

more reason to have the Center of Mass safe securely fastened to the suitcase!

Third, under TSA regulations your ammunition can ride inside the same luggage as your firearm. According to TSA, "You must securely pack any ammunition in fiber (such as cardboard), wood or metal boxes or other packaging that is specifically designed to carry small amounts of ammunition." I leave the ammunition in its factory container.

Now for the kicker: the airline I happen to fly most frequently, Air Tran, is the only airline I am aware of that does not follow TSA regulations as far as ammunition is concerned. Believe me, I have shown them TSA regulations in print and their policy goes a step further. They require that all ammunition travel in a second bag altogether. I have simply accepted the fact that they will not allow the ammo in the same bag, and I now keep a second box of ammo at my destination. If I happen not to be flying to that particular location, I carry a second checked bag—pain in the tail, but it's the rules.

Now to the ticket counter. After you arrive at the airline ticket counter, simply tell the agent how many bags you have to check and that you are traveling with a firearm in this particular bag. At this point, I bend down and unlock the bag showing the agent the hard-sided container (which I have placed on top of my belongings) and unlock it in their presence. You will then be asked to sign the orange declaration tag that the gun is unloaded, and you will then place it inside the luggage. The bag itself will then be re-locked. Depending on the airport and or the airline, you will then either be escorted, or told where to take the bag for its TSA screening. After the bag is screened, you will then be on your way.

This entire process only takes the extra time it takes to open the bag and show the firearm, sign the form, and walk it to TSA for screening. I fly out of the busiest airport in the world (Atlanta) and the process is only about an extra ten minutes. I have never had any problems. And if you follow those rules, neither will you!

Now for my story: I had a meeting in Sarasota, Florida and another meeting the next day in Jacksonville, Florida. I flew from Atlanta to Sarasota, rented a car, drove to Jacksonville and returned to Atlanta the following day via the JAX airport. I flew with two firearms in one

checked bag and ammo in the second (Air Tran.) Upon my return home, I emptied the suitcase and went about my business for the next six days until I was packing for a subsequent trip to Tampa the following week. This time I was driving. I reached for my trusty travel suitcase and when I picked it up it was upside down. That's when I heard the *tink, tink, tink*. Upon placing the case right side up, it just fell out; a 9mm round of Winchester RA9T. Just like that. Dropped right onto the floor. Holy Shit! I had just been through the Atlanta and Jacksonville airports and used that particular bag as a carry on. Where in the hell did that live round come from? I have no idea. In fact, I have no idea how many times I may have carried that bag with that round in it. Upon further examination, I found that it had been tucked up against the side of the bag and the plastic flap that holds the retractable carry arms supports inside the bag. Now I know good and well that I didn't open that suitcase and intentionally place a round in it so it only stands to reason that it had traveled with me for quite some time. I could have been arrested, one of those folks you read about in your local paper or see on the local evening news and think, "What an idiot". Fortunately I wasn't. I am very thorough when I pack to travel, as I carry a gun in my computer bag on occasion and I turn that thing upside down before I fly. I have absolutely no idea how that round ended up in that bag or just how long it may have been there.

I can laugh about it now but what really bothers me is: how did it go unnoticed by security screening at the busiest airport in the world, and in Jacksonville as well? Lord knows how many other airports? Although I'm counting my lucky stars, it makes me wonder what else gets through.

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THIN
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SEXY



It Doesn't Have to Make Sense: IT'S JUST THE LAW

COLUMN BY: K. L. JAMISON

"SIGNS"

*Sign, sign, everywhere a sign
Blocking out the scenery, breaking my mind
Do this! Don't do that! Can't you read the sign?*

"Signs" —Five Man Electrical Band



Parking lots where the customer **takes** his keys with him **are usually not** responsible for security. Parking lots where the customer **leaves** his keys **usually are** responsible for security. The liability is the same when the store takes away the customer's means of security.

Modern concealed carry laws have contained a provision which allows paranoid persons to ban concealed carry on their premises. The procedure is to post a sign in the tradition of "No Irish Need Apply", "Whites Only" or "TWAK".¹ Some statutes specify a terminology, size, placement or even color.² The specifics of these signs have been subject of some dispute.

Minnesota's original concealed carry law specified the language to be used on signs. This prompted a lawsuit by certain religious groups which claimed the required language violated their religious beliefs. These "religious beliefs", it was claimed, demanded signs reading "Peacemakers Only". While the Cowboy Action Shooters could have lived with this language, that was not the point. One gathers that if the statute had demanded signs reading "Peacemakers Only" the plaintiffs would have found that objectionable as well. The court struck down the entire law, which was promptly re-enacted with better sign requirements.

Some states have avoided litigation over signs by assigning their design to state agencies. This avoids risking the statute itself to challenge.

The Missouri statute only requires that the sign be posted in a prominent location, be eleven by fourteen inches with letters an inch high. It does not specify what the letters must say, only that they gather together in some organized fashion to prohibit weapons. Some locations had opted to use the silhouette of a handgun with a slash mark through it. This raises the question of whether this silhouette constitutes letters an inch high. There is no answer. The question may come up as violation of posted areas is an infraction which involves fines and the potential loss of the License To Carry.³ It might also be charged as trespass which triggers misdemeanor penalties.⁴

The casual observer will find numerous signs which do not comply with state statutes. The question then becomes how to respond to these non-conforming signs. When Missouri passed its law, the

activists who had spent thirteen years fighting for concealed carry reform considered this question. The unanimous decision was to urge License to Carry (LTC) holders to obey non-conforming signs. The theory was that in every state where such a law was passed there was a period of "Chicken Little" hysteria that the sky was falling and the signs went up. In time, business owners found that the sky was not falling, and the signs came down. The question then became how to help them realize that the sky was not falling. Confrontation was clearly not the best route. When faced with confrontation people tend to stop listening. Shortly after Missouri's law passed, a gentleman in Columbia, Missouri had to do business at a location with a "no weapons" sign. Being a proud new LTC holder he told them exactly what he thought of their sign; and he was not a silver-tongued devil. The clerks "felt afraid". The police were called and the gentleman was arrested. By the time the police caught up with him he was carrying a weapon, a knife. The county judge ruled that Missouri's law did not cover concealed knives.⁵ The sign remained.

There have been some claims that insurance companies are insisting on these signs. There are other indications that the landlords of malls require them of tenants. This is a shortsighted approach. Since the signs are obviously not effective against criminals and psychopaths, they must be aimed at lawful LTC holders. This assumes 1) that the LTC holder is likely to suddenly turn homicidal, or 2) the LTC holder is likely to be careless and accidentally shoot another patron. The first excuse is absurd. Even if possible it is not likely that a sign would deter the suddenly homicidal. The second excuse is unlikely. While accidents happen, they are no more likely to happen after an LTC law is passed than before.⁶

Continued on page 28



An example of an illegal sign (wrong size). This sign appears on the Liberty Missouri Driver's License Bureau, which has responsibility for issuing the License To Carry.

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The "No Guns, No Money" card politely informs the business that his sign drives away business.

These excuses are the product of prejudice rather than research. Regardless, these superstitions are very real to the persons holding them. They must be dealt with as if they were real. Telling the manager that one needs a gun for the occasional gunfight does not engage the manager on a subject he wants to think is possible, or wants to think about at all. What has proved successful is the "No Guns, No Money" card. The size of a driver's license, the card tells the manager that gun owners are perplexed that he does not want to do business with people who have undergone background checks and safety training, but we will respect their wishes and do business with their competition.⁷ A loss of business tends to get the owner's attention.

The greater question is what business owners get for their signs. I am reminded of TV coverage on what the police called an "active shooter" (they mean killer) at a Kansas City, Kansas business. As the somber reporter did his stand up in front of the building, the camera panned to a sign reading "No Guns Allowed". Clearly, suicidal, homicidal, criminal psychopaths either do not read signs or disregard what they read.⁸ For all the effort in putting up these signs, the business owner gets financial responsibility for his customer's safety.

The traditional rule has been that business owners are not responsible for the safety of customers. Under this rule, criminal activity is an intervening and unexpected cause of any injury on the premises. Business owners are allowed to carry on in the blissful superstition that everyone will obey the law. As in any legal rule, there are exceptions, and in recent years, the exceptions have grown larger. The business owner can become responsible for his customer's safety if the criminal activity is foreseeable: "An intervening criminal act will not necessarily shield the landowner from liability where a jury question arises whether the landowner breached his

duty to maintain safe premises."⁹ If the business owner denies a customer the means of self-defense, the owner must provide protection from the time the customer leaves his gun in his car, to the time that he returns to it. The business owner may avoid liability if the customer retains his weapon. The owner's (the defendant's) "...duty may also depend upon the defendant's ability, or lack thereof, to provide effective protection. The capacity of the victim of such a criminal attack to protect himself may also affect the question of the defendant's liability, since his duty is... proportionately less if the victim was armed or otherwise prepared to repulse an attack."¹⁰

Denying customers the means of self-defense is akin to car lots which require customers to surrender their keys to the attendant. When the car is stolen or property stolen from the car, such lots are almost always found liable for the loss; regardless of what waivers, limitations, excuses or incantations are printed on the back of the ticket.¹¹ Car lots which allow customers to park and take the car's security with them are almost always not found liable.¹² Giving dominion over one's property to another party is called a bailment.¹³ Rights are not usually thought of as bailed.¹⁴ However, the requirement of leaving the right of self-defense at



A CCW friendly sign produced by CCWorks, LLC in Wichita KS.



The late Gary Davis was a 6 foot 5 inch sign for our rights.

the store entrance is a comparatively new concept. Under premises liability rules or bailment concepts the business owner who forces LTC holders to disarm becomes responsible for their safety.

*So I got me a pen and paper
And I made up my own little sign
"Signs" —Five Man Electrical Band*

I have often been in a line where someone indicates my "Guns Save Lives" button and whispers "I like your button." Why they think they have to whisper is a matter of some concern. If we will fly our colors people will become accustomed to seeing us, and fear us less. This has the disadvantage of allowing hoplophobes to identify us and project their paranoid fantasies onto us.¹⁵ It is possible that criminals will shoot first. However, the signs will come down.

Kevin L. Jamison is an attorney in the Kansas City, Missouri area concentrating in the area of weapons and self-defense. Please send questions to Kevin L. Jamison, 2614 NE 56th Ter, Gladstone, Missouri, 64119-2311, KLJamisonLaw@earthlink.net. Individual answers are not usually possible, but may be addressed in future columns.

This information is for legal information purposes and does not constitute legal advice. For specific questions, you should consult a qualified attorney.

1 "Trade With A Klansman". Really, if the Klan did not kill people their terminology would have them laughed out of existence.

2 See www.Handgunlaw.us.

3 An infraction is specifically not a crime in Missouri; it is a civil penalty begun by a citation from a police officer and ending in court.

4 Some prosecutors are salivating to put us in jail on any grounds.

5 This ruling is a gross misinterpretation of Missouri's law which clearly exempts LTC holders from our concealed **weapons** law. An appeal was filed but a plea was negotiated before the gentleman rolled the dice on our rights.

6 *Lott More Guns, Less Crime 2d ed.* The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2000 at 110-112.

7 Download the template at www.learnntocarry.com.

8 There really should be a term for persons who want to die while taking a number of innocent parties with them, perhaps "omnicidal".

9 62 Am Jur 2d Premises Liability § 46.

10 62 Am Jur supra.

11 *Knight v. H & H Chevrolet*, 337 N.W.2d 742 (Neb 1983) at 745.

12 *Equity Mutual Insurance Co v. Affiliated Parking Inc*, 448 S.W.2d 909 (St. Louis Ct App. 1969) at 914. Some effect must be credited to good lawyering.

13 Not like a bail bond which will be discussed some other time.

14 Unless we get back to bail bonds.

15 Hoplophobes are people with an unnatural fear of weapons and weapon owners.

TRAIN WITH THE EXPERTS AT I.T.T.S



Students engage the knife attack simulator from various distances. A real eye-opener if you have not done this before!



Uncle Scotty demonstrates proper body position when using a vehicle for cover.

Legally carrying a concealed firearm has become the standard for the majority of our nation's fifty states. Thousands of everyday citizens are now exercising their right to carry, and have the ability to protect themselves and their families. Exercising this right comes with great responsibility, and a sense of duty to become more skilled at arms. Initial training courses offered for concealed carry are an excellent introduction, often covering firearm safety, gun handling and manipulation, as well as use of force, and related firearms laws. However, it is up to the individual permit holder to develop and maintain their current skill set, and seek out quality training to learn and develop new skills.

While marksmanship can be improved through range practice, I am a firm believer in training with experienced instructors. If you have been shooting for years, or have developed a solid foundation from your basic firearms training, I highly recommend you consider an intermediate or advanced training course. Courses offered by nationally recognized schools like Gunsite and Thunder Ranch offer excellent training; however, they tend to be more expensive

and somewhat inconvenient. There are a few less publicized training facilities that offer very high quality training. One such facility that has been gaining popularity in Southern California is International Tactical Training Seminars. I.T.T.S. offers training at their main range facility in the Angeles National Forest, as well as various locations across the United States and Europe.

I have had the opportunity to train with I.T.T.S. on four separate occasions. These courses were either two-day,

or three-day weekend classes. My initiation to I.T.T.S. was a three-day intermediate class several years ago. This was an excellent class that I will always remember. I have since attended three advanced classes, most recently the "Problem Solver" that includes all of the elements, drills, and evolutions from the prior courses I have attended. The instruction at I.T.T.S. is top notch, and I continue to train with I.T.T.S. several times each year.

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The charging knife attack simulator is used to engage targets from inside or immediately after exiting a vehicle. Safety Officers were assigned to monitor each shooter during these live-fire drills.

The first thing you will notice when training with I.T.T.S. is that Lead Instructor Scott Reitz, or "Uncle Scotty" has a professional and confident demeanor that reflects his many years of hands-on experience with the LAPD Metro Division and SWAT. Scotty introduces himself and conducts an initial safety briefing that really sends home the message that you must be "switched-on" whenever you are handling a firearm. Safety is the priority in training. No exceptions. Further stating "Safety is not a stand-alone issue; safety is an integral part of tactics."

The issue with experienced shooters today is not *ignorance*, they know the rules. The problem, if left unchecked, becomes *ego*, *carelessness*, and *complacency*. These three issues have no business in any training environment, much less on the street. Your ability to safely operate and manipulate your firearm must be hardwired from the repetition of basic fundamental drills. Complete situational awareness, muzzle discipline at all times, finger straight, off the trigger, alongside the frame until the sights are aligned on the target. Manage your ammunition. Stay "switched-on" when handling any firearm.

What adds another unique dimension to training with "Uncle Scotty" is his straightforward and friendly personality that I find genuinely helpful and very approachable. I must emphasize how important it is to feel confident and comfortable with the people that you train with. Scotty is always open to questions and comments, and promotes an open forum for discussing tactics and

methodologies. However, he is quick to point out that the training offered by I.T.T.S. is not based on speculative theories or supposition, but on what has "actually worked in real gunfights." Having testified in numerous Officer Involved Shootings, and as an expert witness on appropriate use of force, Scotty's material comes from real-life gunfights and current court cases.

I recently attended an advanced I.T.T.S. course called the "Problem Solver". This was more of a "Skills Test" using everything learned from prior classes to run through complex shooting drills using both live-fire and force-on-force drills with Airsoft guns. These drills included engaging multiple targets, shooting on the move, shooting moving targets, night shooting, shooting at, from, and around vehicles. Scotty says, "The greater the complexity of the problem, the more time and effort it will take to solve." The emphasis is on keeping your head, thinking through the problem, and avoiding a panic response.

My favorite feature of this training course was that these drills were given to us with minimal direction, other than "solve the problem". After running through the drill cold, you find out that the drills were derived from actual street shootings. Scotty then provides the actual shooting data and explains the dynamics and outcome of the actual gunfight to the class. It's like getting a history lesson along with your hands-on training. It really teaches you to think, move, and shoot.

Scotty reiterates that gunfighting is 95% mental and 5% mechanical. The Problem Solver course is designed to combine all of the elements and fundamentals of shooting, with the added elements of target and shooter movement under stress. Beginning and intermediate courses at I.T.T.S. always stress the mechanics of shooting, while advanced courses like the Problem Solver allow you to revert to pure mechanics with your shooting skills and focus your attention on solving the problem.

Scotty conducts several drills that are performed on moving targets (both lateral movers and the charging "knife attack" simulator). I never get tired of either of these drills, partly because I cannot duplicate the true dynamics of these moving targets on local ranges, and partly because they are challenging. Another plus is that Scotty is very good at moving the class through progressively more complex drills at a steady pace. By switching between paper, steel, movers, and force-on-force drills, Scotty is able to keep your attention and focus throughout the entire class.

Seasoned instructor and LAPD veteran, Bill Casey, assisted Scotty with this Problem Solver course. Bill ran all of the force-on-force drills, which again emphasized safety. Each participant unloaded their primary and backup firearms, and removed their knives. Everyone went through a cursory weapon search from fellow students prior to entering the force-on-force area. One hot issue with Scotty is preventing injuries

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in training. Scotty shared several stories of incidents where students or instructors have shot, and killed or seriously injured other students in training exercises. The main issue regarding these firearm related accidents is that they are preventable! By simply implementing the appropriate safety protocols, and following them to the letter—and not getting complacent or careless—safety truly does become an integral part of your training and tactics.

Force-on-force training is something everyone needs to experience first-hand. You can't get it out of a book or from watching a DVD. It's a very enlightening and humbling experience, especially if you have spent the majority of your time on a square range, shooting at stationary targets. It really drives home the lessons that smooth is fast; you must gain quick access to your firearm while moving; use cover efficiently if available.

The distance = time theories put forth by Dennis Tueller, and the Tueller Drill (21 foot rule) are better understood when you have actually experienced them first hand. This training also reminds us that no matter how fast your draw is, due to the surprise and proximity of the threat, you just may not have time to access

our weapon. Your initial reactive response may be a physical defensive action, such as redirecting a knife or gun attack, prior to creating distance and accessing your own firearm.

I.T.T.S. "Problem Solver"

Day One:

We started out with some basic cold drills. One drill I really like is the "Metro Drill" that utilizes two shooters facing down range. One is the initiator, the other is the defender. The initiator stands with his arms straight out, while the defender has his arms relaxed by his side. After counting to 10, the initiator can take any amount of time to start the drill by drawing his firearm and firing one accurate head shot. The defender must react to this peripheral movement, draw and fire two center-mass hits. Instead of reacting to an audible prompt such as a whistle or buzzer, the defender is learning to react to the visual queue of hands moving toward a weapon.

From the cold drills we moved to the lateral mover, then retention drills on the square range, and then to the retention problem solver evolution that really got

the blood pumping. We switched up to force-on-force drills that had us exiting a vehicle and engaging an armed moving subject. Then it was on to the charging knife attack simulator, where two rapidly moving targets advance toward the shooter at a high rate of speed. This drill was later conducted with shooters exiting a vehicle, with the vehicle facing toward, away from, and alongside the moving target system. Students must react to the initial movement of the target, safely exit the vehicle and engage the targets. These drills require a high degree of focus, and were always conducted in a safe and efficient manner.

Day Two:

While working with the LAPD, Scott Reitz experienced five Officer Involved Shootings—four of those shootings occurred at night or low light, with the use of flashlights. Night shooting is a reality of combat, and remains a common element in most I.T.T.S. course offerings. The Problem Solver included the use of two "shootable" vehicles that gives the students a real-world experience of personal observation of the effects of

Goody Guns

BY: WWW.JPFO.ORG



Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership (JPFO) has created a new program to counteract the unceasingly lies and dangerous propaganda of the victim disarmament (aka "gun control") lobby—lies and propaganda mostly aimed at a captive audience of children in the public school system, and spread like a disease by the mass media—while providing hours of wholesome family fun.

The program, called "Goody Guns," consists of a special cookie cutter in the shape of a semi-automatic pistol or a revolver. With the supervision and help of the adults in their lives, boys and girls can turn their own kitchens into "Arsenals of Liberty" by making gun-shaped cookies to keep and share, while learning firearms safety lessons the public schools would never teach them, and which the mass media don't want to see taught.

Each Goody Gun comes with 2 JPFO "Gran'pa Jack" booklets, educational comics aimed at everyone aged eight or older. These booklets destroy every major argument for "gun control" while educating kids so they will know how to support firearms ownership. You'll also get 2 mini toothpick flags to decorate your Goody Gun creations, plus two recipes to start you off.

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Force-on-force included shooting moving suspects while avoiding incoming rounds using Airsoft guns.



Students learn the dynamics of shooting a laterally moving target. These drills were also performed at night, using night sights and various flashlight techniques.



Scott Reitz, and the author, William Desy.

bullets on vehicles. Shooting through a vehicle's windshield, a car door, or other part of a vehicle that you once thought would provide good cover is quite educational.

After running through several square range drills, we began shooting at the vehicles. For this drill, students were positioned inside a second vehicle, head down, eyes closed. Multiple steel targets were then placed in and around the target vehicles. A loud impact on the rear of the vehicle, along with the command "GO, GO, GO" had students quickly exiting their vehicle and engaging multiple fall-down steel targets that first had to be located and identified with flashlights. These drills were repeated with vehicles facing forward and away. Seeing my 230 grain 45 ACP rounds punch big holes through a car door, and still have the energy to knock down a steel target inspired me with added confidence in this round.

A sign of a very seasoned Instructor is the fact that Scotty takes time to explain "why" we do something a particular way. Instead of just stating this is the way I was taught, or this is "my way". Scotty explains what has worked for him and other officers on the street, and why it worked. He then leaves you with several options to pick from. For example, when shooting at moving targets in low light conditions, there are several flashlight techniques to pick from. My preference has always been the Harries method. Uncle Scotty recommends trying several

different techniques, and personally validating which work best for you.

Scotty has this training down to a science, and unless he has a tiny little outline taped under the brim of his cap, I see him running these drills based entirely on memory, from years of experience training LAPD Metro Division and SWAT Officers. I highly recommend training with "Uncle Scotty" and International Tactical Training Seminars. Their courses are an excellent value compared to the national "name brand" schools, usually two or three-day weekends, and they are conveniently located in Southern California. This combined with Scotty's very professional and positive demeanor, a strong emphasis on safety and basic shooting fundamentals, and moving targets that are difficult to duplicate, the only thing you will leave wanting, is more

training from I.T.T.S. You can get more information about International Tactical Training Seminars and their complete course schedule at:

www.internationaltactical.com

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CENTER BODY FOR CONCEALED CARRY

There are a lot of perspectives regarding the concepts of carry location when in reference to concealed carry. I will touch on several points of view in the next few paragraphs and perhaps answer some questions for the reader and certainly stimulate some thought as to what might be the ideal concealed carry location.

Accessibility and *security*, often referred to as weapon retention, are two primary concerns when carrying concealed other than actual concealment itself. *Accessibility* is the ability to produce the gun with speed, minimal effort, and or surreptitiously if the situation dictates. Recovery back to the original or alternate location is also an important consideration. *Security* simply means maintaining possession and control of your concealed carry piece at all times during confrontation, physical activity, or just living everyday life.

Consideration should be given to the carry location, type of holster used, clothing, and anticipated activity while carrying concealed, with both accessibility and security in mind. It is possible to secure the weapon so well that accessibility would be allowed in only a limited number of circumstances. That being said, having a gun, but not being able to get to it when we need it is worse than not having one at all. There is a fine line between having your gun accessible and ensuring security. However, with a little thought and application a viable compromise can be found.

Carrying concealed itself provides an element of security that open carry does not. If our concealment is effective, the surrounding population has no idea that a gun is present. In the case of physical confrontation, the element of surprise in producing a weapon of defense out of nowhere gives us a distinct advantage. The carry location on our person should be given some consideration in optimizing our control of the weapon while carrying in a non-typical location. The physical activity of running across a busy street while

trying to avoid becoming another traffic statistic can blow your concealment in a heartbeat. If you are seen running holding on to something under your clothes, do you think that observers of your actions might be alerted to the possibility that there is something heavy that you are holding on to that you don't want anybody to see? Even worse, if the gun gets to the other side of the street before you do, there is no speculation left as to what you were carrying. Simple movements such as reaching for an item on the top shelf at the grocery store often rearrange our clothing so that concealment and weapon security is compromised.

Through significant study of the equipment and objectives of carrying concealed, a strong case can be made for a carry location at the beltline on the anterior side of the body. Some refer to this location as center body, appendix, or pelvic carry. In general, they are similar enough to be called the same: Center Body.

Think for a moment where your hands have the most power and dexterity. Most people will volunteer that the area in the front of the torso from point of hip to point of hip is where they can generate the most effort with the economy of motion—speed—desired along with the motor skills necessary to manipulate the weapon and fire accurate shots. Ask the armed professional who carries concealed all day, every day, both seated and standing, male or female, where they prefer to carry their duty gun. If they are progressive thinkers and operators the answer will be inside-the-waistband, between the center line of the body and the point of the hip where the thigh and the torso come together. Spare ammunition can be carried on the other side of the body's centerline, in front of the hip, or in an easily accessible pocket by itself.

Variations of the inside-the-waistband holster include the apron type holster which is worn over the underwear but under the outer garment, positioning the gun just at or under the belt line for optimum access and security.

The age old bellyband holster is worn in a similar manner, over the underwear and under the outer garment, but is located above the beltline for optimum access and security. Depending on the soma-type category you fit in, thick, thin, or in-between, one of the options listed above will fit your needs.

Of course, there are numerous carry locations and methods of carry that are regularly used successfully in specific circumstances. However, regardless of an individual's size, gender, mode of dress, activity, or area of responsibility, for general everyday use the Center Body carry location meets the objectives of concealed carry better than all the others.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



George Harris has spent over 30 years in the field of Adult Education with more than 17 years at the SIGARMS Academy. George completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Virginia and earned his degree in Communications from

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As Director of the SIGARMS Academy, George is committed to the safe and successful use of firearms by armed professionals and responsible citizens alike through using the SIG Principle of Training: Simple Is Good!

MANAGING UNCERTAINTY: FIVE SIMPLE SOLUTIONS



If you want to give God a good laugh, tell him your plans.
— Old Yiddish folk saying

Who knows what the world will be like five years from now, let alone in twenty years? The only thing we know for sure is that change and uncertainty will continue, and that those who know how to adjust to change and uncertainty will live more comfortably and successfully. Unfortunately, the life skills you need for coping with change and uncertainty are not taught in school.

Uncertainty is an ever-present issue, as is the need to cope with it. This has always been so and probably always will be so. For many people, it is often the cumulative stress of the small hassles of daily life that gets to them, or contributes to their eventual ill health by precipitating stress-related disorders.

Uncertainty is a condition in which you lack knowledge or confidence about what will happen to you in your daily life as it relates to your job, financial security, health, wellness, shelter, family, and safety on a personal, family, and community level. This brief article will address the issue of successfully dealing with the ever-present uncertainty about your personal safety, security and survival. The way

you deal with uncertainty has an impact on your overall health and well-being. The ability to cope successfully with uncertainty is necessary and essential to leading a productive and happy life. Failure to cope with uncertainty has unhealthy effects on your mind and body.

The key point to coping successfully with uncertainty is to stay calm, keep a cool head, and apply logical, rational, and effective ways to mastering the perils

of uncertainty (i.e., good tactics). Staying calm means controlling the intensity of your negative emotions: anxiety, fear, anger, grief, sadness, rage, helplessness, alienation, cynicism, and the feeling that you have no future. When these emotions are not controlled, they impede your ability to think clearly and to process the information and facts around you in an effective and organized fashion.

Staying calm is a way of taming your emotional brain so that your executive, logical brain can rationally assess the facts in the present and plan your actions to be the most effective for your day-to-day living. The payoff for staying calm in the face of uncertainty is that you are able to see your options and choices more clearly and thus make the right choices. Staying calm enables you to ignore matters that could intrude and hinder you from achieving your goals. Here, we are referring to distractions that create noise and more anxiety.

The costs of not staying calm in the face of generalized uncertainty involve damaging your health, family life, effectiveness on the job, and the possibility of ending up feeling miserable and hopeless. When uncertainty in daily life is not effectively managed, your body may become a dumping ground for negative emotions, and you may experience a variety of bothersome physical symptoms. This negative mental and physical state is not conducive to maintaining personal security and assuring survival.

In addition, ineffective management of ongoing generalized uncertainty can lead to a chronic sense of feeling

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alienated from society. This can manifest in the form of cynicism, rejection of all moral and religious principles, and the feeling that life has no meaning, causing you to feel lost, dejected, and adrift, without purpose or direction. When you feel alienated like this, you become internally distracted and unable to stay abreast and aware of what is really going on in the immediate world around you.

Uncertainty is a fact of life. I believe that all uncertainty is fruitful, as long as it is accompanied by the wish to understand. On the other hand, uncertainty becomes an unnecessary burden when the fact of its reality is accompanied by the wish to deny that it exists, avoid the unknown, and by maladaptive efforts to manufacture evidence for certainty.

Nowadays, there seems to be more reasons to be afraid than in previous decades. The world is a more uncertain place than ever. There has been a sharp increase in the frequency of terrorist acts around the world, including in the United States. People are living with the threat of further terrorism, and the television and news media provide a continual stream of information that heightens the focus on these threats. Understandably, all of this has led many people to feel frightened of what the future may bring.

During this first decade of the 21st Century, many people, with good reason, have become less trusting in general, given increased media exposure of new kinds of scams, and a wide range of ways in which innocent people have been criminally victimized. Threats of violence, local, domestic and international, wars around the world,

unstable and oppressive governments, and the use of terror also have contributed to instability. This has been reflected in a major change in the stability of the world economy. In addition, technology is changing at a pace that can be described conservatively as "warp speed." All of this change, instability, and uncertainty have made people feel more vulnerable.

Vulnerability stems from the feeling that one has no control over the outcomes of what happens in the world. Feeling vulnerable leads people to feel more endangered and threatened. It can shatter our basic sense of trust and security in the world, our belief that the world is a safe place to live in, and our expectations that we will be here tomorrow. Our vulnerability can become a breeding ground for fears of all types, and erode our feelings of comfort and security in carrying on our day-to-day activities. The lack of adequate support and connectedness to other people can also become a breeding ground for alienation.

Given all the instability and uncertainty in our world today, my purpose in writing this brief article is to empower you by giving you five simple and practical solutions for coping with daily uncertainty. These solutions can help you to counter your feelings of vulnerability, fear, and alienation, and aid you in mastering your fears of the future. For a more detailed exposition of these concepts, see our book, *Coping With Uncertainty: 10 Simple Solutions* (B.N. Eimer and M.S. Torem, 2002).

1. Accept uncertainty as part of life:

Let's face it. When you leave the house in the morning, we don't know for sure what is going to happen to us. We can get hit by a Mack truck, attacked by terrorists, accosted by criminals, come home to a burglarized house, and so on. So, it is necessary for us to accept uncertainty as a fact of life. We must follow the Boy Scout motto and be prepared for the worst and expect the best.

2. Learn to think tactically:

Prepare yourself mentally for tactical situations. Use mental rehearsal to go over different scenarios in your mind and rehearse mastery of them. Learning to think tactically means learning to think about how you can apply various self-defense and personal security techniques

to accomplish survival tasks. These can be as simple and as common place as entering and exiting your vehicle.

3. Stay present and aware:

This means avoiding distractions. Awareness refers to self-awareness as well as other and environmental awareness. You want to nurture a developing, ever present awareness of how you appear and employ your personality in different situations. And you want to develop a continual 360 degree awareness and attention to the world around you. You do not want to let people sneak up on you.

4. Manage your negative moods:

Our moods include negative feeling states as well as positive feeling states. Managing negative moods is imperative for maintaining your personal safety. When you are depressed, or angry, or afraid, you are often focused inward and not paying attention to the world around you. You then become a prime target for victimization. Additionally, if you suffer from chronic feelings of fear, which can often turn into depression and anger turned inward, this is not conducive to carrying concealed. Your focus instead is on how you feel rather than what you can do. It has been said that chronic feelers are losers. The solution is to act healthfully no matter how you feel. Don't dawdle. Make decisions even if they are small ones. Take action. Don't languish in regret. Focus on what you have to accomplish.

5. Improve your tolerance for frustration:

Improve your tolerance for frustration so you can weather any storm. Frustration means not getting what you want or getting what you don't want. It refers to an obstruction that prevents you from reaching your goals. It refers to being hindered or restrained. Unfortunately, frustration is a fact of life. Ever since we humans were thrown out of the Garden of Eden, instant gratification has been a rare event. So, to live a healthy life, you must improve the coping skills that enable you to deal with frustration.

Frustration tolerance refers to the ability to continue living a balanced, healthy life despite encountering repeated interferences. It refers to how robust you are in the face of life's stressors and challenges. How well you handle frustration forms the basis for how well

you cope with uncertainty. When you build strong frustration tolerance skills, you empower yourself to cope more effectively in times of uncertainty.

Chronically facing uncertainty with no resolute strategy or tactics for handling it can lead to a state of chronic stress. This is because we have a basic biological need to resolve uncertainty. This need to resolve uncertainty is what motivates new learning experiences. In fact, there is an optimal level of uncertainty. Too much uncertainty may provoke excessive anxiety and tension; too little uncertainty may lead to boredom and indifference.

So, one key to not becoming worn out by persistent uncertainty is to find ways to moderate the degree of uncertainty that you deal with in your day-to-day living. A second key is to control your anxiety about uncertainty. This entails learning how to accept and tolerate uncomfortable feelings. Unbound continuing uncertainty extracts a toll on your body. It triggers the "stress response," also called the "fight-flight response." This set of physical and mental reactions to uncertainty, to excessive demands, and to perceived or real threats is actually an adaptive response. It motivates you to reorient yourself in a reflex-like way, so that you can better cope with the stress of uncertainty.

This set of basic responses was necessary for survival in prehistoric times when humans lived in the wild with regular exposure to danger and life-threatening uncertainties. In fact, this fight-flight response continues to be basic to survival. However, when it is excessively or unnecessarily activated, your mind and body wear down. When the fight-flight stress response continues activating various cascades of hormonal and biochemical changes in your body, even after the reasons for your stress are gone, then you don't get any rest. Eventually you and your body become exhausted from the continual strain. Your body is like a brilliantly designed machine. Without proper tune-ups at appropriate intervals, you are likely to wear it out.

Your brain and body work in harmony together because there is a feedback system of chemical messenger molecules and hormones called neurotransmitters. Chronic stress triggers this hormonal-neurotransmitter system to work on overdrive, and eventually it gets worn down and you get worn down with it. A variety of mental and physical disorders may result.

The neurotransmitter system is a communication system. It exists so that your cells can communicate with each other. It transmits electrical and chemical messages up and down your nervous system, to and from your brain, with the rest of your body. It needs to be well cared for and not to be on "red alert" all the time for your body and mind to function properly. Paranoia is not good.

Chronic states of stress throw this system out of balance. When we are over-aroused and anxious most of the time, this may result in certain conditions associated with running continually on overdrive. This may eventually lead to a system slowdown, producing other conditions, such as burnout or paranoia which then may lead to clinical depression. Moreover, being habitually stressed-out often leads to painful, distressing symptoms such as, insomnia, general fatigue, loss of energy, loss of enthusiasm, impaired concentration, being easily distracted, indecisiveness, lapses in judgment, slowed thinking, feeling drained, nervous, and irritable.

Summary:

Learn to manage uncertainty and stay safe and secure. Remember to pack your personal defense tools on and

around your person every day, and don't forget to be as prepared as you can be for every conceivable emergency.

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For a schedule of upcoming classes, you can log on to the PDS website:

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Bruce is also the co-author of the "Essential Guide to Handguns: Firearm Instruction for Personal Defense and Protection."



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How Anti-Gun Propaganda Works

(and what we REALLY need to know to beat it)

If you are a sincere gun owner, you probably try to argue the gun issue with your non-gun acquaintances to get them to see the light. This IS your duty and your rights and freedoms depend on it. And, by the way, you are already ably assisted in this effort by both Constitutional and factual experts who write on the gun issue here and elsewhere. They equip you with impeccable statistics and clear-cut facts. So it is actually fairly easy to become well-prepared to execute your duties.

But with all this being said, do you ever leave a conversation with a non-gun friend feeling like you were talking to a sandbag? Why is it that people fall for the anti-gun propaganda? Worse, why is it that the endless mountains of evidence we can heap before them do not seem to change their minds, or change them only temporarily? Of course, some of these

poor folks are professional idiots. They base WHAT to believe on their emotions and WHO to believe on who they like. They latch on to gurus and blindly follow them. If their favorite guru tells them that they can cure depression by crapping in their hands and smearing it on their heads, they may very well do it. However, there are also a lot of far more sensible people who ALSO buy the anti-gunners' bill of goods. You probably have friends, neighbors, colleagues and relatives who fit this description. Why do THESE people take their cues on guns from out-of-touch eggheads, air-headed Hollywood types, old hippies, fear-mongers and professional activists who have a painfully obvious vested interest? We all know the standard explanations. People are being deceived. A complicit press seizes a few bona fide tragedies and harps on them endlessly. A complicit media, seeking

to bolster the scant availability of real gun tragedies, writes fictional ones into movies and TV programs. Several times a week, people see concealed carry licensees mowing down the innocent, terrorists buying machine guns at the gun show and cartoon coyotes mail-ordering bazookas. When the gun issue comes up at some later point, people forget that these things were all fictional. When you try to point out that federal law already prohibits cartoon coyotes from mail-ordering bazookas, it seems a fine point relative to all the dead soap opera characters.

Now, these standard explanations are all true. However, there is a difference between *explaining* a phenomenon and *understanding* the cause of it. In the course of teaching introductory college chemistry, I noted a very common and very fundamental error in the human thought process which I later realized may help us understand (rather than just explain) why people buy the anti-gun arguments. Before we get into it, let me acknowledge that this sort of thing may sound like an "academic curiosity" of the type that eggheads just love to waste their time talking about. But the fact of the matter is that a better understanding of how people get deceived by anti-gun propaganda may make us better able to effectively argue the issue. Understanding this PROBLEM sets the stage for many practical SOLUTIONS that we can ultimately apply to the matter of practical gun rights debate with our friends.

To see what I am talking about, I must ask you to forget about the gun issue for just a couple minutes. Let's take a quick look at the human thought process itself.

Some beliefs are objective and others are subjective. This distinction applies to almost ANYTHING that people think about. Objective beliefs can be proven either true or false (gasoline burns = true; water burns = false). Subjective beliefs are matters of simple opinion and words like true and false really do not even apply (I like Italian food, you like Chinese; neither opinion is "correct" or "incorrect"). Well, we all know THAT. But what may not be so clear is the surprising amount of trouble people sometimes have in correctly distinguishing between objective beliefs and subjective ones. Actually, most people, even the professional idiots, do pretty well with this in the practical



Objectively, the Taurus 38 Special is smaller than the Para Ordnance 14.45 LDA. Subjectively, an anti-gunner could say that nice people have no need for a gun as small as the Taurus or one that holds as much ammo as the Para. Our problem? Far too many people can see no difference between the objective and subjective statements just made about these guns.



More of the same. It is objectively true that ball ammo penetrates without deformation while hollowpoints expand (usually, anyway). Depending on the needs of the moment, the anti-gunners can find something bad to say about either. Thanks to people's confusion, they need not worry about crossing the line between objective fact and subjective opinion when they spout sound bites. Handy, isn't it?

matters of everyday life. They understand that favorite musicians are subjective and checkbook balances are objective. But when things get controversial, or even simply abstract, people can lose the sensibility they otherwise possess. If you are not convinced of this, observe the world around you for a while. Listen to your friends and neighbors. Listen to conversations in the restaurants and coffee shops. Watch the "reality" shows and watch the "guru" shows like *Oprah*, *Larry King*, *The View* and *Dr. Phil*. See how people think and talk when it comes to the "issues"—and you need not confine your experiment to the "gun issue".

If this assignment causes nausea, you have my permission to ignore the specific topics as best you can and simply look for failures and/or errors that people make in distinguishing between the objective and the subjective. Once you start looking for this, you may be surprised by how much of it you see. Or maybe it won't surprise you a bit. Either way, this is an extremely serious problem. When these distinctions are NOT made correctly, beliefs based purely on subjective opinion can be accepted as objective fact. In the same way, clear objective facts can get written off as nothing more than subjective opinion. And I would argue that it is exactly this mental error that causes otherwise sensible people to buy into the anti-gun propaganda. Let's consider this for a minute.

The gun-haters, of course, do not like guns and they do not like gun people. Unfortunately for them, their beliefs are not supported by objective facts. For instance, the problems they promise to solve by banning guns are generally not fixed and are, in fact, usually made worse.

In other words, most anti-gun beliefs do not meet the burden of proof demanded for factual beliefs. Now here's the thing: *a belief that is not supported by the facts is really nothing more than a subjective opinion.* This immediately creates a problem for the gun-haters. Why? Because sensible people generally understand that it is wrong to force everyone into agreement about subjective opinions. Most folks would have a

fundamental objection to legislation decreeing that blue is a prettier color than red or that lasagna is tastier than pepperoni pizza. Even the total fruitcakes understand that they cannot ram their subjective opinions down other people's throats, at least not with the force of law. So, what's a total fruitcake to do? Here is the trick: if they can convince people that their belief is a matter of objective fact rather than one of mere subjective opinion, they can get people to buy into it. Now, if this sounds illogical to you, the reason that it does is because IT IS ILLOGICAL! Yet, it happens all the time and it is very effective.

If you think about it, this is exactly what happens with the gun debate. Millions of people—including sensible ones—DO take their cues on guns from out-of-touch eggheads, air-headed Hollywood types, old hippies, fear-mongers and professional activists who have a painfully obvious vested interest. Why? Of course, you can understand the "professional idiots" doing such things, but the fact of the matter is that those in the "generally sensible but confused about guns" category also fall for the

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There is no legitimate use for electrical tape THAT wide! If you think about it, some of the very successful anti-gun sound bites are just as silly. The thing to recognize is that even sensible people can lose their objective/subjective barometer (and their eye for the simply stupid) when the topic at hand is controversial, unfamiliar or abstract. For our non-gun friends, guns often fall in all three categories.

same stuff. Folks in the latter category do not follow gurus blindly, they do not give out their bank account information in response to e-mails from Nigeria and they do not buy miracle creams designed to swell their unmentionable body parts to enormous size. They are not idiots. But many of them DO buy the anti-gun propaganda nonetheless. Apparently they have been convinced that these anti-gun beliefs are something more than mere subjective opinions.

To fully appreciate the scope of this technique, we also have to look at the other side of the coin. Legitimate examinations of the evidence, such as Professor John Lott's book: *More Guns, Less Crime*, are based on the honest analysis of objective fact. Yet, you will find the anti-gunners writing off this objective factuality as nothing but the subjective opinion of a gun-nut. In other words, at the same time these people are pushing their own subjective opinions as objective fact, they are painting objective fact as subjective opinion! This is not hard to do; they simply couple emotionalism with a reliance on the fact that semi-interested people will not actually READ scholarly and factual analysis. So much for how people get fooled, but what do we do to address it?

What I am about to say may at first sound blasphemous, so please reserve the tar and feathers until you have heard me out. With certain non-gunners, it may be appropriate to forget (at first) the specific facts and (God help me) even the Constitution itself and explore instead the basic concept of objective and

subjective beliefs. Here is the essential thing to realize: You and I understand that "what Oprah says" means something fundamentally different than "what the facts show", whether the topic at hand is guns or not. Facts are facts, opinions are opinions, and gun people are usually quite good at telling the difference. But the thing we need to recognize is that, for reasons I explore in more detail in an article in *American Handgunner* (May/June 2007), gun people are generally more astute at sorting out these distinctions between objective and subjective beliefs than are a lot of people. This can cause us to make a fundamental error; we assume that other people possess the same clarity of distinction as we do. Unless we recognize that they may not, and we first address the errors in distinction that may be present in the minds of our audience, anything else we say may be meaningless—or at least carry far less weight than it should.

If our best factual and Constitutional arguments do not get recognized by our non-gunning friends as objective, they will not carry the weight they deserve—no matter how well they are delivered. Further, they can all be blown out of the water by a single "Oprah says" if THAT is not properly understood by the non-gunner as a subjective opinion.

We gun people naturally make certain assumptions—not necessarily about guns but about reasoned thought ITSELF—that are as obvious to us as the crap in some people's hair. *But these things may not be obvious to our non-gunning friends.* Unless we are aware of this and make efforts to explicitly clarify the thought process behind our arguments, our discussions may be far less productive than otherwise possible. The principle of "know thy enemy" is as old as the Ancient Chinese military philosophers. However, the idea of understanding our potential friends is one that could perhaps use a little more attention.

This brings us to a final point. I urgently ask that you understand this article is an exploration of a PROBLEM. In that regard, it can seem to be rather depressing stuff. However, an understanding of this PROBLEM can let us explore SOLUTIONS. Let me put it like this: GIVEN the fact that people's vulnerability to anti-gun propaganda seems to stem from thought and perception problems, can an understanding of these problems make us more effective in defending our rights? I would argue that

it can. And in closing, I would like to leave you with a few SOLUTIONS that we will examine in some subsequent articles:

1. We gun people get beaten up all the time over our appearance. But understanding the perceptions of our undecided audience can allow us to justify our appearance and establish that our beliefs are the well-reasoned ideas of honest and intelligent folks. Before we argue "what we believe" with our friends, let us examine "how we think."

2. With some of our friends, arguing the facts can be a hopeless effort because the anti-gunners can trot out their own laundry list of "facts" and most folks will not conduct the research needed to find out what is true and what is not. But what if we could show these people the fundamental errors in the anti-gun reasoning process? THAT sort of thing is pretty hard for the anti's to refute because all the needed truth-checking resources already exist in the brains of our friends.

3. You already know intuitively that some people are simply undecided non-gunners while others are hardcore anti-gunners. But what if we had some tools for spotting the difference between those who are "sensible but confused" and those who are probably beyond all rational argument? This could certainly make us much more efficient advocates of our rights.

There is more to the story, but that is enough of a hint for now. We already know that we pro-gun folks have correct factual beliefs that are firmly on the side of the truth. But to carry our message effectively to others, we need to understand why the facts and the truth do not pack as much wallop as they should with the undecided. Having now diagnosed the root problem, we are positioned to move on to an examination of solutions.

Tim Thorstenson is a chemist, NRA member, part-time writer and lifelong gun enthusiast who lives and shoots in Bismarck, North Dakota. His experience includes teaching college chemistry. It was in the classroom that he realized how basic errors in the thought process itself can lead to the acceptance of anti-gun propaganda by otherwise sensible people. His goal in writing these articles is to share his observations with others so that we can more effectively defend our fundamental rights and freedoms.

Tim welcomes comments and feedback and you can reach him at:

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Please look for follow-up articles offering "SOLUTIONS" on the U.S. Concealed Carry website in the near future.

Street Tactics:

reality-based
gun & knife fighting by gabriel suarez

On Fitness for the Gunfighter

I spoke with a man today who wanted to attend classes, but said he was too old (55!) and out of shape to do anything but “target shoot”, and didn’t think he could take being “banged around”. I asked him what he was expecting out of training and he replied, “to be a better shot.” He also admitted to already being a very good shot to begin with. There is a myth prevalent in the shooting community that all the physicality one needs to win a fight is the ability to pull a trigger. This notion was promulgated by certain gun gurus who scoffed at, what they called, “the cult of the body”, as they sat on the couch and sipped their sixth scotch of the day. Listen folks, if all you want to be is a “shooter” you probably don’t need any training at all. Just buy a little bit of ammo and go out and burn it until your accuracy makes you feel warm and fuzzy all over. Or better yet, go to an Olympic shooting coach and have him tune you up to put them all on top of each other at 25 yards. But don’t for one minute think that skill alone will help you at all in a real street fight.

If you are interested in winning an actual fight, then read on. Everything we teach is for fighting, and only coincidentally has to do with shooting. I think in many shooters there is a “laziness factor”, and an “ego-gratification factor”. It’s easier to go to the range and fire controlled pairs between puffs of the cigarette and bites of the doughnuts. But I ask: How will that “shooter” do against a 25-year-old that grabs him by the collar and throws him against a brick wall? How will his “ticker” handle the alarm reaction when and if, he is able to get his pistol out, and he has to shoot for blood?

One of the preeminent concepts in our combative technique is the *complete arsenal*. This means that the individual should have developed his physical abilities as far as his age and medical condition will allow. Now that doesn’t mean that you can say, “I am 45, and now I don’t have to do anything anymore because I am old.” To the contrary, it means that as much as your true physical condition will allow, you need to keep up with your physicality now more than ever.



Quick movements, not only for getting off the line of fire, but also for the draw are easier if one is in good physical condition. And although few consider this, injuries—such as gun shot wounds, are more survivable for those who are in good condition.

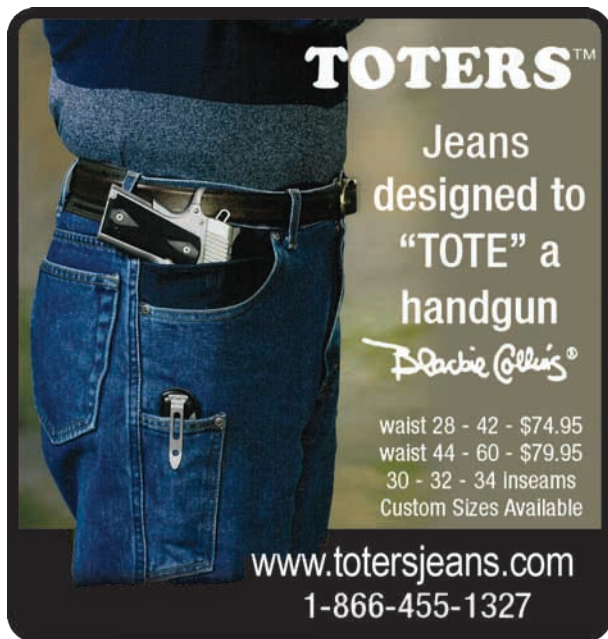
Let me put something on the table for your consideration: if you are too out of breath to fight, or too weak to fight, or whatever, you will not do yourself, or anyone else any good—least of all those for whom you are responsible. And before anyone starts reaching back for their canned “can’t” excuses, I will bring out two gents as examples of guys who would be more justified than anyone in saying “I can’t”, who had it worse than many reading this, and yet managed the fight.

One was a man nicknamed “Geezer” (a regular at my online forum www.warriortalk.com until he went to the Lord earlier this year). This guy had bad legs, walked with a cane, and to top it all off, had a pacemaker of all things! Hardly the young, power lifting stalwart, yet he attended AMOK knife training and multiple force-on-force classes. And he did very well, I might add. He could not get off the X too well to save his life. Yet, he didn’t fall back on the “target shooter” mentality. He realized that he needed to improvise with what

he still had left. He devised and refined a way to use his cane as a distraction. He would launch the cane at the target, and a blink of an eye later, the same target would be peppered with bullets. He caused me a little concern one day when he launched his cane at a young lad working as his aggressor at a force-on-force class and nearly flattened him. He never complained about being old, frail, or weak, and would have taken offense at anyone even suggesting such a thing.

Another was a young man in Memphis, TN. We will call him Caleb. Caleb is challenged by having only one hand that works, the other one and his legs are totally inoperative. He lives in a motorized wheelchair. He came to a force-on-force class (YES, A FORCE-ON-FORCE CLASS!). I will admit to being daunted by him when I saw him, but I simply asked him what he could do. He advised me and showed me that he had a really fast draw, and that he could maneuver the motorized chair faster

Continued on page 42



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The ability to move quickly can spell the difference between living and dying in a fight. This shooter sprints to cover and can fight well when he arrives. Would you be able to do that, or would you be sucking wind and unable to fire when you arrived at cover?

than most men could walk or maneuver. Thus, we worked out a plan. In his first force-on-force evolution, he managed to move off the line of attack in his motorized chair as the knife man was charging at him to the cheers of all the watching students. The cherry on top was when the knife man lost his footing and fell down only to receive a volley from the would-be victim's Airsoft pistol. The softest and least physical among you is probably in better physical shape than Caleb is, yet he came to class and tested himself! So as far as I am concerned, excuses are just a substitute for laziness.

There is a third gent. This man is a good friend of mine, but he rarely trains. He is 7 years younger than me and weighs close to 300 pounds. He is a good man, a family man, and just had his third child and his first heart attack. He can shoot a one-hole group with any of

his handguns in slow fire, but just walking forward to tape targets winds him like a set of wind sprints. He is certainly not in the physical situation the previous guys were in. There is no medical reason for him to be as he is. Heck, with his size, he could be an NFL animal that hardened convicts would cross the street to avoid! What made him how he is? Laziness, self-indulgence, complacency and lack of discipline. Can he protect anyone? Unless he is able to ambush an attacker without having to physically exert himself, the answer is *no*—no matter how good a shot he is. And even if he were to prevail in the fight, will his body even be able to handle the adrenal dump of a life and death fight?

Does that describe you? Why would you choose that for yourself? Set down the TV remote, throw out the doughnuts and cigarettes, get your rear end out on

the street, and get to training—physical training. Start off slow, BUT START OFF!

I think the most important issues are as follows:

- 1) Do something physical every day.
- 2) Stay fresh on your exercises. Don't push beyond what is reasonable (this idea is from one from Pavel Tsatsouline of www.dragondoor.com)
- 3) Variety rules. Run one day, lift weights the next, go for a hike the third day, swim on Day Four.
- 4) Cut the smokes, sweets, and the excess beer.
- 5) Depending on your age and physical conditioning, prioritize Anaerobic, Strength, and Aerobic training as needed.
- 6) Eat like a warrior and not like Jabba the Hut.

Remember, the adversary, your enemy, who will administer your "final exam" on the street, will not be some out-of-shape stockbroker, or a pimple-faced punk. He will be a capable criminal or terrorist, a warrior for evil, who is training right now to kill you and your whole family.

Will you be up to the fight? 

Gabriel Suarez is an internationally recognized trainer and lecturer in the field of civilian personal defense. He has written over a dozen books and taught courses in several countries.

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Cover is rarely comfortable. The ability, via flexibility, to accommodate to what you have is very appreciated by these shooters.

gun fit

■ From working with beginners, I can tell you that many of the hardest-to-fix shooting problems come from dealing with equipment that *Just Doesn't Fit*. The shooter may be struggling with a lever that can't be reached, or a fat grip that keeps squirreling around in the hand, or a trigger finger that cannot be placed properly on the trigger without awkward contortions, or pain from recoil going into the thumb joint, or difficulty holding the gun securely enough to avoid unpleasant recoil effects. Each of these problems are very definitely related to gun fit, and each can cause flinch, wild shots, trigger yank, and genuine difficulty with safe firearm manipulation. Because these problems are so critical and so prevalent among new shooters, I'm of the opinion that a beginner should never be taxed with shooting a poorly-fitted gun if it is at all avoidable.

As most experienced shooters realize, it really isn't that hard to shoot a slightly over-size gun accurately on the range when there is no particular pressure to perform well. It isn't even hard to shoot such a gun accurately under the moderate stress of timed drills, provided time limits are not too tight for the shooter's basic abilities. But that changes as a shooter moves into performing advanced skills.

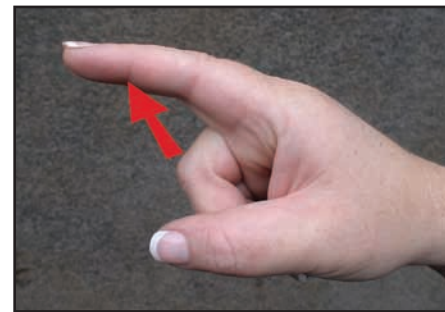


DA/SA trigger reach should be measured in DA mode, since the gun will most likely be in DA mode if needed for defense.

Advanced skills include rapid draws and accurate shots from concealment, rapid multiple shots on multiple targets, shooting moving targets, one-handed shooting, and shooting in low light. These are the kinds of skills which are most likely to be needed on the street, and which are least likely to be practiced on the range by casual shooters. Gun fit can make a critical difference in the speed and accuracy a shooter is able to achieve with these advanced skills.

That's why high-level competition shooters become so obsessive about personalizing their guns to fit their hands; it is because they know that when the time is tight and the stress levels are high, a properly-fitted gun can boost them over the edge and allow them to win a match they might otherwise have lost. So what, I guess. Competition isn't combat. But here's the deal: if you ever need to use the gun in real life, you'll have to be able to do it as fast and as accurately as possible under stress. You may be attacked in low light, or you and the attacker might both be moving, or you may need your non-gun hand to be doing something else such as shoving a child down and to safety, or there might be more than one attacker who needs to be neutralized in a big hurry. The need to perform these advanced skills quickly under stress is one way in which self-defense is like competition (there are other ways in which the two differ, of course). A defensive handgunner may thus benefit from the same good gun fit that the competition shooter demands.

A certain percentage of shooters will never become dedicated enthusiasts like most of CCM's readership are. Instead, they're going to buy a gun, shoot (maybe) a hundred rounds, (maybe) take a CCW class, and then leave the gun in a nightstand drawer against the remote chance of a home invasion.



For measuring purposes, place the finger's distal crease on the trigger.

For these folks, gun fit may become even more critical than it is for the dedicated shooter. Practice, after all, might enable someone to overcome an unnatural grip angle or an awkwardly-sized gun. But without regular practice, all that is left is the natural fit of the gun in the hand, and instinct. Instinct points the human hand straight, with the bones aligned. Instinct does not point the hand at an angle, nor with the wrist crooked, but a poorly-fitted gun almost invariably needs to be corrected by bending the wrist slightly to bring the sights into alignment. These unpracticed shooters are really unlikely to make such minor and fundamentally non-instinctual corrections when faced with a deadly threat.

So that's why I think gun fit can be a critical issue for many shooters. But if you already have a gun—even a poorly-fitting one—that you are happy with, and you regularly practice with it, you are probably better off than you would be if you had a gun which fit you perfectly but with which you never practice. On the other hand, if you don't practice much, and your gun doesn't fit your hand well either, it may be time to consider a shopping trip.

There are three basic components of firearms fit: grip angle, trigger reach, and access to the gun's controls. To some extent, all three are a bit subjective, but you can easily learn to compare them once you're armed with a little information.

ASSESSING GRIP ANGLE

Some folks prefer guns with a high bore axis, while others find a low bore axis more comfortable. Similarly, the angle at which the handgun's grip connects to the operating parts of the gun

Continued on page 44



This gun is small for the shooter's hand. The gun aligns with the bones of the arm, with extra slack in trigger finger.



When shooting a gun which is small for your hands, avoid using too much trigger finger.



When the gun is large for the shooter's hand, recoil will go into (or beyond) the thumb's basal joint and the gun will not align with the arm bones.

can make a difference both in comfort and in shootability.

The grip angle you find most instinctual and comfortable depends in part upon the natural geometry of your hand. To a lesser extent, the grip angle you find most natural also depends upon your personal experience. If you've sent a gajillion rounds downrange from one grip angle, a gun which uses a different grip angle might feel unnatural and awkward to you. Since continued experience can definitely influence the preferred angle, grip angle is perhaps the least significant of the gun fitting factors. If the gun fits well in every other way, but the grip angle feels awkward to you, it might still be worth taking a gamble on the purchase.

The test for a good angle fit is rather simple. Start with an **unloaded gun**, and make sure you have a **safe direction** that includes a small target at which you can aim. Pick the gun up and acquire a solid, two-handed firing grip. Quickly raise the gun to eye level, aligning the sights on target. Did the gun naturally line up with the target?

Or did you find yourself making large adjustments to the point of aim once the gun was at eye level?

Now do the same thing again, but this time with a one-handed firing grip. Was the result different when you held the gun with only one hand? Perform both tests again; two-handed and then one-handed. Close your eyes as you bring the gun quickly up into a comfortable firing position. Freeze in place and open your eyes. Is the gun pointed at or near the center of the target? Is it pointed high or low? If the gun consistently points toward the ceiling or the floor as you do this, a gun with a different grip angle might suit you better.

MEASURING REACH

The distance from the handgun's backstrap to trigger is called the trigger reach. To assess whether the gun's trigger reach suits your hand, start with an **unloaded gun**, and make sure you have a **safe direction** for the muzzle. Place the distal crease of your index finger on the trigger, then—without moving your finger or pulling the trigger—carefully wrap the rest of your hand around the gun to obtain a firing grip. With the crease of your finger on the trigger, if the gun's backstrap is firmly centered in the web of your hand, midway between your thumb and forefinger, then the gun fits your hand perfectly. Notice how this perfectly-sized gun aligns with the bones in your forearm. Recoil will go directly into the cushioning web of your hand and be transferred along the long bones of the arm, allowing a strong and natural grip without much strain.

If your hand has a lot of extra slack, with your trigger finger curving far out from the side of the gun (so that you would be able to put a large portion of your trigger finger through the trigger guard), then the gun is small for your hand. Note that the small gun still lines up with the forearm bones. Except in extreme cases, a small handgun is rarely

too small for effective shooting, so don't let this deter you if the gun is otherwise suitable for your purposes. Unless the gun is radically undersized, it's generally not difficult to adapt your shooting style to match a small gun.

If the gun's backstrap cannot be centered in the web of your hand while the crease of your trigger finger is on the trigger, then the gun is large for your hand. In the photo above, notice that the large pistol does not line up with forearm bones, and the recoil will thus go more into the thumb joint than into the absorbent web. Provided you are able to reach all the controls, you can probably work with a gun that is a little large for your hands. You may be able to simply slide your hand around the backstrap so that the backstrap becomes slightly off-center when your finger is firmly on the trigger. Or you might consider installing a shortened trigger, which will reduce the distance between trigger and backstrap.

However, if the gun is very much too big for your hand, recoil will be going straight into the joint at the base of your thumb when your finger is properly on the trigger. An exceptionally large gun may even place the center of the backstrap somewhere outside the base joint, putting severe strain on your thumb as you fire. You will be able to shoot that way, but such a hold is not very secure, especially one-handed. Further, it will probably be painful to fire a lot of rounds. Even if it doesn't hurt at the time, the strain and direct recoil into the joint can cause medical problems down the road. For these reasons, shooting a significantly oversized gun on a regular basis may not be worth it in the long run.

Incidentally, one possible cause of limp-wristing may be firing a gun that is large for one's hands. Notice the direction the recoil will go in the picture above, and compare that to the solid platform provided by the long bones of the arm when the gun is the ideal size for the shooter. An excellent fix for this is to fire a



A perfect fit: the muzzle aligns with the long bones of the arm allowing a strong and natural grip.

large gun from a solidly-locked isosceles stance, rather than from Weaver.

CHECKING ACCESS TO CONTROLS

The final test of gun fit is whether you are able to reach and use all the gun's controls. It isn't enough to simply be able to (barely) touch the slide stop lever or the safety. You must be able to move the levers quickly and easily whenever you need to.

How essential is each control?

HOW ESSENTIAL IS EACH CONTROL?

Slide Stop/Slide Release: In order to lock the gun open, you must be able to push up on the slide stop while racking the slide. It's okay if you have to move your hand around slightly in order to do this, but make sure you can still punch the gun forward hard enough to rack the slide. If you have to move your hand so far around that it becomes impossible to move the slide, that's a deal killer.

It's nice to be able to lower the slide by pressing down on the slide release lever. However, if you can't, it's not really

a big deal; you'll just have to release the slide using the overhand or slingshot methods instead, pulling the slide back slightly and letting it fly forward under spring tension.

Decocker: Generally speaking, ordinary citizens will have no particular need to operate the decocking lever with the gun hand. It's okay if you need to use your other hand for this.

Safety: You absolutely must be able to flick the safety off with the thumb of your gun hand. This one is non-negotiable. It is okay if you need to use the other hand to put the safety back on again.

Magazine Release: It is best if you can run the magazine release with your gun hand. If you can't, your reloads will be slower and less smooth than they otherwise would be.

Kathy Jackson is a freelance writer who lives with her husband and their five children in Washington state. An Assistant Instructor at the Firearms Academy of Seattle, Kathy takes special pleasure in teaching other women how to shoot. Her personal website may be found at: www.comeredcat.com

GUNS FOR SMALL HANDS

Finding a gun that really fits your hands can be among the greatest challenges facing small-handed shooters. With that in mind, here are a few handguns that I believe are particularly well suited for those with smaller hands. It is by no means a definitive list, but may give you a place to start your search. (Please note, these are not all small guns; they are simply guns which may fit smaller hands, or which may be adapted to fit smaller hands.)

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SAFE ROOMS

The phrase safe room has been around for a long time and it seems that everyone has their own definition of what a safe room is or should be. I don't believe there is any one right answer and that a safe room is custom to each household. For those who already have and utilize a safe room in their house, kudos on your planning and I hope you never have to use it. For those who do not have a safe room or don't know much about the subject, perhaps this article will help you out.

In any home security plan, the safe room is probably one of the major priorities. The safe room is basically a secured room located somewhere within the house, where you and your family can go in the event of a home invasion, safety and security emergency, and sometimes a weather related emergency. This can become your stronghold or the fortress of the castle.

A safe room can be as simple or as complex as you want it to be. A simple safe room could consist of a bedroom with the items discussed below. You can use the bed or dresser as a concealment item and the window as means of escape. A more complex safe room could consist of a specially designed and

built room in the basement or first floor that incorporates a strong solid metal door and frame, multiple locks, hidden doors and escape hatches and multiple defense items. Whatever you choose to become your safe room, be sure that it is a safe and highly secured place with good locks and the ability to defend or escape.

A safe room should always be a part of a family plan. The plan should include when to go to the safe room, for what, and, what to do while you're in the safe room. Be sure your family knows how to secure the room and how to operate all of the equipment. It is a good idea to include your children in these plans, but be aware of ages, maturity and mentality when it comes to using the defensive weapons or tools. Babysitters or nannies should only be in the loop of the family plan or safe room if they are a trusted person or another family member. Sharing some information can be useful and wise, but share only that information that is needed at the time. Be sure to change any plans, keys, codes, etc. if you have any problems with babysitters or family members.

Below are recommended items to keep in a safe room and why. Not all safe rooms will contain all of the items discussed, it depends on your specific room and what type of security you desire.

Cell Phone - A cell phone (with charger or extra battery) provides the communication you need to get emergency services and responding police to your location and advise them of the situation, directions, etc. A cell phone allows you to make calls even if home phone lines are tampered with or cut. It also prevents intruders from listening in on details from another home phone. A cell phone also lets you keep in constant communication with emergency services while escaping from your home or moving about your home or safe room.

Defense Weapon - Defensive weapons or tools can consist of many different type of items such as a firearm, pepper spray, baton, etc. Whatever defensive tool you choose (you can have

multiple defensive tools) to be in your safe room, be sure you and your family are aware of the items and are all properly trained on how and when to use them. If you use a firearm, be sure to keep extra ammunition within your safe room. Know the legal aspects, responsibilities and details for each defensive tool and the use of those tools. Consult an attorney specialized in the field.

House Keys - Keeping a set of house keys, including any garage or entrance keys, in your safe room will allow you to toss them out to responding police to give them quick access to the house to conduct a search for an intruder or assist in an emergency. Extra keys should be made and checked with the locks to insure proper working order. Keys should be secured to a key chain or ring of a large item, flashlight or preferably a snap glow stick. Be sure to tell the police on the phone that you have keys and will toss them out when they arrive. Do not toss them out before the police arrive. An intruder or accomplice could be outside and gain access. Do not include keys to your safe room on the key ring.

Note that vehicle keys can be kept in a safe room as well, to provide an escape once you get outside your safe room and house.

House Plans - House plans (not blueprints) kept in the safe room that show a brief sketch of the interior and exterior of your home can assist responding police to where your safe room is, along with each room, wall, hallway, etc. that an intruder could be hiding. Your plans can be tossed out your safe room window along with your house keys to assist police in getting in and clearing your home safely and quickly. Include how many people, including children, live in the house, and brief descriptions of your family. This may help police identify you from an intruder.

Flashlight - A flashlight, preferably one that is rechargeable, is very useful in providing light if the power goes out or is cut by an intruder. It can help illuminate any room or help to blind an intruder temporarily. A flashlight can also be used as a defensive tool much like a baton and can be used to signal responding emergency services.

Door Scope - Installing a door scope (or peep hole, but door scope is



My safe room tools consist of a Smith and Wesson SWAT folder, MACE Pepper Spray Pepper Guard—Michigan formula 2%, SureFire Centurion Flashlight, a Beretta 90 .40 cal., a cell phone and house and car keys.

preferred) on your safe room door or bedroom door allows you to see outside your safe room into a hallway or room to see if anyone is near your safe room, and what he or she may be doing.

Alarm Control Box - If your house is equipped with an alarm, depending on your system, having a control box in your safe room can be used to call for assistance. If an intruder came into your house without setting off the alarm, you can manually set it off by the control panel, which will contact the police to respond.

Light Control Box - A control box that can turn lights on and off inside and outside your home can prove to be useful in deterring intruders. If someone is in the house, perhaps turning on the lights will be enough to scare the intruder out and can also provide lighting for responding police.

CCTV Monitors - If your house is equipped with closed circuit television cameras, the monitors in your safe room will allow you to see your house, perhaps inside and out. This will keep you in constant view of where an intruder is, thus assisting police in determining his/her location and what they are doing.

Other items that can be kept in a safe room that may not necessarily apply to an intruder or home break in, but could be useful are:

Food/Water - When referring to food and water kept in a safe room, it doesn't imply that you should keep tons of these items stored like a warehouse or bomb shelter. It simply means that some snack type food such as beef jerky, candy bars, trail mix, and a few bottles of water may be a good idea in case you are holed up in your safe room for any length of time. It also may help keep children calm.

Radio/TV - This would apply more to tornado type emergencies, but having a TV or radio in the safe room can be useful in keeping children calm and entertained, distracting them from the unfortunate events. Be sure to keep the volume low or include headphones. This item is not what you would call a priority, but you never know.

Be sure to check all of your items and equipment regularly, keep them maintained and working properly at all times. Your life could depend on them.

For those who live in apartments or condominiums, most of the above information still can apply to you as well.

For a safe room, a bedroom can be used and temporary locks or door jams can be used if you are not allowed to build special rooms, doors, etc. Use door jams, small mobile door alarms, and even under the door peep sights or cameras.

A safe room can be just one room in the house, but it is a good idea that every room in your home be viewed as a possible safe room in case you or a family member cannot get to the main safe room in time. If you have a small amount of the above mentioned items in each room, you will cover your bases and be better prepared for anything that comes your way.

Jerrod S. Smelker is the owner and senior instructor for Edge Advantage Consultants a business which conducts courses and seminars in crime prevention, safety and security, personal defense and firearms training for law abiding citizens:

www.edgeadvantageconsultants.com

Mr. Smelker has an extensive background and experience in the fields of security, law enforcement, corrections and crime prevention. He is a certified defensive tactics instructor and NRA firearms instructor and the instructor for the Online Police Academy's Officer Safety course for law enforcement agencies.



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THE FORCE-ON-FORCE NOTEBOOK VOLUME VI

Happy New Year and Welcome to 2008!



TOOLS OF THE TRADE: KETTLEBELLS (L) AND DUMBBELLS (R). BOTH WEIGH THE SAME: 35 LBS.

I'm going to do something a little different for the New Year. We are going to talk a bit about those dreaded New Years' resolutions. I know what you are thinking, what does this have to do with force-on-force? The answer is: everything!

If you review all my past articles, you'll see a couple of common threads. One is that you have to move to survive. The second is that there is a very good chance that the confrontation will go hands-on at some point. We, as concealed carry permit holders, should be able to move efficiently and briskly and have some "gas in the tank" if the confrontation gets physical.

This brings us to our New Year's resolutions. Some of us are blessed with fast metabolisms and no body fat. Some are natural athletes and able to move gracefully and quickly. Those of you that are in these groups, you can skip ahead to the Suarez International advertisement and book a class. The rest of us, myself included, need to work at keeping fit, and practice performing the skills necessary for carrying a pistol.

I'll tell you a bit of my own story that began on January 1, 2007. I had attended a class with Tom Sotis in December of 2006 and I had a great deal of trouble moving and fighting for more than 10, or 20 seconds at a time. I hopped on the scales and was shocked at what I saw. I was the heaviest I have ever been, with a weight of nearly 230 lbs. I vowed to lose weight and get in shape. I started a diet and exercise program as of the New Year, and by the end of January, I had dropped 15 lbs. By March, I was down another 10 lbs and soon I was hovering just below 200 lbs. I felt pretty good, and I was able to do a lot of the drills much easier. I thought I was doing well, until my association with Dino Zervos and the Warrior's Forge took an unexpected turn. He convinced me to try things his way and see how I felt. That one workout changed my life.

Let me expand on that a bit. I have always worked out since high school. I had the 300 lb bench press and the 500 lb squat. But due to some injuries and some unfortunate genetics, I haven't been able to train at that level for the last

PHOTOGRAPHY BY AUTHOR AND ASHLEY WEAKLEY

10 years or so. I did what I could do and didn't really push it. Dino introduced me to kettlebells this summer. And I am very glad he did.

What are kettlebells you might ask?

From Wikipedia:

The kettlebell or girya is a traditional Russian cast iron weight looking somewhat like a cannonball with a handle... Some modern kettlebells feature adjustable weights. Kettlebell workouts are intended to increase strength, endurance, agility and balance, challenging both the muscular and cardiovascular system with dynamic, total-body movements.

Let's examine the last statement in that paragraph. "Kettlebell workouts are intended to increase strength, endurance, agility and balance, challenging both the muscular and cardiovascular system with dynamic, total-body movements."

In one simple device we get the benefits of an entire gym full of equipment. All of the benefits of the kettlebell training, strength, agility, endurance, and balance are benefits that we as warriors want to cultivate.

Continued on page 50



THE AUTHOR, EXECUTING A 36 INCH STANDING BOX JUMP. DINO ZERVOS, LEFT, COACHES FROM THE SIDELINES.



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ONE OF THE CORE KETTLEBELL EXERCISES, AMERICAN SWING IN THE STARTING POSITION.

Keeping up with a routine is the toughest part. Kettlebells are not boring in the least. I love doing the routines and they have had a profoundly positive effect on my body. I have several injuries that were always nagging at me. With the kettlebell workouts, I am almost pain free and able to do many things that I could not do prior to starting the kettlebell program. Dino was right. And I am grateful he badgered me into trying things his way. I make time every few weeks to go learn more kettlebell exercises and I have made up a few of my own just playing around.

They really do work as advertised. I started with the 35 lb kettlebells in June and in early October I was able to use an 88 lb kettlebell for the same exercise. All accomplished with three to five workouts a week of less than one hour each. Kettlebells are fairly portable and can be taken along on trips. Mine came on vacation with me. I urge you to investigate the kettlebell as a new alternative to your usual workout routine.

Now, on to the resolutions.

Repeat after me:

I (state your name) do hereby resolve to do one or more of the following during 2008:

1. I resolve to get off the couch and put down the remote at least three times a week, and do something physical.



AMERICAN SWINGS FINISH OVERHEAD AS SHOWN. RUSSIAN SWINGS FINISH PARALLEL TO THE GROUND.

2. I resolve to train with my concealed carry gear at least once a week.

3. I resolve to attend at least one training class during 2008.

4. I resolve to lower my body fat percentage. I'll increase my activity and/or decrease my caloric intake.

5. I resolve to strive to make progress every day. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

Did you take the oath?

You did? Great!

Let's go over these in greater depth.

1. I resolve to get off the couch and put down the remote at least three times a week, and do something physical. You need to walk your dog, take a stroll with your significant other, play tennis, go to the gym, or perhaps even train the Team Ruthless way. The more you move, the more energy you will have. You will find that you will sleep better, too.

2. I resolve to train with my concealed carry gear at least once a week. It is critical that you do your dry practice repetitions with your gear in the positions you normally carry it and concealed in the manner that you normally wear it. Train with Airsoft, or hit the range. Get in the repetitions to make your techniques natural and reflexive.

3. I resolve to attend at least one training class during 2008. As a concealed carry permit holder, it is imperative that you train with a first tier instructor at least once a year. They can correct any bad habits you might have fallen into and keep your techniques up to date.

4. I resolve to lower my body fat percentage. I'll increase my activity and/or decrease my caloric intake. Pills and fad diets don't work. The only way to lose weight is to burn more calories than you take in. There are no magic pills. If you are like me, with nagging joint issues, every pound you lose is better for your joints. It's better for your heart, and lowers your blood pressure.

5. I resolve to strive to make progress every day. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Keep with it. Get a trainer, coach or accountability partner. When my wife and I went on our diet, we were accountable to each other. It's so much easier to reach a goal with the support of another person.

I'd like to relate to you the story of one gentleman and his wife who began the journey to fitness in March of 2007. We'll call him Ricky, and his wife Lucy.

Ricky:

"It was at the Suarez International force-on-force class at the Warrior's Forge (Team Ruthless) in Manassas, where I was brought to the painful conclusion that I am in lousy shape and completely unable to adequately defend my family or myself. I decided that enough was enough. I needed to drop more than 100 pounds and get into much better shape. I e-mailed Dino on May 25th, asking if I should try to reach some minimum conditioning level before starting to train with him. His response was 'call me; we'll talk.'

"I went down for my evaluation on Wednesday, May 30th. My entire evaluation consisted of about thirty squats and body weight thrusters and almost three sit-ups. I say almost because I couldn't make it up for the third one. I was in pain for two days! My wife wasn't in much better condition. After her evaluation, they had to ice down her legs to help relieve the cramps. Dino told me that I had no core and that would be our first priority. He said that the progress would be up to me. If I did the work, I would see the results. Dino is a dynamic person and his enthusiasm was



ANOTHER KEY EXERCISE IS THE KETTLEBELL SNATCH. YOU START IN A SQUAT.



EXPLODE OUT OF THE SQUAT AND PULL THE WEIGHT UP. NOTICE MY FEET ACTUALLY LEAVE THE GROUND DURING THE PULL.



FINISH WITH THE WEIGHT LOCKED OUT OVERHEAD. I USE THE FREE ARM FOR BALANCE.

so contagious that I signed up for seven weeks before leaving that night. While talking to my wife later that night, she surprised me by saying that she wanted to start training too. You see, we are both in our mid-50s and have been confirmed couch potatoes for more years than I can remember. But my wife said that she feels that this is our last chance to get in shape—if we don't do it now, we won't do it at all.

"Now after a little over four months, Dino e-mails our workouts for three nights, and we work out at the Warrior's Forge with Dino and Ashley one night a week. Many of the exercises such as the basic squat, dumbbell thrusters, power cleans, etc. involve squats. So sometimes our program will require that during one workout, we do as many as 400 squats and 125 sit-ups. Don't get me wrong, we have a long way to go to get where we want to be physically, but this program is incredible. Dino and Ashley always change things from one week to another so you never get bored or stuck in a rut. My weight hasn't decreased much yet, but I have reduced my waistline by at least three inches and we both find we can do things now we couldn't have even attempted four months ago.

"It's funny, during the workouts we are both hurtin' puppies, but the feeling of accomplishment that we have after the workout is incredible. This has really become addictive. My wife is also

joining me at the range and has even talked about getting a concealed carry permit herself."

I had the pleasure of meeting Ricky at the force-on-force class and he couldn't get out of his own way. He and his wife have made positive progress and both of them are on a journey that will take them to a point where they are fitter and healthier than they have been in years. I'm proud to know them both. If Ricky and his wife can take the first steps to achieve a goal of being a more effective fighter and healthier individual, anyone can. I have at least five more stories like Ricky and Lucy's; complete couch potatoes reinventing themselves into healthier, fitter individuals. It's positively inspiring. Go ahead. Take the first step.

Next month we are back on track with another scenario based on a situation described in a thread on the U.S. Concealed Carry forum. It appears to be a no-win scenario—a *Kobayashi Maru* if you will. So far, I have been unable to figure out a way to win the encounter. Perhaps by next issue, I'll come up with a solution for the no-win scenario. Stay tuned!

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If you would like to participate online in "The Force-On-Force Notebook," please visit: www.usconcealedcarry.com

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MOUTH MARKETING



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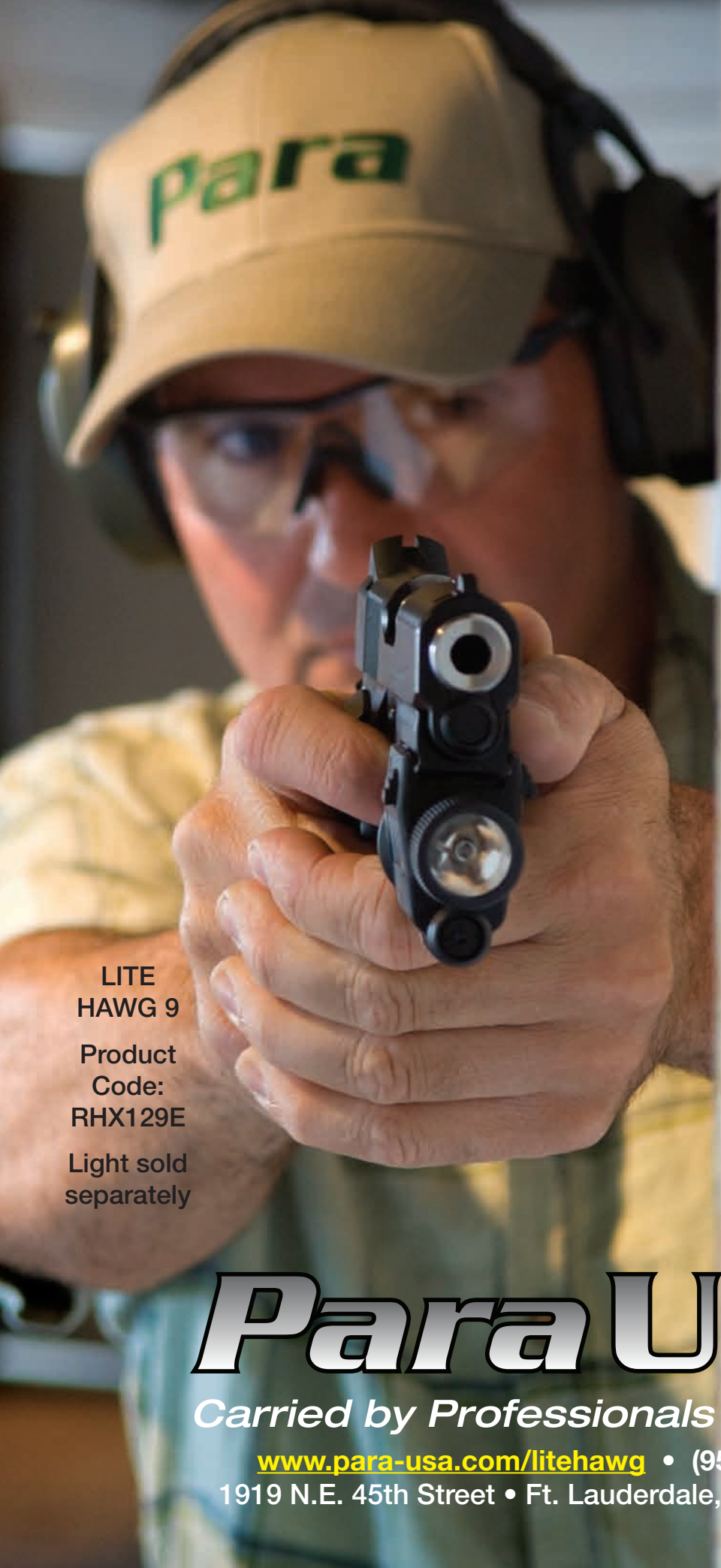
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