

The Active Shooter Threat- Developing the survival mindset



One thing that we all can see, these active shooter incidents do not discriminate. Anyone can be a victim, any time, any place. Over the last several years we have seen attacks in malls, offices, movie theaters and schools. Some of these incidents have left us with clues to the shooter's mindset but we will never fully understand the motivation behind all active shooter incidents. They are each compelling, gut-wrenching, confusing, shocking, and an outright tragedy.

As a society we are typically a reactionary one. After an incident of its kind we as a society, are outraged, saddened, and distraught, Then the reactionary side of our society scrambles to make mandates of behavioral change or legislation for modification of firearm laws. How much of this is actually political fodder opposed to actual intent to solve the problem through realistic and practical means that are clear of political correctness?

Currently in the United States there is over 70,000 active state and federal gun laws on the books. The simple and direct fact is that we cannot regulate 'crazy.' Determined persons will always find a way to inflict harm and death if that motivation is powerful enough. We are attempting to stay a step ahead, forecast and prevent another Columbine, Sandy Hook, Aurora Colorado, Fort Hood and many other incidents in our past.

It was under 150 years ago that we as a people still relied on self-preservation, the animal instinct within. We were the hunter and gathers' and relied on that survival mindset to warn us of impending danger whether it was from hostile aggression from a fellow man/ woman or an animal acting on its own instinct for survival.

I challenge anyone reading this to take a personal evaluation as well as an overall evaluation of your surroundings. You will all see a commonality in our society. Distraction- to the point, technology distraction, and the user is buried deep into social media, texting, email, music. Their situational awareness and survival mindset is essentially on 'airplane mode.' When the 'airplane mode,' is on we are basically the sheep amongst the wolves, the predators that are within our society who prey on the weak, the uninformed, and the unaware.

A great number of people choose to ignore the voice in the back of their head that there is DANGER. I am talking about the kind of danger one encounters when they find themselves in an unfamiliar city that they have never dared to venture into or at the ATM in the middle of the night; or the parking garage where you see 'questionable' individuals walking in your direction.

We can chalk this up to many reasons for the blind dismissal of impending danger, whether it is political correctness, being in fear of making the wrong call or not having enough confidence in our own decisions.

This crisis was brought to all of our attention on April 20th, 1999 through the Columbine tragedy. The active shooter is a difficult topic for anyone to fully comprehend as there are so many variables to each one and the Active Shooter can rarely be predicated without warning indicators and 'red flags.'

Once an assailant is on scene and shots are fired, they have committed to their actions and they will not stop until they have ran out of ammunition or are stopped by law enforcement or civilians.

There are several known contributing facts for these senseless acts of violence, some being: ideology, economy, revenge, unrelated mental illness, domestic violence (spill over)and drug and alcohol abuse. As a society we will never be able to fully prevent these acts of violence but we can better prepare our employees to react and to develop the survival mindset that just might save their lives.

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