A Short Guide On Situational Awareness

By Alain Burrese

(Excerpted from How To Protect Yourself By Developing A Fighter’s Mindset)
Be Aware
Situational Awareness

“By learning to observe your environment, constantly evaluate it, and react appropriately to what you see, you can achieve a large degree of control over your fate.”

- Tom Givens

You hear many self-defense instructors discussing situational awareness. It’s a common term used in regard to both personal security and military operations. However, often it is used without defining what it actually means. I highly respect Kelly McCann, aka Jim Grover, for both his Combatives and Firearms instruction. His direct, no-nonsense, hard-hitting approach to self-defense is devastatingly effective. This is McCann’s definition of situational awareness from his book *Combatives For Street Survival: Hard-Core Countermeasures for High-Risk Situations*: “Situational awareness is a cumulative alertness to threat and your environment. It enables you to notice pre-incident indicators, which are odd movements or anomalies given the situation. Cumulatively, pre-incident indicators create a visual unlikely circumstance consistent with either a contrived situation or predatorial behavior.”

“Comprehensive self-defense should begin with teaching a variety of awareness skills to help the student deal with a potential confrontation and prevent it from becoming violent.”

- Bill Kipp
Awareness, or situational awareness, is the single best self-defense principle there is. Awareness enables you to avoid many violent encounters people face, and is the best way to ensure your safety. No matter what you know, how you train, or what weapons you carry, avoidance is the best way to prevent harm to yourself and loved ones. I put this principle of a fighter’s mindset first because being aware is the foundation for any self-defense or safety program. It is the foundation of a fighter’s mindset. If you pay attention to this information and incorporate being aware into your lifestyle, your chances to avoid a violent encounter increase. In addition, being aware allows you to attack back in those instances you can’t de-escalate or avoid violence. (Not to mention, as I’ll restate later, that you will also see a lot of good things out there that you might have otherwise missed.)

“People should learn to see and so avoid all danger. Just as a wise man keeps away from mad dogs, so one should not make friends with evil men.”

- Buddha

So let’s explore this concept a bit more. When it comes to situational awareness, one of the first things I like to teach is a simple color code of awareness that was first made popular by Colonel Jeff Cooper, founder of the American Pistol Institute. Many self-defense instructors teach a variation of this code, and it can be a useful tool to help think about your fighter’s mindset and a reminder that you need to be alert to indicators that will tip you off that something is amiss. Once we have the color code framework, we can better understand how we can be more aware and what to look for.
Four Levels of Awareness: White, Yellow, Orange and Red

Level 1: White. This is the first level, and unfortunately the level where most people exist. In white, you are oblivious to your surroundings and unaware of any potential threats. In this state, you are not prepared mentally or physically to attack back if confronted with a violent or life-threatening encounter. Nor are you ready to flee if that is the best course of action. (And often it is.) With cell phones and other electronic devices, it seems that more and more people walk around in the white level of awareness. Some places have actually passed laws making it a misdemeanor to cross a street while using an electronic device. Why? Because people were getting hit by cars while texting or talking on cell phones as they walked out into traffic. Do we really need the government telling us to quit texting and pay attention when you cross the street? Didn’t our mothers and fathers teach us that as kids? The only times you should be in white are when you are secure in a locked safe place. For example, you can let your guard down, relax, and veg out when at home with all the doors locked. Otherwise, I recommend you stay at level 2, or yellow, the majority of the time.
Level 2: Yellow. This is the level you should live in. My friend Ray Terry, a martial arts and firearms instructor, always likes to say, “Yellow is a great place to live.” Condition yellow is having the mindset of paying attention and being aware of what is going on around you. You are aware of the general threats that surround you, such as being in a bad part of town, as well as noticing things or people that don’t seem right. You are not paranoid. You are aware!

Besides living a much safer life by being in condition yellow and aware, you can live a fuller life by noticing the good things surrounding you, that otherwise go unnoticed as you blindly go along in condition white, oblivious to your surroundings. Besides noticing potential or actual threats, you also notice the new store that just opened across the street, the five dollar bill blowing across the sidewalk, or numerous other positive things you would miss if you were not paying attention to your surroundings. This is important, you notice everything: good, potentially bad, and bad. But it is NOT being paranoid, looking for danger around every corner. It is just being aware of your surroundings.

Unfortunately, the way some people teach situational awareness, it’s at a level that becomes hard to maintain, especially for civilians. It becomes difficult to always be scanning for danger, and you can burn out if you try to maintain such high levels of hyper-vigilant awareness. Not only is there the possibility of burn out, but there is also the possibility that you will overreact when you are constantly on high alert looking for that boogie-man threat out there around every corner. So chill out some. Be alert. Be aware. But don’t turn into a paranoid, hyper-vigilant, super-
duper, ninja-commando, looking for deadly threats around every corner, under every rock, and behind every bush and tree. Remember, being aware lets you notice that beautiful sunset too. So be sure to take a moment to enjoy it.

“The best self-defense is being aware of and avoiding dangerous people and hazardous situations.”

- Lawrence A. Kane & Kris Wilder

**Level 3: Orange.** This is the level when you notice a specific threat. Your perception of your surroundings must be more acute, because you have recognized some danger. You don’t get trapped in tunnel vision and only focus on the threat, but because of the heightened sense of danger, you are more aware of everything around you. You look for avenues of escape, potential weapons, and other people that may help you. You also look for other people or things associated with your potential threat.

This heightened awareness at level orange is where you could burn out if kept up too long. You don't want to stay at this level all the time. It's only when you are generally aware and paying attention in yellow, and you recognize something that needs extra attention, or action, that you raise your awareness level to orange. When the situation is over you drop back down to your general yellow level of paying attention.
Level 4: Red. This is the level where it is time to act. You must escape or attack back. This is when the punks on the corner that were eying you start to advance quickly drawing weapons, or when the drunk that has been talking trash grabs a bottle and swings at your head, or when the car door opens after the car had been slowly creeping up the street toward you walking on the sidewalk.

Please remember, you won’t necessarily be walking around telling yourself, “Stay in awareness level yellow. Oh look, he looks scary, go to level orange. Oh no, he’s attacking, I must go to level red and run away or attack back.”

http://burrese.com/attack-back

The colors let us conceptualize these mental states and make them easier to discuss and understand. Hopefully they make them a bit easier to remember too. The key is to learn to go up and down through the levels as situations dictate. Your surroundings will constantly change, and you must be able to change your awareness level appropriately with these changes as you go through your daily routines.

“To see the sun and moon is no sign of sharp sight; to hear the noise of thunder is no sign of a quick ear.”

- Sun Tzu
In all of these situations, your being at level 2, yellow, should have given you advance warning that something was not right, and when you noticed that, you raised your level to 3, orange, paying even closer attention to what was happening. Then, upon realizing there is an actual threat and violence is about to happen, you are prepared to react instantly to flee, defend, or attack back. The important element is being able to transition rapidly from yellow, to orange, to red. Sometimes, this transition is so fast that level orange is but a second; you must react instantly upon the first hint of a threat.

“She said she was meeting her boyfriend in Key West and wanted to be ready for the visit.”

- Trooper Gary Dunick, describing what Ms. Barnes was thinking after she got into an accident while shaving her bikini area while driving.

Most people have an increased sense of awareness when driving. It’s a must to prevent accidents. You should be driving in condition yellow. (Don’t get me started on texting and other things while driving. Hear about the woman shaving her bikini area while driving? Look it up on google. In one report, the highway patrol officer that pulled her over said it was one of his stranger traffic stops.)

So, when you see a deer on the side of the road, or a child playing in an urban setting, or any other potentially dangerous situation that is not normal, you pay more attention, possibly taking your foot off the gas, watching the object of concern more closely in case the deer or child decides to bound into the road or create some other danger. If a deer or child does bound into the road, you immediately go from condition orange, where you were watching closer, to red, where you hit the brakes or take evasive action.

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Seeing deer in the road does you no good if you don’t know that hitting the brakes will stop the car from hitting them.

Part of awareness is being aware of what response you must do. Seeing the deer enter the road does you no good if you don't know that hitting the brakes will stop the car from hitting them. (And yes, I know you can do everything right and still hit a deer, but by being aware it reduces the likelihood of hitting one; it doesn't eliminate it. And that is the same with any self-defense situation. We try to reduce, because you can't eliminate everything.)

These are examples of how you may go through the conditions of awareness to keep yourself from harm while driving. Unfortunately, many people drift off into condition white, oblivious to what’s going on while driving and accidents occur. Paying attention to the cell phone, radio, or food you dropped instead of the road can mean disaster. Not paying attention when a criminal is sizing you up as a target can mean disaster of another kind.

Driving is probably what helped me learn to be more aware and observant. Here in Montana we see lots of animals beside, and in, the road. When I was a kid, my dad always saw game before anyone else in the car, and he was driving. I learned from him and got good at it too. (I'm sure that, shooting, and other field craft he taught me in the woods helped with the military later.)
Take Care Be Aware

I remember when I and a group of Honor's College students drove a University van down to Flagstaff, AZ for an Honor's conference. We were down in the lower part of Utah, heading south, and Deb was driving. I was in the passenger seat. Others were sleeping in the back seats. I kept saying, "Deer." I was always seeing them before she did, and she was driving. (Not good.)

She finally asked me to drive. Fortunately, we switched. She fell asleep, and I was the only one awake as I drove. I saw the deer off the side, took my foot off the gas. They all decided to run across the road. I hit the brakes. Deb woke, saw all the deer in the road in front of us and screamed. The combination of her scream and falling off the seats as I hit the brakes woke everyone else up. I didn't hit any deer, and we continued our trip. Deb moved to the back to sleep while Matt came up front and stayed awake with me. We saw more deer, but none of them in the middle of the road. So this is what I’m talking about when I say be alert and be aware.

The key is to recognize the level you are at and be more aware, and then increase awareness to be prepared to act if needed. Make sure you live in the aware state and not in the oblivious state many people blunder around in. I want you aware, so you can recognize potential threats and enjoy the positive things out there. When you recognize a potential threat, increase your attention and attempt to avoid a violent encounter. If things get where you have to act, I want your awareness to have readied you for flight or fight. First try to escape or de-escalate, but if you have to, attack back. Being aware is the first step, and living in the level yellow is the key.

"Escape or run to safety."

- Michael Johnson

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I also want you to remember some advice from a friend of mine, Michael Johnson, a JKD instructor and fight choreographer for the stage. Rather than teaching people to run from danger, he teaches, “Escape or run toward safety.” When you run, you should run toward safety.

An easy example would be in a mall parking lot, a common place for certain crimes. Run back toward the mall, where there are people, security guards, and safety. Running to your vehicle parked out on the fringes with no one around may not provide much protection from your attackers, especially if they can get to you before you can unlock the door, get in, and take off. All of which will take longer than you might think. Your awareness and staying in level yellow will enable you to know where safety lies if you have to run from some threat. So remember, don’t just run from danger, run toward safety.

What Are You Looking For?

Awareness alone is not sufficient. You must act on the information you receive from your observations. It also helps to know what to look for. Sure, I can tell you to be aware, but aware of what? What are you looking for? What signs should you look for and then react to?

Realize that crime is a process. Not only that, but once you know what it looks like, it is very obvious when it is developing. The problem is that often we are so emotionally involved, that we fail to recognize the signs.

- Marc “Animal” MacYoung

Here’s a simple example of awareness from living in Montana. When I’m out in the woods I’ll notice and observe the different wildlife the Big Sky Country has in abundance. However, it is not enough to just
observe wild animals. I must recognize each animal. My actions are quite different when encountering a bear on the trail then they are with a 6 point deer.

I want to take pictures of both, but my actions are different because of the threat differences. If it happened to be a grizzly, then my precautionary actions would increase more. You need to be aware, but you also need to recognize the different threats so that you can react accordingly. While most of us know the difference in danger levels between a grizzly and a deer, many don’t recognize the danger signs human predators give. The better we recognize and react to criminals and those that would do us harm, the safer we will be.

Obviously I can’t disclose every little thing you may notice that leads to violence, but I can point out some common things to look for that will raise your awareness level and help you avoid violence that may follow.

“Here are some universal pre-incident indicators of imminent street crime or pending violent assault: No cover for action, no cover for status; Sudden change in someone’s status; Correlation of movement; Hidden hands that cause unnatural movement.”

- Kelly McCann

In no real particular order, here are a few examples that should cause you to go from level yellow to orange. You might recognize someone moving with purposeful movements towards or away from you that doesn’t seem normal. Maybe it is convergent movement you notice. It may be seeing something, a car or person, more than once because they are following you. Perhaps it is a slow moving car or person, with someone “scoping” you or the surroundings. Pay attention to something
that is there that should not be there. Pay attention when something changes at a coincidental time.

Look around and notice if someone is loitering in the parking lot or garage. If they are, maybe you should go back inside until it is safe. If you don’t go back, at least pay more attention. Don’t just focus on the first loiterers, they may be there to draw your attention away from the real threat coming up behind you. Remember to pay attention to everything. Now, think of things that would require you to pay a little closer attention. Thinking of them beforehand will increase your ability to recognize them when it really counts.

Unfortunately, tunnel vision is a physiological effect of imminent danger, making it more difficult to pay attention to everything.

You should increase your awareness entering dark areas, or places where you have to transition to something, such as unlocking a car or opening a door. Any time your attention may be distracted with something such as fumbling for keys, looking for a key hole, etc. you should be aware. It is at these times that criminals like to attack, since they can often surprise you when your attention is on something else. For this reason, you want to ensure that you are being aware of your surroundings and increase your awareness for certain circumstances.

Known trouble areas often warrant an increase in attentiveness, as do certain enclosed areas like elevators. So know the territory or neighborhood you are in. Are you in an area with gang activity? Can you spot gang members? Find out about the local culture where you are. This is especially important if you travel to different countries. Think of some areas where you want to have a heightened sense of awareness.

In addition to keeping yourself safe, being aware may help you thwart other criminal or terrorist activities. It goes without saying since 9/11
people became more aware of the possibilities of terrorist acts and realize law enforcement officers can’t do it all. We can help keep our nation safer by being more aware. If we see certain patterns of behavior, we can report to the authorities and help stop those who want to commit crimes of terror.

Things to look out for and report include: suspicious packages, luggage, or mail abandoned in crowded places; someone suspiciously exiting a secured, non-public area near a train or bus depot, airport, tunnel, bridge, government building, or tourist attraction; someone suspiciously watching, mapping or photographing a landmark, airport, tunnel, bridge government building, business, or tourist attraction; and things such as strange odors, smoke, fire or explosions.

“Your new attitude should include an awareness of where you are and what’s going on around you. It’s like when you’re driving: you check the rearview mirror, watch for flashing brake lights up ahead, quickly rehearse the turns you’ll be making… all at once.”

- Stanford Strong

To recognize suspicious behavior, you must first be aware, and second know what behavior should be observed. Unlike the criminal that wants to attack you, terrorists usually are looking at different targets, those that create the biggest impact for their time and effort. To pull these acts off, it takes planning. You may be able to spot this planning if you keep your eyes and ears open for these signs or behaviors. Unfortunately, unless you have been in certain military or law enforcement fields, you probably have not been exposed to the kinds of behaviors to observe.
My father taught me of the importance to watch others when I was young. When he was in Vietnam, and they would catch someone pacing out distances, it was a sign that someone was up to no good. Spies would measure distances from fences to buildings, or from building to building, to provide to the opposing side. Warning signs today could be someone pacing a distance, sketching a picture of a place, video taping the lights and surveillance cameras rather than normal things a person would video. A person might also check out fences, peak periods, escape routes and other particulars of a potential target. Take note of things such as unattended packages, suspicious vehicle activity, and any individuals whose activities and actions do not seem normal in the sense of peaceful or harmlessly motivated.

Noticing just one of these is probably no big deal, but if someone is linked to several of these actions and appears to be suspicious and not normal, you may wish to notify authorities. When doing so, articulate what you saw as detailed as you can. Don’t get excited and paranoid, but if you notice something out of the ordinary, report it, and then go about your business. Don’t try and be a cop or soldier unless you are one. Just like your personal safety is your responsibility, our nation’s safety is our responsibility, and by being aware, we can help do our part.

**Become a Keen Observer**

Have you ever played the game where you close your eyes and try to mentally describe to a friend, your surrounding environment? Try it. It’s not as easy as it sounds, especially if you don’t know it is coming. If you know you are going to be tested, you will pay more attention. Most of the time, if we were stopped suddenly and asked to do this, we would not fare as well as we believe we would. Even when we think we are aware, we are probably observing a lot less than we believe.

To increase your awareness, you need to practice being a keen observer. You need to pay more attention to your surroundings. I’ve found it easy
to play mental games with myself to help observe more. You can also do this with a friend. As you are walking, pay attention to things and then mentally quiz yourself, or if with a friend, quiz each other on things you have passed.

Do this often, and you begin to notice more on a regular basis. I was lucky growing up in the country. I can remember driving with my father who would always spot various animals. He’d say, “See the deer,” and my sister and I would peer out the windows looking for what he spotted. With practice, and over time, I learned to spot these animals quickly too. This skill that enabled us to see the various wildlife in the fields and woods, has also enabled me to recognize potentially dangerous situations in other circumstances. Practicing looking for anything can aid you in becoming more aware.

**KIMS = Keep-In-Memory-System**

In sniper school, we used to play the KIMS game. KIMS stands for Keep-In-Memory-System. The instructors would select six to twelve ordinary items, such as a pen, fired cartridge, stapler, etc., and place them under a blanket. The students would then gather around the blanket, and it would be removed for one to two minutes. The students could not pick up the items but could move, so they could see easier or from a different view. No note taking was allowed.

![Any assortment of items can be used for the KIMS game.](image-url)
When time was up, each student had a test and had to write down at least five categories regarding each object. 1. What it appeared to be: (a stapler). 2. Its shape: (draw a sketch of the stapler). 3. Its dimensions: (6 inches long, 2 inches high, 1 ½ inches wide). 4. Its color: (gray). 5. Its condition: (New, worn, etc.). If you didn’t have all five areas for an item, you did not get credit for that item. To make the exercise more difficult, more items would be displayed with less viewing time, and then less time to recall and write down the five categories. To make it even more challenging, after viewing the items, the students would have to undergo some form of activity or physical training and then return to the classroom and remember the items viewed earlier. You can take this idea and create your own games to help your awareness levels. If you have kids, it’s a great game to teach them to pay closer attention to things and to improve memory and recall.

Pretend You are a Criminal

Another good exercise to help increase your awareness is to pretend you are a criminal. Earlier, I asked you to think about things that would make you increase your awareness, and then asked what kinds of places would require a heightened awareness level. Now I want you to think like a criminal for a bit.

As you go to an ATM, ask yourself where you would hide or what avenue of approach you would use to rob someone there. Sit in the mall for a while and watch people. Which people would be easier to rob?
Which people would be more difficult? Why? This last question can be hard to answer. You may find yourself saying, “I don’t know. That person just looks easier.” Analyze why you have those feelings and thoughts. The more you practice, the more aware you will become, and the better you will be at spotting things and understanding what you are observing.

Paying attention takes both physical and mental energy. You will get tired trying to observe every little thing. But with practice and repetition, like other exercise, it becomes easier and less tiring. The benefits of being a keen observer are well worth the time and practice. Besides noticing things that enrich your life, keen observation just may save it.

Be Aware of Yourself

So far, everything regarding awareness has been targeted toward paying attention to what is going on around you, and what to look for to help ensure your safety. It’s extremely important to pay attention and be aware of external things, but you must also be aware of yourself. You must be aware of your strengths, weaknesses, and limitations, as well as how you effect your environment.

First, take a good assessment of your strengths and weaknesses regarding self-defense and attacking back. Are you in great shape? Are you in terrible shape? Do you have physical limitations? Do you have martial art training? Have you trained with weapons before? What kind of lifestyle do you lead? Do you go out partying a lot, or do you stay home with the family?

Take a real close look at yourself: physically, mentally, emotionally, your habits and your lifestyle. I’m not going to tell you what life to lead, just know yourself, and what you do, so that you can prepare accordingly. If you are in better shape with no physical limitations, you
will have a better chance at being able to attack back. Additionally, you may not be a primary target for the criminal looking for an easy score.

If you look like someone who will fight back, the criminal may just go somewhere else. If you party a lot in places where violence occurs, know this and take extra precautions. Go with friends, limit your alcohol consumption, and stay extra alert. There are no absolutes, but knowing yourself will help you make decisions and be better prepared.

Second, be aware of how your actions effect a situation. Your actions can antagonize or diffuse; they can escalate or de-escalate; they can assist you in going home safely, or result in you having to attack back for your life - and possibly losing. Acting like a jerk or being obnoxious and aggressive can lead to violence.

Being polite and taking an assertive but non-aggressive position with obnoxious people can help de-escalate potentially violent situations. Being aware of how your actions are effecting the situation, is as important as being aware of what’s going on around you, and they go hand in hand.

A theoretical example I often use consists of the options available when going into a bar frequented by bikers. I can go in and get along just fine, or I can go in and start bad mouthing anyone who rides a Harley. Which is the most conducive to my health? Obviously, this is extreme, and one would need to be suicidal to go into a bar filled with bikers badmouthing Harleys. People do things just as obvious all the time that get themselves into trouble and hurt. These actions are obvious to everyone but them. They wake up in the hospital wondering what happened, and a friend says, “Man, you should have kept your mouth shut.”

Another example that is fairly common involves the type of person who gets loud or vicious with words when angered but doesn’t expect the confrontation to go physical. This type of person will yell, call people
names, and swear profusely when angered. It can be directed at anyone anytime the person is riled. Some people will cower away or avoid such behavior, while others may take it to the next level and become physical.

Many people have been surprised when what they figured would be a loud argument got them punched in the mouth. Many men have been punched or worse for comments or looks directed at someone’s girlfriend or wife. I could go on for several chapters about the stupidity I’ve seen, and the violence that erupted over such acts. Sometimes I was the one being stupid, and my actions and comments brought on violence that was definitely avoidable. Don’t go there. You need to be aware of what you are doing and how it is affecting those around you. Do not provoke a situation that could have ended without violence. Paying attention to this, while paying attention to your surroundings, will keep you out of most trouble.

Avoid Being Prey

Criminals are predators, and like the predator in the wild, they prefer attacking weaker targets. By selecting the weak, they have a greater chance of success. Criminals don’t want confrontation. They want an easy score. Confrontation raises risks for the predator as well, and it requires expending more energy, time, and resources. The predator and criminal want it over as quickly as possible, with him having the upper hand. (And they will often use surprise as an element to gain that upper hand.) He doesn’t want to risk the possibility of injury, or of being identified. Therefore, make yourself stand out as someone who will not be an easy victim, and you will increase the odds the criminal predator will pass you by.

“Learn from the experience of others and don’t let yourself be surprised.”

- Colonel Jeff Cooper

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Just being aware, as I’ve already discussed, reduces the likelihood of you being an easy victim. Weak prey do not pay attention to their surroundings and don’t realize the predator is there until too late. Your goal is not to stop the criminals. That is best left to the police. Your goal is to make it so you are not easy prey, so the criminal passes you by as a risk he doesn’t want to take.

You need to recognize if you are giving off signals that may draw predators. Studies among criminals have shown they pick certain people as victims. If you are not exhibiting those characteristics, chances are you will not be selected as a weak target. You have probably heard these before, but they are worth repeating. You don’t want to look like a victim, so you walk erect, look around (that awareness stuff again), walk with someone, don’t appear lost or confused, don’t be preoccupied, watch how you carry your valuables, stay in well-lit areas, walk purposefully, and so forth.

There are other things you can do to reduce the likelihood of becoming a target of a criminal. Some of these are lifestyle habits, and it is up to you how to live your life. Just be aware that what you do, how you behave, where you go, and how you dress can make a difference when being sized up by a predator. Expensive clothes and jewelry will be noticed and may invite trouble. Certain bars and areas of town are more frequented by criminals than others. Areas are different and frequented by different people at 2:00 A.M. than in the middle of the day.

I want you to think about these things. You probably have a good idea of what things invite attention, and what things don’t. Most people have instincts that will help them, and I recommend you listen to yours. Way too often I hear people saying, “I had a feeling I shouldn’t have done that,” or “I had a feeling about that guy,” or “I knew I shouldn’t have done that or gone there.” Failing to listen to your feelings and instincts can lead you to trouble. So remember, when those warning bells go off inside your head, LISTEN!
Developing alertness and awareness skills is the most important ingredient to your personal safety. Without developing these skills, you will be at a tremendous disadvantage when it comes to protecting yourself and ultimately defending yourself if you can’t avoid the threats and dangers that your awareness alerts you to. Being aware, or situational awareness, is the foundation of your fighter’s mindset. No warrior can afford not to be aware of his or her surroundings and how he or she is interacting with and effecting those surroundings. So take care, be aware, and stay safe!

“Be aware. Be alert. Assess.”

- Loren W. Christensen and Lisa Place

Lisa is not only aware of the threat Loren imposes, she is alert to the improvised weapon in her hand, and assesses it her best defense.

(Photo courtesy of Loren W. Christensen & Lisa Place)
Awareness is only part of the Fighter’s Mindset. Continue your training by learning how to: Be Decisive; Be Courageous; Be Willing; Be Vicious; Be Determined and more!

“The Fundamental principle of surviving violence is mental. Not physical, not gadgetry, but mental preparation, mind-setting.

- Stanford Strong

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