Self-Defense For Survival, Your Mindset...

Categories: Self Defense

(This is a guest post by Craig Caudill)

We often talk about wilderness survival in our articles, as wilderness and survival are two words that have become closely related to each other. Beyond the Law of Threes and the basic skills necessary to achieve it, another forgotten essential skill for survival in whatever kind of crisis is the ability to defend yourself from physical assault, or at least knowledge of the very basics of it.

Mass crisis events such as a hurricane or earthquake, tend to bring out the best and worst in people, and survival in such an event doesn't only involve learning the skills, but also developing the “survivalist mentality”. Surviving in the wilderness or in a crisis event does not only mean being able to achieve the basics such as warmth, water, and food, but also being able to protect yourself, your loved ones, and the limited resources you have from the more desperate and less cooperative people. I will submit to you that self defense is an essential skill that you must know and be capable of.

Unlike what you watch in the movies, self defense doesn't start with throwing flying kicks, and left and right hooks. In fact, that act is supposed to be the last resort when you have exhausted all means to avoid conflict. If you have ever attended formal martial arts training, you will know what I mean.

The first step towards self defense would be an avoidance strategy. Simply put, avoiding locations and situations where you might be engaged in physical conflict is the best and primary strategy to adapt. “Keep out of trouble”, is the phrase to use here. Avoiding situations where you might have to engage in physical conflict, is the best way to avoid potential injury to you and your group. In a survival scenario or crisis event, an injury is one thing that we do not want to sustain.
Here is some advice that you can use to avoid conflict situations:

- Prepare with a small group of people in your community that will work together and render assistance, without having to overly rely on institutional assistance groups such as the police, National Guard, Red Cross, or FEMA.
- Learn the art of talking to people. Diplomacy is the better choice, rather than outright confrontation. If you can master the art of subtlety when influencing the people around, you are then much better off.
- If you need to move from place to place, it is better to move at night or early in the morning, when you have the benefit of cover of darkness.
- Remember to stay quiet. Also, never bring attention to yourself and to your group.

Now if despite your best efforts, you are forced into a situation that you have to engage in physical conflict, then here are some basic tips:

- Train now! Learning the art of self defense takes time, and while things are still looking good, now is the time to train for it. Being prepared beats anything you think of during a potential conflict situation.
- Whatever happens, never give up! A do or die mindset is crucial during physical conflict and an aggressive group that sees you will think twice about pushing the issue further. Remember, in any survival or crisis situation, a “never give up” attitude will be a key factor in you and your group surviving. No matter how difficult the situation becomes, never think of “throwing in the towel”.
- Prepare and know how to intimidate during a physical conflict. If someone is attempting to assault you and diplomacy has been exhausted, an overwhelming amount of violence should be your response to the assault. Many of these assaults will stop when the perpetrator sees his/her intended victim will not give up easily.
- Engaging in martial arts training is great, assuming the martial arts you are learning teach you actual hand to hand combat scenarios and not a sporting type of engagement. Remember, in a crisis situation, there will be no referees or umpires to ensure that the fight is fair.

Now before I end this article, remember that these are only tips on how to get started and how to cultivate a mindset of self defense, during a crisis or survival scenario. I would also add that maintaining a high level of physical fitness is also crucial in this scenario. I hope this article gave you the proper advice and guidance to start off your actual training.

Craig Caudill helps people to prepare for emergencies even with an emergency disaster kit and other tools. He is a regular contributor to Dan’s Depot, and teaches at his own Nature Reliance School.