

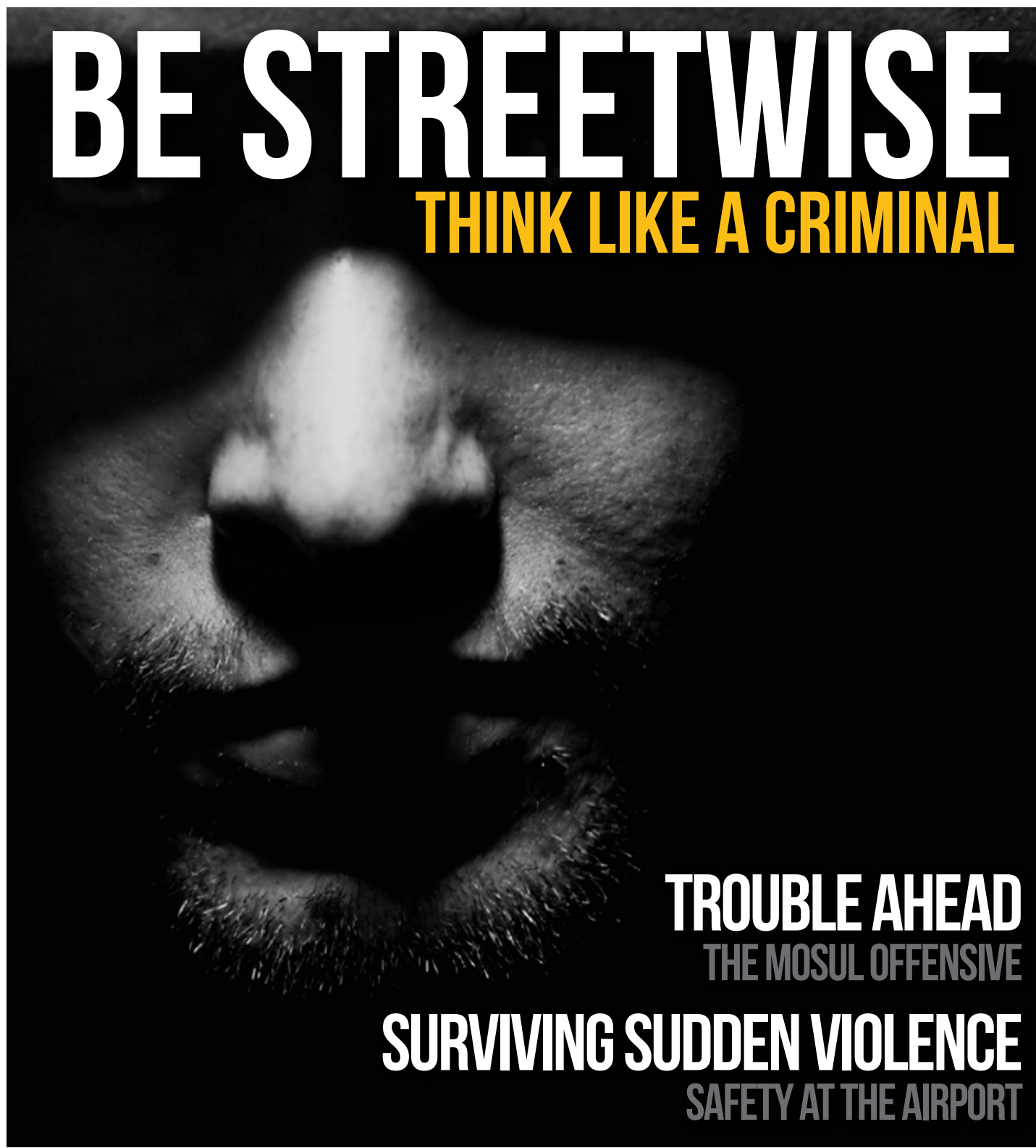
The Circuit

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The Magazine for Security Professionals

BE STREETWISE

THINK LIKE A CRIMINAL



TROUBLE AHEAD
THE MOSUL OFFENSIVE

SURVIVING SUDDEN VIOLENCE
SAFETY AT THE AIRPORT

BE STREETWISE & THINK LIKE A CRIMINAL!

By: Orlando Wilson

When people come to me for tactical pistol training I tend to ask them why they want to do the class and carry a handgun. The responses I get are usually the same - to protect themselves and their families, to defend themselves, etc.

Then I ask my clients why the bad guys carry guns and the responses are usually the same again: to kill us and harm us. From my clients' responses it's easy to see who the wolves are and who the sheep are! I tell my clients there is one reason they are carrying a gun and that is to kill people and if that is not their reason then don't carry the gun.

One thing that needs to be avoided is thinking that a gun will make you a tough guy. I have come across many men for who think

carrying a gun is a status symbol. Somehow it re-enforces their masculinity. But in fact, gun is a tool. The same as a hammer, which can be just as deadly as a gun. If you need a gun to give you confidence, you have problems because that confidence is false confidence and can get you into situations that are beyond your limitations. Guns are tools that need to be respected, not something to hide behind or bolster your ego with!

To me tactical shooting is not a sport. It's about



staying alive and killing your opponent as quickly as possible. If you are in a situation where someone is trying to kill you, your family or your team members you must kill them first. Unfortunately, it's as simple as that sometimes. Political correctness does not enter into it. We are talking about your life and death not banning super size sodas or gay marriage. For most people the thought of killing someone and the legal ramifications are a nightmare, but you're better off dealing with the aftermath than being dead.

If you are unfortunate enough to be involved in a hostile situation, your actions must be instinctive and aggressive. However, aggression must be controlled and turned off when the threat is over. Teaching controlled aggression to civilians and first world police can be difficult. Professional militaries achieve it with strenuous training and strict discipline; both of which seem to be lacking in modern society in general.

There is a lot more to tactical shooting than just shooting. Being a good shot ►

is just part of what it takes to stay alive. One story that came out of Latin America was of a top competition shooter who was driving to work one day when two kids on a motorcycle pulled up next to him while he was stuck in traffic. The kid on the back of the bike had a revolver and asked the competition shooter at gun point for his wallet, he complied. As he was handing over the wallet he went for a Walther PPK on his ankle, the kids saw the gun and shot and killed him. Who was the better shot that day, the trained or the wise?

I tell my clients that the three golden rules to personal security are: 1) think like a criminal, 2) keep a low profile and 3) always have an escape route.

- Think like a criminal: Put yourself in the criminal's shoes and think how you would rob or kidnap yourself. How would you break into your home or hotel room?
- Keep a low profile: Do not draw attention to yourself, consider what you wear and drive. Don't be loud and rowdy. And don't tell strangers too much about yourself, especially

anything to do with your personal security. If you are trying to impress someone use a cover story.

- Always have an escape route: Make sure you know how and have the means to get out of your location to a safe area. Know how to get out of the hotel and have the means to get out of the city, and then possibly the country and you know how to get to a safe location.

Use of force is a last resort and should be avoided at all costs. Fighting is for amateurs. You want to do everything possible to identify and avoid any potentially hostile situations. Unlike the movies, street fights are not glamorous and when guns are involved people are going to be killed, maimed, or paralyzed. In reality, someone will be going to the hospital or the morgue and in most places others will be going to jail. You must never use excessive force against the person who is attacking you. The level of force you use you must be appropriate to the force being used against you. When defending yourself you must always



be able to justify that the use of force was necessary. The laws on the use of force vary greatly from area to area. Do your research, knowing the law is all part of an efficient personal defense program.

You need to have confidence in your ability to be able to handle hostile situations. Over the years I have had students come to my classes who have been through self-defense and tactical programs and told how they can avoid becoming victims or potential victims and how they can respond to attacks against them. To me, these people were already being placed at a severe disadvantage by being told they were a potential victim. You are only a victim if you let yourself be. You need a positive attitude. Why

should you be afraid of some scum bag that tries to intimidate, bully and rob people for a living.

What a lot of people forget is that when a criminal is going to commit a crime they are going to be scared; they are breaking the law and can get arrested, beaten up or shot in the process. Criminals look for easy targets; they don't want problems as they are bad for business. Remember if you are going to be scared and nervous so are your attackers. Your attitude needs to be that with the knowledge and ability you have you can stop anyone who wants to mess with you, your clients or your family. The criminal made the mistake of starting the fight with you and they are going to lose, that's it! ►

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The bad guys will have put together a mental plan and strategy for attacking you, so should you not have one for how to counter them? The easiest way to assess someone's personal security is to go up and ask them a question like what's the time etc. By doing this and reading their reaction you can tell if they are security aware or clueless. Now think about how you would react if a stranger approached you and asked you the time. What's your body language going to be saying? Are you going to tell them the time? Will you be caught up looking at your watch or assessing their body language? Or will you be in a defensive stance, checking for any obstacles in your area that can trip you up? Can you access potential weapons to aid you? Would you even be thinking about your weapon? The criminals want to set you up and catch you off guard. To do this they will use distractions or surprise. If you understand how the criminal operate you can hopefully spot a potentially hostile situation and avoid it. Or if it's unavoidable reverse the situation and set the criminal up for failure.

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with a violent situation you need to quickly work out your strategy and put into operation your counter attack. There are three elements needed to win a confrontation: 1) surprise, 2) speed and 3) aggression. If you can combine two of these elements in your counter attack, there is a greater chance you'll be successful.

- **Surprise:** This is the main thing that you require. Surprise will give you the edge in all confrontations. If the criminals don't expect you to attack them; they won't be ready to defend themselves.
- **Speed:** Your actions need to be fast and decisive, no hesitation!
- **Aggression:** Aggression will always beat fancy techniques.

Other things you will need to consider is what do you want your body language

to say. Can you access your weapon, are your standing on slippery or uneven ground, are there objects that can trip you up, look for objects that can provide you with cover etc.?

If you have already planned your reaction, you're not going to panic. You'll just be going through your procedures and be setting the criminal up for your counter attack. So, if a stranger approaches you start setting them up by assessing their body language, assessing your surroundings, getting yourself into a defensive stance, consider what you want your body language to be saying, select target points on the stranger and how you'll access your weapon. Shootings generally take place at very close quarters and there will be many obstacles, which you can trip over like curb stones, chairs ▶

and tables etc. Be aware of what's around you. Chances are you will not have the space or time to get into textbook shooting stance, so this is where training in one handed close quarter shooting is a must. You should use distractions as they can give you the seconds needed to deploy your weapon or move to cover. When you are out and about on your daily business always consider how you would react if attacked by those around you. The next time you are at the mall or in a coffee shop look around workout if you could access your weapon quickly, are you in a good position, what you could use as cover and how you would exit the building safely!

One of the main things that you need to learn is how to assess someone's body language and control your own. This is very important skill as you need to try to identify someone's intentions and not telegraph to them your potential response.

There are three main components of communication between humans: spoken words contribute 7%, vocal tone

and volume make up 38% and body language makes up 55% of the message. So, let's say you're approached by someone while pumping gas into your car and they are telling you how much they like your car; their breathing rate is shallow and accelerated, their sweating and making agitated movements with their hands. Are you going to engage them in a conversation about the car or read their body language, assess your surrounding and be ready to deploy your weapon?

Start reading people's body language, at a basic level you can generally tell if people are happy, sad or angry. Even though it's not 100% reliable, someone's facial expressions are good indicators to what mental state the person is in. If someone is stressed, their faces will be flushed, they may be sweating, have veins protruding in their neck or forehead and they may be a tensing their facial muscles.

When you are out at the mall or in a restaurant or bar, watch the people around you and try to identify what mood they are

in or what type of discussion they are having with others. It should be easy to identify if a man and a woman are on a romantic date or two business people are having a heated discussion. When in a coffee shop try to determine what people are looking at on their laptops; are they concentrating or goofing around? You must learn to read body language, because this will help you identify, avoid and if necessary react to potential threats.

When a person is involved in a stressful situation their body will undergo over 150 different physical stress reactions. These stress reactions will happen to you and criminals alike, you need to be aware of them and be able to notice them in yourself and others. A bodies stress reactions

include: adrenal surges, increased heart rate and blood circulation, sweating, increased respiration, increased muscular tension, reduced peripheral field of vision, reduced decision-making ability and auditory exclusion.

If you have ever been involved in a car accident, try to remember how you felt just before, during and after then try to remember if you felt any of the above reactions. If you have ever tripped over something and subsequently fell, try to remember what it felt like. For example, did the time between you actually tripping and hitting the floor seem longer than the fraction of a second it took in actuality, were you sweating and was your heart beating rapidly when you hit the floor? ►



“Start reading people's body language, at a basic level you can generally tell if people are happy, sad or angry.”

Learn to read your own body language as well as others. If you are in a situation and your heart rate starts to increase or you start to breathe quickly; try to identify why this is happening. This could be your body's sixth sense telling you that something is not right and to get ready to react to a hostile incident. Look for these stress reactions in people around you. If someone approaches you and their face is flushed, eyes are wide and bloodshot, and they have veins protruding in their forehead and neck, maybe you want to try to avoid them or get ready for a confrontation!

Warning signs that identify someone is agitated and a potential threat include direct prolonged eye contact, flushed face, accelerated breathing rate, sweating, or the veins in the neck and forehead are protruding, fists clenching unclenching, hands moving towards a concealed

weapon, hands rising getting ready to strike, head dropping forward to protect throat, eyes narrowing, looking to see if you are armed or at intended target's areas on your body, changing to side on shooting or fighting stance and lowering the body before launching an attack.

Always remember, if the criminal is street wise they will be monitoring your body language and trying to predict your reactions. You should never give any indication that you are going to defend yourself or are armed. Your reactions should be a total surprise to you attacker. You must have an offensive mindset, not defensive. You should always keep a low profile, do whatever you can to avoid problems. But if put in a situation where you have to use force, the bad guys will be totally overwhelmed. Remember, fighting is for amateurs, you just end things!

Orlando Wilson has worked in the security industry internationally for over 25 years. He has become accustomed to the types of complications that can occur, when dealing with international law enforcement agencies, organized criminal and Mafia groups. He is the chief consultant for Risks Inc. and based in Miami but spends much of his time traveling and providing a wide range of kidnapping prevention and tactical training services to private and government clients.

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