

Surviving a Terrorist Attack

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The safety topics of today are far different than they were a generation ago. What's going on in the world is a lot darker and has a more terrifying reach than ever before.

Unlike something that you could know was coming, such as one country's military attacking another, you never know when a terrorist attack is going to occur.

This is how people who plot a terrorist attack like it. Because people don't really suspect it could happen to them, terrorists are able to create chaos. They're able to take down dozens, hundreds or even thousands of victims with an act or several acts of violence.

The Threat of Terrorism in Your Backyard Is Real

It's so easy to think of terrorism as being an isolated event that shocks an entire nation that always happens somewhere else. But what happened on 9/11 proved that terrorism is not "out there."

It's here.

Thanks to easy access to borders, air travel and people willing to sneak people into all areas of the world, terrorism is no longer contained in any one single country.

Terrorists live where you live. They work, they sleep, they eat and you can't tell just by looking at someone if they're part of a plot to bring a terroristic act to pass. Right now, there are plenty of sleeper cells all around you.

They could be in your neighborhood. They could be part of the crew where you work. Your children might go to school right by an organized

group of terrorists. A sleeper cell is made up of people who are basically agents of harm.

These people are taught to immerse themselves into the way of life of various areas. They'll know the culture and how to speak the lingo. They'll know how to be friendly enough and taught to blend in so that they don't stand out.

Look at the Boston Bombers – they were college kids whose own friends couldn't believe they had blown up and killed innocent adults and children. Some even covered for them out of loyalty!

But while they might fit easily into your country and even into your neighborhood, these are highly trained and lethal individuals. Many of them will never even launch a weapon of attack.

However, what they do is make it possible for an attack to actually happen. They're told what to do and if they are part of the actual terrorist act, they're told when to act.

They follow the lead of the person in charge of handling them or the upper tier of the organization that they're with. These sleeper cell groups can lie dormant for years without anyone knowing what they're up to.

They also work independently of each other. This way, if one sleeper cell is caught before they can carry out their acts, the other sleeper cells can continue on with business as usual.

Besides sleeper cells, you want to be aware of lone wolf terrorists. This is one individual who isn't usually connected to an organized terrorist unit. They act on their own.

But the intent is the same - to kill people or destroy things in the name of a cause they believe in. The lone wolf attacks happen all over the world. In Fort Hood, one lone wolf shot thirteen people at the military base.

In Norway, lone wolves bombed government buildings and murdered children in a camp in some attacks that took the country by surprise. By the time it was over, 77 people lost their lives.

More recently, France experienced a terrorist attack at the office where the Charlie Hebdo satirical magazine was created. In Kenya, 36 miners died from a terrorist attack. In Australia, 17 people were held hostage and 2 people died at a café there.

These acts of violence, terroristic in nature, are becoming more of a mainstream happening than isolated incidents. You need to be prepared in case you ever face a terrorist attack.

How to Survive a Hostage Situation

Though being taken hostage is an extremely stressful situation, the first thing that you have to do is stay calm. If you panic, this will only add to the chaos and could very well make you a target.

You have to realize that as upset and stressed as you are, the person who just took you hostage is also stressed and more than likely upset over whatever he's trying to prove with his actions.

Stressed people can easily swing to the side of aggressive behavior on the part of both hostages and the one committing the act. You don't want to behave in such a way that you inflame the situation.

You have to act calm and speak calmly. You need to keep your emotions under control. The time to process what you're feeling is after the threat is over. Don't give in to panic while it's going on.

Forget what you've seen on television shows about trying to get the terrorist to see you as a person. You don't matter to him. You're simply a means to an end. Your goal is to survive and that's it.

If your captor has certain religious beliefs, you don't want to antagonize that. Don't attempt to engage him in a conversation. Instead, you should only answer a question if he asks you something.

Never ask a question and never try to act like you understand what he's going through. If you're aware that there's a hostage in the building or the area where you are, you may be able to avoid becoming one of the hostages.

If you've seen the person, but he hasn't seen you, you may be able to hide. If you are able to hide, you'll want to remain in your hiding place until the situation ends. If you are hiding, you don't want to suddenly spring out at the person.

This could startle him and cause him to start shooting. Every move that you make must either not be seen or can't be viewed as a threat by the terrorist. If you can get away from the area and your chance of escaping safely is a good one, then you should attempt to escape.

But you only want to do this if you can do it in a quiet manner. You can't outrun a bullet. If you can't get away from the person, pay attention to everything that's going on.

The smallest detail can mean the difference between surviving and not surviving. Make a note of all of the escape areas such as where the doors and windows are located.

Pay attention to the kind of firepower the terrorist has and how many terrorists are in the area. The more people involved in the terroristic act, the lower your chances of survival if you do anything that further agitates them.

Only attempt to take down a terrorist if you have no other option. If he begins shooting at other hostages or at your or your loved ones, your odds of survival have already gone down.

You would want to act immediately. But if you're close enough to a terrorist and you have the strength and training to know how to take someone down and disarm him, do it.

This is a step you want to take only if you know you're about to be killed because going after a terrorist and failing will cause him to react. If you have your children with you, do what you're told in order to attempt to ensure their safety.

That was the case with the situation in France. The woman who came to the door did what she was told in order to save her child. If you're in a room with a terrorist, try to get your children behind or underneath a large item such as a table or desk.

If you can, create a barricade to keep them behind it. Speak calmly to them and instruct them that they have to be quiet and not come out unless you tell them to, or they're ordered out.

After the situation ends, you can expect to experience a rush of emotion. You might feel anxiety, fear and have trouble sleeping. Though these are normal reactions to a crisis, sometimes the emotional impact can linger. Some people find comfort in seeking a counselor to help them heal.

What to Do in the Event of a Dirty Bomb or Nuclear Situation

A dirty bomb is a bomb that contains the force to blast it - such as dynamite. Also inside the bomb are radioactive properties. The force of the blast can maim or kill people and can blow holes in buildings, depending on the amount of the force.

When a dirty bomb is detonated, you and your loved ones will be at risk of exposure to the radioactive material from the bomb. When this type of bomb goes off, you may not realize that it's a dirty bomb because you might not know it contains radioactive material.

If a bomb goes off near you or your family members, you should immediately get a gas mask if you have one and get them on. If you don't have access to a mask at the time, you need to create one with a shirt or whatever material you have so that you don't inhale the radioactive particles.

If you're outside where the bomb goes off, you need to get away from the area and into a safe place. Hide yourself and your family in a building or home that's secure.

As soon as possible, you'll need to get out of the clothes that you wore near the bomb blast - because the clothes could be contaminated. As soon as it's safe, take a shower to make sure that you get rid of bomb residue.

If you happen to be inside a building or home and a dirty bomb goes off outside, don't leave your structure if it wasn't seriously damaged in the blast. You'll want to make sure that outside residue doesn't get in with you, so you'll need to seal off any possible openings such as windows or doors.

If you happen to be in a vehicle and a dirty bomb goes off, immediately close all air vents and windows. Don't leave your car until you know it's safe or you're told by authorities that it's okay.

In the event of a nuclear bomb, where you live may determine if you're at a higher risk. If you live near a port city, chemical plants or a state capital, then you're at a higher risk.

You're also at a higher risk if you live near a military base or near a financial hub area. If a nuclear bomb goes off, you need to get out of the vicinity of damage. A nuclear bomb causes mass destruction and death - both when it's dropped and in the aftermath.

You'll be at risk from the fallout of a nuclear bomb the closer you are to the area where it hit. This is when having a bug out plan and a bug out bag prepared can make a difference in your survival and long term health.

Take shelter immediately in buildings, homes or fallout shelters that are thick and provide a good barrier between you and the particles from the bomb. You must remain sheltered until the radiation threat is over.

This time frame can be anywhere from 14 to 21 days. This is why it's a good idea to have a supply of food and other necessities store away somewhere safe from all threats.

How to Fight Back in a Life or Death Situation

Surviving a life or death situation starts in your mind. You have to be prepared to do whatever it takes to stay alive. Make sure that you're prepared for an attack on a vulnerable part of your body.

Attackers like to punch victims in the face or slam their heads against a solid object because this can momentarily stun the victim and give the attacker the upper hand.

So be prepared to protect your face. Don't allow the attacker to take you to the ground. Your chances of getting pinned down and becoming helpless increase when you're in a prone position.

Remember to make some noise. Be as loud as you can be. Sometimes shouting, "Back off" will deter a would-be assailant because he doesn't want to draw attention to himself.

If he does attack, you need to fight back. Avoid the automatic assumption that you need to move closer to the attacker. Maintain your distance and aim a blow at the sensitive parts of the body.

This would be the eyes, mouth, nose, groin area and the knees. Poke your attacker's eyes with your extended fingers or with hard jabs of your knuckles. Use your palm to strike below an assailant's nose and do it with hard, furious force.

If you strike an assailant on the side of the neck, you can hit the carotid artery and that can cause your assailant to become shocked and give you enough time to take him down.

You can kick your assailant on the knee, but aim for a side because it causes more damage and can throw your assailant off. A hard kick to the groin will also disable the attacker if it's a man.

Remember that your elbows can strike hard blows. If you're grabbed from behind, use your elbow like you would throw a punch. You can also use your head as a weapon by slamming your head into someone's nose.

If the attacker is a woman, you would still treat her as if it were a man attacking you. In a life or death situation, you can't afford to make concessions. Remember that any nearby object or object that you have can be used as a weapon in your defense.

You can use high-heeled shoes. These are sharp enough to actually cut through skin if enough force is applied. You can use a rock or a board or any object that would pack a punch.

How to disarm an assailant will depend on several different things such as whether the assailant is in front or behind you and what kind of weapon he has. If someone has a knife, the weapon is more effective up close, so you wouldn't want to close that distance unless he lunged at you.

Keep your hands open, prepared to grab the assailant's arm and wrist. Use a kick to the stomach or groin before making your move to grab the arm holding the knife.

Twist the arm behind the assailant's back and apply pressure until he drops the weapon. If the person has a gun, instead of maintaining distance like you would with a knife attack, you would have to move in.

You need to cause a distraction. A gunman will usually follow the movement of a distraction by pointing his gun at it. That means that it's not pointed at you for a split second.

That's your chance. Aim for getting your hand on the barrel of the gun, keeping your hand free of the opening. With your other hand, punch the assailant in the nose or strike a forceful blow to the neck.

In any situation, if you can get away without having to disarm the attacker, then do that. If the attack situation is one where you're not face

to face with the person, but they're trying to get in, then barricade yourself in and call for help.

If you're in a public place or home and someone comes in shooting, your best bet is to pretend that you were hit and play dead. Remember that any nearby object can be used as a weapon in your defense.

Being Aware Prevents a Lot of Risk

There's no doubt that we live in a world where danger is everywhere. But a lot of it can be avoided just by being aware. Pay attention to anyone who appears to take too much interest in a building or area.

These might be people who keep returning to the same place. They might be recording things and acting like tourists, but something just doesn't add up. Trust your instincts.

If someone makes a lot of threats, but blows it off as a joke, this could be an area of concern. If you work at a building that could be a potential targeted place, pay attention to anyone who is asking too many security type questions.

If you see or know of others who are buying objects associated with terrorism, tell the authorities. These can be things like guns and ammunition, dynamite, fireworks and more.

Pay attention to unfamiliar people in your work or home area. If someone is acting suspicious, don't give them the benefit of the doubt. If you see someone do something that looks strange, tell the police.

This might be behavior such as leaving behind a backpack or a box. Watch out for people who aren't dressed appropriately, such as people who have too many layers of clothing for the weather. Anyone who hangs around at or tries to sneak into a secure area should be turned in to the police.

When it comes to surviving a terrorist attack, always be vigilant when in public. If you have the ability to gain a concealed handgun license, you

might want to do that to help protect yourself in the event of a surprise attack.



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