



Guidelines for Personal Safety

- Everyone needs skills to manage conflict. In modern culture, predators are common and victims are often people who are unprepared to defend...
- Qualified instructors assist you to set personal safety priorities and learn, refine, or complete your skill sets to prevent violence.
- ***Stay Current!*** When is your next Personal Safety Review?

* *MLS program skills indicated by italics*

Prevention

- Know your *Risk Group* and why it changes.
- Find effective self defense education near you. Learn and inform others of the *Danger Signals*, the red flags in daily life that indicate increased risk.
- Acknowledge strengths and transform vulnerabilities – every person at any age can improve skills, acquire better information, reduce risk, and improve skills to protect others.
- Learn the markers that predict a high-escalation assault.
- Improve skills for *Conflict Resolution*, especially *de-escalation tactics*. De-escalation responses create more options for you and can stop aggression. Learn *Subtle Response* and *Matching* as strategies to enforce boundary skills.
- Practice resourcefulness and accountability and insist on accountability from others.
- Have confidence in your legal rights. If you perceive **an imminent threat to your life** most local laws recognize self-defense to include all levels of force and most tactics. Learn the RISK GROUP EXCEPTIONS. Know your local law and work with a qualified self-defense professional to understand your rights and defense skills and options.
- Choose to confront expressions of hate and participate to end women's isolation.

During a Confrontation

- **Use your Voice and Breath in any defense.**
- **Maintain Distance.** Self-defense proficiency requires two essential skill sets: *Boundary Awareness*, and *Boundary Controls*. To maximize options, stay in the largest available space. Smaller spaces are useful for exerting control.
- **Use Breath for Centering.** Intimidation and control tactics must succeed verbally or non-verbally **before** they can succeed physically. Use Box Breath and other breath skills to keep your attention (and your power) self-centered. Learn the simple breath skills and practice emotional resiliency and efficacy – two central protective factors in defense.
- **Make it a Priority to Defend Personal Space.** Set clear boundaries using the four *Boundary Controls* -- eye contact, facial expression, breath defenses, and control of space.
- **With Physical Defense, Use Explosive Force in any high-escalation situation.**
- **Use Your Natural Weapons:** Your mind, your voice, your hands, elbows, legs, and feet. Our best first defense is mental. Practice to be clear about your rights and resources; increase your awareness skills and be willing to act in your own best interests.
- **Know Effective Targets.** With an attacker in front, strike the eyes, throat, temple, nose, knees or groin. With an attacker behind, strike the head, throat, instep, feet, groin or solar plexus. Remember the attacker's fingers are vulnerable.
- **Use Every Thing for a Weapon:** the environment, your belongings, other objects, other people. **Block:** use a book, purse, backpack, briefcase, shopping bag. Get behind obstacles, trees, benches, furniture, parked cars. **Create Space:** swing a purse, tennis racket, umbrella, jacket, broom, rake, or belt. **Stall:** lock yourself in a parked car and use the horn. Throw objects: smaller, lighter objects (coins) to the eyes to distract; heavier objects can be held in the hand to enhance a strike. **Counter Attack:** When defending your life, use heavy shoes or pointed heels; heavy items within reach; use any stick, pencil, or pen to stab attack vital points – the hands, throat, and eyes are vulnerable.