logical, I am not sure it is the best approach. It would be one thing if the federal government wasn't already trillions of dollars in debt, with no real plan or effort toward getting out of debt. This will just add to our debt and that does not make me happy. But, thinking selfishly, I am of an age where it is unlikely to really affect me personally, when the nation goes bankrupt. I wonder what that would look like? Who knows? All I know that I will do the best I can to provide for my family and myself as I look towards the golden years. As I do, I cannot help but think that the whole government response to this "crisis" will change things for years to come.

Some of the economic hardships are already starting. My training business is taking a hit, while on the other hand, the Network is adjusting. More details from Gila in this journal's final column.

What I do know is that many, many people will be facing economic distress because of this event. I know that those in distress will include Network members. If you have lost your job, either temporarily or permanently, we here at the Network have sympathy for you. One thing the Network will not do is leave you without being able to access Network benefits because of a temporary financial setback. Please read Gila's editorial for the exact mechanism through which we will make sure you are not left out in the cold without help because you lost your job during these troubled times.

That pretty much sums up my thoughts at this time. I close with my hopes you will all weather this unprecedented situation in good shape.



Attorney Question of the Month

In this column, our Network Affiliated Attorneys generously contribute commentary and information from their professional experience to help Network members better understand the myriad legal issues affecting how law enforcement, the courts and society in general react to use of force in self defense. This month we asked our affiliated attorneys this question:

In Washington State, the initial aggressor issue in a self-defense case is outlined by State v. Riley, 976 P.2d 624 (1999), stating: “However, in general, the right of self defense cannot be successfully invoked by an aggressor or one who provokes an altercation.”

The question: in your jurisdiction are words alone sufficient to invoke an initial aggressor jury instruction, or must there be more than just words?

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In my jurisdiction (Georgia), an initial aggressor (i.e., not using self defense) generally may not use self defense, unless he has clearly communicated his intention to break off the aggression. Just words do not usually constitute initial aggression, with the exception being what are commonly referred to as “fighting words.” While the concept of fighting words continues to exist in Georgia, the idea that words are so bad that they cannot help but provoke a physical response strikes me as becoming less and less likely in an age when people commonly say things in public that formerly would have been socially taboo.

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In Indiana, the courts have held that a person may be an initial aggressor, and thus trigger jury instructions on the subject as relates to the negating of a self-defense

claim, merely by having provoked the violence with words.

In Indiana, the “initial aggressor” statutory language is found in Indiana Code § 35-41-3-2(g)(3), which reads: “(g) Notwithstanding subsections (c) through (e), a person is not justified in using force if: (3) the person has entered into combat with another person or is the initial aggressor unless the person withdraws from the encounter and communicates to the other person the intent to do so and the other person nevertheless continues or threatens to continue unlawful action.”

When reviewing self-defense cases, the Indiana courts frequently cite Wilson v. State, 770 N.E.2d 799, 800 (Ind. 2002). In order to prevail on a self-defense claim, a defendant must demonstrate he was in a place he had a right to be; did not provoke, instigate, or participate willingly in the violence; and had a reasonable fear of death or great bodily harm. *Id.* A mutual combatant, whether or not the initial aggressor, must declare an armistice before he or she may claim self-defense. *Id.* If a defendant is convicted despite his claim of self defense, we will reverse only if no reasonable person could say that self defense was negated by the State beyond a reasonable doubt. *Id.* at 800-801. An “initial aggressor” is one who provokes a fight or who willingly participates in it. Bryant v. State, 984 N.E.2d 240, 251, (Ind. Ct. App. 2013). Additionally, the Indiana Court of Appeals held that a defendant was an initial aggressor after a verbal argument escalated into a physical altercation that resulted in the defendant choking and punching the victim. Cole v. State, 28 N.E.3d 1126, 1129-30 (Ind. Ct. App. 2015).

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In Arizona, mere words are never enough to warrant the use of lethal force. Lest we forget, as Mas Ayoob would remind us, lethal force is an option only in “the gravest extreme.” No matter how large the insult, extricate yourself from the situation, apologize as you do so (even though you’re not the one who should be apologizing)

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and live to tell the tale another day. If someone steals your parking space, give them a thumbs up and drive on. Don't forget, however, it is perfectly fine to utter a silent prayer that the jerk develops anal cancer. That goes a long way towards making you feel like you're not just backing down! We don't want John Wayne to roll over in his grave if possible!

As further evidence of this fact, Arizona statutory law dictates that you forfeit your right to claim self defense as a legal justification for your actions if you started the fight. Moral of the story: walk away if at all possible, and, let's be honest—it is almost always possible.

I was fortunate enough to take another class from Thunder Ranch's own Clint Smith a few weeks ago and, careful to leave room in the margin of my notes for the many "Clintisms" that I knew would be coming, I jotted one down that applies here: "Graveyards all over the world are filled with people who would not back down." Words to live by!

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The short answer under Illinois law is yes, words alone can result in an initial aggressor jury instruction. The relevant Illinois statute, 720 ILCS 5/7-4, provides:

The justification described in the preceding Sections of this Article [self defense and defense of others, defense of property, defense of dwelling] is not available to a person who:

- (a) Is attempting to commit, committing, or escaping after the commission of, a forcible felony; or
- (b) Initially provokes the use of force against himself, with the intent to use such force as an excuse to inflict bodily harm upon the assailant; or
- (c) Otherwise initially provokes the use of force against himself, unless:

- (1) Such force is so great that he reasonably believes that he is in imminent danger of death or great bodily harm, and that he has exhausted every reasonable means to escape such danger other than the use of force which is likely to cause death or great bodily harm to the assailant; or
- (2) In good faith, he withdraws from physical contact with the assailant and indicates clearly to the assailant that he desires to withdraw and

terminate the use of force, but the assailant continues or resumes the use of force.

Paragraph (b) refers to the person who uses words or action to goad another into acting so the person has an excuse to use force. Such a person is often referred to as a "provoker" or "provoker with intent." Paragraph (c) refers to the more common initial aggressor, the person who starts the fight. Unfortunately, Illinois law refers to both of them as the "initial aggressor." Note that only the initial aggressor under paragraph (c), and not the provoker under paragraph (b), can regain the right to use self defense if the other person escalates the level of force, as stated in subparagraph 1, or by withdrawal from the fight that is clearly communicated to the other party, as stated in subparagraph 2. If the jury finds that words or acts by the defendant were intended to provoke a response that would justify the use of force, the defendant cannot be found to have acted in self defense.

In People v. Tucker, 176 Ill. App. 3d 209 (2nd Dist. 1988), the Appellate Court upheld the defendant's conviction in part because he made comments to the victim and his friends that appeared intended to provoke them into fighting. In People v. Barnard Ill. App.3d (5th Dist. 1991), the Court stated in dicta (not necessary to the ruling in the case) "It has been held that mere words may be enough to qualify one as an initial aggressor" citing Tucker and the 1870 Illinois Supreme Court case of Greshia v. People, 53 IL 295 (Ill. 1870).

There is not much case law on this point, probably because defendants often engage in physical actions in addition to words to make them the initial aggressor, or because a lot of heated words are often exchanged between defendants and victims, or perhaps because intent to provoke is difficult to prove. Nevertheless, it seems clear that words alone are sufficient to warrant an initial aggressor jury instruction in Illinois.

It seems to be more difficult, but not impossible, for mere words of the "victim" to justify the use of force in self defense. It is possible where the victim has a reputation for following up his words with violent acts and the defendant knew of that reputation before the incident. In People v. Bailey, 27 Ill. App.3d 128 (1st Dist. 1975), one of the "victims" told the defendant "I am going to kick your ass" and the other told the defendant that the only way he was going to leave the room was

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through the window. The defendant knew the men making the statements were violent individuals who had beaten other persons. Under these circumstances, those statements and other facts justified the defendant using his gun and the Appellate Court overturned his conviction.

However, usually some overt act must go along with the words to justify a reasonable belief of imminent harm. For example, the Illinois Supreme Court stated in *People v. Golson*, 392 Ill. 252 (Ill. 1946) "The rule is further settled in this State that mere threats of personal injury or even against the life of another will not justify the latter in taking the life of the person who has made such threats, when he is doing nothing to put them into

execution." Subsequent cases have followed this general rule absent facts indicating the defendant knew of the speaker's reputation for following up his threats with violence. I mention this issue because the case law seems to indicate that less is required to be considered the initial aggressor (provoker) by words alone than for mere words of the "victim" to justify a use of force response. Of course, each case will depend on its facts, or more accurately, the facts as the jury believes them to be.

A big "Thank You!" to our affiliated attorneys for their contributions to this interesting discussion. Please return next month when we ask our affiliated attorneys for their thoughts on a new topic.

Book Review

Deadly Force Encounters

Cops and Citizens Defending Themselves and Others

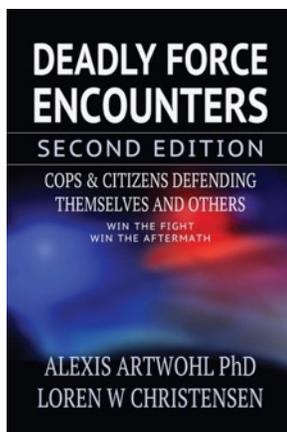
by Alexis Artwohl Ph.D. and Loren W. Christensen

Dec. 26, 2019, 2nd edition

eBook: 548 pages \$5.99

Paperback: 546 pages \$24.95

ISBN-13: 978-1650012193



Reviewed by Gila Hayes

Ten years ago, [this journal](#) reviewed the original version of Alexis Artwohl's and Loren W. Christensen's classic on the physio-psychological effects of violent encounters, *Deadly Force Encounters: What Cops Need to Know to Mentally and Physically Prepare for and Survive a Gunfight*. It was not a new book then, with a 1997 copyright by Paladin Press. I was very pleased when these acclaimed authors published an updated version, offering in the preface, "extensive updated research on extreme stress events and...specific recommendations to officers, agencies, and citizens on how to survive deadly force encounters and cope with the aftermath."

Although both authors worked in law enforcement, this is not exclusively a police book. In dedicating the second edition to police officers, community members and first responders, they note, "Although our focus is on officer-involved use of force, much of the research and principles apply to many other situations as well," adding later, "Evil prowls the streets 24/7, and smart citizens need to take responsibility for their own safety. Everyone can cultivate a survival mindset; some people go on to develop a warrior mindset with skills. Many citizens rescue, defend, and protect themselves, their loved ones, total strangers, and police officers."

The book draws on a wide array of scholarly research, combined with experiences from the authors' careers as a police psychologist and a police officer, to teach about how use of deadly force affects people. Do not be put off by the police-oriented anecdotes. Police use of force incidents are documented in excruciating detail while self defense by citizens is often no-billed with little publicity generated, so the facts are not publicized or recorded for posterity. Many of the aftermath issues, while not identical, are definitely parallel.

One such aspect, raised by the authors early in *Deadly Force Encounters*, is legal survival. In law enforcement, a criminal investigation and internal affairs investigation is all but guaranteed after use of deadly force and civil lawsuit is very likely. As is true for the armed citizen, political motives increase the likelihood of punishment. "Citizens forced to defend themselves from an attack can also find themselves in serious legal trouble for committing an assault or homicide no matter how justified the use of force.

Assaults are crimes, and the police investigate them as such," they explain. A common thought, they continue, is, "I haven't done anything wrong, so why do I need a lawyer?" Whether spoken by cops or citizens, this is a naive assumption for anyone being investigated...the entirety of the criminal justice system is too complex to be fully understood by laypeople and is subject to human error just like all other institutions," they observe later in the book.

One difficulty is striking the balance between silence and giving a statement. "People involved in use-of-force incidents are likely to experience high levels of emotional turmoil and feel a strong need to talk about what happened," however survivors must keep in mind that, "everything they say and do at the scene, including 911 and other phone calls, is observed, probably recorded by multiple individuals, and could be used against them in all the ensuing legal actions, including civil litigation that might happen months or years down the road," they write.

They add, "If citizens decide to make a public safety statement, it can include brief information such as who is the victim and the offender, location of physical evidence, injuries, identifying witnesses, and other information relevant to immediate public safety and securing the scene...Citizens should provide this brief information in a calm and restrained manner. They should not ramble, second-guess, speculate, editorialize, dump emotional reactions in public, or answer any questions in detail except under the supervision of their attorney."

Most will afford themselves of the opportunity to make a full statement under the supervision of their attorney. The authors explain, "The full statement is where the involved officers or citizens sit down with detectives and undergo extensive questioning about all the details of

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the event. Often recorded, interviews and all statements and behaviors of the interviewee become part of the public record. Everything can be used against them in criminal and civil litigation.” That’s why, they add later, “it is best to wait for one or two sleep cycles” before submitting to an interview. A substantial amount of memory research follows, too much to detail here, but it is recommended reading and just one more good reason to buy *Deadly Force Encounters* for detailed study and a permanent place in your resource library.

Artwohl and Christensen contrast the competing priorities of individuals, society, and the criminal justice system. As humans, we care primarily about survival, but after that’s assured, our brains need to make sense of what happened and extract details that might be useful in the future. Conversely, the criminal justice system cares only for “exactly what happened.” That creates what the authors call a “disconnect,” because “people who experience or witness an event are highly unlikely to have perfect performance or perfect recall. Much of the time, this is not of great importance. However, for people who become tangled up in the criminal justice system, a less than perfect memory or performance might, and has, resulted in them being falsely accused of lying, covering up, and obstructing. In the worst cases it can lead to indictment and conviction.”

Ignorance about brain function combines with “the demands of the criminal justice system” to cause survivors of critical incidents considerable harm, they warn. Combat that general ignorance by studying this book and take to heart the authors’ advice about surviving a critical incident. First, one must survive the criminal violence, and from experience and research the authors outline attributes they deem “important for people to develop if they want to protect themselves from predatory attacks.” These include calmness, survival mindset, respect and the warrior mindset. Each element is explained in depth and is too long to fully review here. Additional pages address the effects and management of fear, the importance of personal resiliency and maintaining a positive outlook—before trouble strikes.

Also notable is the chapter discussing why eyewitness testimony is so unreliable and how false memories are implanted, all backed up with research from multiple sources. The authors comment, “Given the fallibility of memory, these ‘always believe the accuser without any evidence’ movements are dangerous deviations from the fundamentals of the criminal justice system: thorough investigations, due process, the presumption

of innocence, the right to face one’s accuser, and trial by facts and evidence rather than emotion and bias.”

A discussion about decision making compares cold, rational analysis to emotion-informed, intuitive decisions. “A shortcoming of conscious, rational decision making in sudden emergencies that require split-second decisions is that it takes too much time...Intuitive decision making...allows responses to pop up rapidly and automatically with little or no effort or conscious thought. Training and other life experiences help automatic responses be the correct ones,” the authors introduce.

Relevant training is essential and needs to consider “a combination of individual abilities, health status, and a wide variety of other issues unique to each person. For example, those interested in home defense can access information on how to harden their security. Concealed carry requires a whole different area of training. People who use a cane can learn to use it as a self-defense weapon,” the authors explain.

Stress inoculation, they continue, is “an essential element of reality-based training.” Done right, stress inoculation “should start with classroom education on the physiology and psychology of stress reactions, and techniques to manage the symptoms.” Simulated defense situations are part of any successful training program and the authors quote a study showing “Use-of-force simulators provide an important training mechanism in which important skills can be honed, and they are important in transferring trained judgment and firearms skills from the classroom and the firing range to actual field encounters.” Don’t forget to role play the aftermath, too, they advise.

A long segment on visualization outlines harnessing the power of the mind to provide frequent training. “Research shows that frequent practice for small periods, known as ‘distributed practice,’ can be a more effective method of learning and skill maintenance as opposed to ‘massed’ or ‘block’ practice where the students only train for long sessions now and then,” the authors write. Safe dryfire and mental rehearsals of defensive scenarios are recommended. “Mental rehearsal of effective responses has long been known to enhance learning and performance. This can range from imaging the smooth, uniform feel of a trigger pull, to rehearsing entire complex scenarios.” Christensen relates how he would mentally rehearse law enforcement responses, “After just a few sessions, I found myself responding to...hold-up calls more

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smoothly and confidently...All because I had practiced, albeit only in my mind. This is a powerful technique that many cops, military, and top athletes use to enhance performance.”

There's a parallel mental function in the way people revisit and critique past actions. The authors explain, “After a dramatic event, many people find themselves involuntarily replaying it over and over in their minds, sometimes for a week or longer. This can include dreams and second-guessing what happened...The temporary natural tendency to repeatedly relive what happened can be harnessed as a learning experience for any event, including seeking more information or training to improve future responses,” but when the replays continue for extended time periods, it is detrimental and one of the recognized symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

People who have faced imminent death report common responses—experienced in varying degrees of intensity—ranging from mentally reliving the incident, trouble concentrating, increased startle reflex, avoidance, anger, blaming or guilt, feeling helpless, second guessing their decisions, and more, the authors report. These are not uniform, the authors stress, owing to the great variations in human resiliency, supportive or hostile environments, individual degrees of preparation to face hardship and more. “Social support is essential to all humans, especially after a PTE [potentially traumatic event]. Group debriefings and peer support

teams can be a critical part of mobilizing collegial support.” They stress facts about PTSD that debunk common myths and identify Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy as a helpful tool in recovery.

A chapter on developing resiliency urges readers to adopt a positive outlook when things are going well, noting, “Resiliency is a way of life, not a single epiphany or method.” Instead of taking a class or seminar that generally addresses resiliency, they recommend getting training or counseling on specific problem areas and addressing real issues like health and endurance, sleep deprivation and proactively solving looming issues. “A defining characteristic of adults and children who cope well is their ability to quickly size up a challenge, grab as much control of a situation as possible, and proactively work to enhance their survival,” they advise.

Resilient people, they continue, find meaningful ways to be of service to others and know how to accept help when they need it themselves. Find meaning and purpose, they continue, and practice being adaptive and flexible as a means of coping. Other characteristics include strong ego boundaries, not taking perceived slights as personal attacks or abuse, and practicing gratitude.

The second edition of *Deadly Force Encounters* is a long book, containing many thought-provoking topics. Highly recommended!



Editor's Notebook

by Gila Hayes

I missed you at the NRA Annual Meeting! I suppose a few people might even have missed, me, too, because the whole event was cancelled a month before it was due to occur. Who knows whether the COVID-19 virus might

have been contained before April 16-19—or how extensively it might have spread by then? Cancelling the event was only sensible. I'm just sorry I didn't get to personally greet the many new and faithful long-time members we usually chat with at the Annual Meeting.

One high point of exhibiting at the NRA meeting is visiting with long time Network members who come to our booth at the convention and bring along a friend or family member. They introduce their loved one to us, and then often buy them the gift of Network membership. That would have been particularly useful this spring. Jurisdictions, concerned about infection inside their penal institutions, have released prisoners, and subsequently, there has been a run on gun shops by people who've never owned guns before. Just Thursday, a member in WI emailed to ask for more copies of our Foundation's booklet *What Every Gun Owner Needs to Know About Self-Defense Law* (see <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/educational-foundation>) because all the first-time gun buyers had cleaned out the store's supply of booklets. "They're just flying off the shelf," our member wrote.

Do you have a family member or a friend who you love like a brother, sister, son or daughter who just became an armed citizen? A great way to get him or her off to a good start is the gift of membership in Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network. Call us at 360-978-5200 to order or sign your new armed citizen up for the Network at <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/join/purchase-membership>.

A few members have reached out to ask how we at the Network are doing, and to offer their prayers and best wishes for our continued health. It brings a tear to my eye every time that happens! It was especially poignant last Thursday when during my first day running the office alone, several members emailed to inquire after our well-being, and several others sent me articles about

health and cleaning practices to avoid falling victim to the virus.

Our state is enforcing Stay Home orders for all but essential workers. I am hearing from members and affiliates that other states are doing the same, with various governmental decisions on which types of employees are "essential."

With some of our members facing severe financial difficulties from job losses, the Network will, upon request, offer 90-day grace periods for out-of-work members whose memberships expire March 31, April 30 and June 30. If you are severely affected by loss of income owing to the pandemic, please contact me at ghayes@armedcitizensnetwork.org and I will extend this consideration to your membership. We'll send occasional reminders about the expired status so that when you get back to work, you can renew as normal.

In WA, a list of essential workers—on which our staff was conspicuously absent—was announced the evening of Monday, March 23rd.

[Continued next page]

Below: Josh-ing around made the final minutes as we left work carrying our monitors, keyboards and computers to work at home a little lighter. [L-R] Will, Josh and Belle.



April 2020

The restrictions went into effect at midnight Wednesday, March 25, so we had a couple of days to pack up our offices, scrounge up extra equipment and get ready to start working at home. We already have two team members regularly telecommuting, so we had a pretty good idea of what we needed to do.

Work was re-assigned, and we have continued our mission of serving members. From the outside, I doubt much of a difference has been noticeable. We have an amazing Network Membership Services team and everyone pitched in 110% and then asked what else they could do. Josh even brought in pizzas for lunch our last day so we could have a little social time before continuing to unplug computers, monitors, printers and dumping all our working files into boxes. These good folks bore all the disruption in genuine good spirits.

In the days that have followed, each has proven their mettle, taking care of members and keeping the new and renewal memberships going out. We have been most negatively impacted by the difficulty of juggling phone calls. We are a membership services team that takes pride in taking time to answer questions from members and prospective members.

Now, working from home, not all members have ready company phone access and currently, all our calls are

being forwarded to a single line. We ask your patience if you call and get our voice mail. I hope you will take a moment to leave your name and phone number so we can call back if you catch us on the line with another caller. We promise to return phone calls the same business day received—weekends, as always, get return calls first thing Monday morning.

That takes care of ordinary concerns and routine business. Network members facing a self-defense legal emergency should call the emergency phone number printed on the back of their Network membership card. The emergency number is also accessible to members by logging in to <http://armedcitizensnetwork.org> and clicking the link for *Accessing Post-Incident Assistance* on the right side menu. Don't forget to share that access with a family member or trusted other who may need to access that number on your behalf if you are detained after a self-defense incident.

Every single member of the Network membership services team comes to his or her position having previously surmounted more difficult situations than our current Stay Home restrictions. Their coolness under fire really shows! Here's a big thank you to each of our excellent team members and an equal expression of gratitude for all of our Network family members who are standing with us through this challenge.

About the Network's Online Journal

The **eJournal** of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, Inc. is published monthly on the Network's website at <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/our-journal>. Content is copyrighted by the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, Inc.

Do not mistake information presented in this online publication for legal advice; it is not. The Network strives to assure that information published in this journal is both accurate and useful. Reader, it is your responsibility to consult your own attorney to receive professional assurance that this information and your interpretation or understanding of it is accurate, complete and appropriate with respect to your particular situation.

In addition, material presented in our opinion columns is entirely the opinion of the bylined author and is intended to provoke thought and discussion among readers.

To submit letters and comments about content in the **eJournal**, please contact editor Gila Hayes by e-mail sent to editor@armedcitizensnetwork.org.

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

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We welcome your questions and comments about the Network.

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