

# SURVIVE IN SIGHT



Ex Navy Seal reveals the **7 SECRETS** to hardening your phone and surviving by being invisible in plain sight

## INTRODUCTION

There's a real problem in the world of disaster preparedness, and it's a problem that isn't talked about. It nullifies almost every strategy you've read about; it doesn't matter if you have 10 years worth of food, or walls that are 20 feet high and 4 feet thick and covered in barbed wire. It doesn't matter if you have 10,000 rounds of ammunition or live in a small group of dedicated die-hards. You could live in the middle of Wyoming, or Australia, for all that it matters, and you still wouldn't be able to avoid the real problem.

The problem that *everyone* talks about is when the "shit hits the fan" (SHTF), but the problem that *nobody* talks about is that no one knows exactly what it will look like. While TV shows and movies portray it as a rough and rapid event like a nuclear bomb or overnight government breakdown, it could just as easily move slowly, creeping up on you over a few months time in the form of gradually increasing protests, or in the course of a few days in the form of high impact weather.

If it's a nuclear bomb, you'll need one solution. If it's government breakdown over a few months, you'll need another solution, and if it's a temporary weather event, you'll need a radically different solution than the first two. All of those can be dealt with, and this book will show you how, but I'll warn you, these are NOT the solutions you've seen before, and if you've bought into the necessity of high walls and heavy weaponry you might want to rethink your position.

You see, we live in an amazingly abundant world right now, and to ignore that fact and live in a manner of complete preparedness for any future disastrous event cuts you off from enjoying what's right in front of you, and what's right in front of you will be talked about endlessly as "the good old days" for years to come if disaster strikes. By missing out on today in order to get ready for tomorrow, you're basically sitting on the sidelines of the big game while you wait for the big game. It doesn't make sense, and it's not necessary.

The slippery slope is that it's so easy to get caught up in the paranoia and consumed by the fear of "what if?" They spend all their time thinking about what might happen and how to prepare for it. It doesn't cost anything to think, you can get lost in fantasy (and nightmare) scenarios and then not have to deal with the reality around you, and you spend far too much energy and "current" life to prepare for possibilities of "future" life. While preparing and thinking about preparing can be healthy in small, controlled doses, in anything much more than that it can cause lasting damage that you won't see right away and it misses the main issue of preparation.

The real issue is that all the solutions offered by mainstream preppers are mutually exclusive; the nuclear event means living in the wilderness, which I certainly won't do for 30 years "just in case". A weather event is something that can actually be enjoyable if you're prepared for it, and can create new alliances for future events. Following a pattern geared solely toward social unrest leading to anarchy can create

more problems than it solves; and living in an isolated commune in such a connected society as ours is just asking for trouble.

How do you prepare for all those at the same time AND enjoy the only thing you truly can enjoy, which is the present moment? I'll tell you, it ain't complicated, but it does take effort.

Home defense is far more a state of mind than it is "stuff". Thick walls, big guns, deep moats and barbed wire (which is what most people think of when they hear "home defense") aren't effective without the right state of mind; an unmanned guard tower led to the deaths of US servicemen in Afghanistan, and they had every physical defense modern technology offers at their disposal. Conversely, with the right mindset you can defend a cardboard box with a box of detergent and a handful of beans.

The basics can be summed up in a few phrases:

- what people don't see they won't pursue
- you don't have to be an impossible target, you just have to be harder than the guy next door
- perception is reality
- concentric rings of defense
- $1+1=3$  (yes, home defense math is different)

The solutions all revolve around the ideas of self reliance, confidence, and common sense. Anyone can have those attributes; they're not reserved for a few ripped and hard commandos, they can be learned easily and implemented throughout the rest of your life. Whether you put them to use in building up physical defenses overnight if that's the need you have tomorrow, or you use them enjoy the life you have today, they can be continually strengthened to meet any challenges you may face.

Before we get deep into the "why" and "how", let's define the problem and the goal we have.

The problem is this: Nobody knows the future. The future could take many forms, only a few of which end in complete disaster. Preparing for more than one of these disasters in any specific physical way has too high of an opportunity cost to live a reasonable "current" life.

The goal is this: To strengthen your solution finding and survival abilities in the form of three attributes: Self reliance, confidence, and common sense. It's simple, it's cheap, and it has worked for thousands of years, from the time of the Greeks until this very day.

Instead of providing you with a hand-holding session in which I increase your dependence on outside sources, this book will increase your independence, so no matter how many or few resources you currently have you will be able to live a far

safer and more enjoyable life once you've read this book. It is just as easy to use if you're homeless on the streets as it is if you're a billionaire on a Montana ranch. Rather than trying to be every detail to everybody, this book focuses on the most powerful tool you have, your mind, and how we can increase your understanding of its use.

It would be foolish for me to try and create a detailed plan for you that is perfectly suited to your house, that's your job! Teaching you **how** to do it and giving you some tips and tricks along the way, that's where the power is, and that what this book is about.

Before we go too much further, let me introduce myself. My name is Tim Keith and I'm a former Navy SEAL. I'm a little different from what you might think of when you imagine a SEAL; I'm not some huge muscle bound gung ho commando, and now that I'm out, I'm way more into gardening than I am shooting. The ideas you're going to pick up in this book came from my experience both in the Teams as a SEAL as well as working as an independent security contractor after I got out. I've helped design and protect high security camps in war zones and I've protected vulnerable assets in port and on the high seas.

As a SEAL I was expected to use the materials at hand to get the job done; you don't always have the entire spectrum of modern warfare technology to fight your battles, sometimes you've got to make do with little more than cammie netting and canteens. It can be done, and in this book I'm going to show you how.

I also want to bring up a point that isn't widely known outside of the SEAL community, and that's just how much time we spend in NOT doing all of those things you've seen on TV. One of the things a SEAL has an absolute excess of is time to chew the fat. As exciting as it may seem to be constantly jumping out of planes or blowing things up, or diving underwater, each one of those "evolutions" as we call them, is primarily made up of sitting around.

Sitting around? Really? Yep, let me give you an example based on executing a training parachute jump onto a target. First, sitting around calling the airfield to arrange a plane. Then, hanging around waiting to pick up the 'chutes from the air loft. Next, sitting on the bus to head to the airfield. Then, sitting at the airfield waiting for the plane to get prepped. Now, standing around with a chute on while weather delays you, then finally getting on the plane for what could be anywhere from a 30 minute to a 3 hour flight before stepping off the plane's ramp into black night and adventure.

Of course, after a few seconds of freefall and a few minutes of canopy work, you land, gather up your 'chute and guess what? Yep, sitting around again waiting for a truck to pick you up.

Don't get me wrong, it's a fun life filled with excitement, but there's a LOT of down time in there where you get to think. What do SEALs do with all this down time? Do they really just sit around? Well, we do, but we're not just vegging out. We're aggressive guys striving to be the very best at everything; if we're going to be sitting around chewing the fat, it's going to a world-class (and working) fat-chewing session.

The first thing that happens with down time is that half the guys sit down. The other half usually stands around, and within about 5 minutes, if there is ANYTHING small and throwable, some kind of contest develops. Usually it's throwing pebbles at something, and within a few tosses by the first guy, everybody is in on the game.

While this pebble throwing is going on, the topics of conversation usually center around three things: What training is next, how much longer you've got in the service, and what we fondly refer to as "The Revolution." You see, every SEAL you'll ever meet has spent countless hours with his buddies debating what will happen when the shit hits the fan. For a group of such capable guys it's a paradise scenario; all of the skills we've learned will actually be useful in everyday life, as opposed to now where they're only applicable in the military.

We'll talk about vehicles, weapons, houses, how best to protect, what food to store, where to store it and why, how to grow food, how to hunt, to forage, what kind of community to build, how much and what type of money to set aside, what we've seen work in countless high threat areas around the world and what our current situation is. As you can see, we cover pretty much every topic of disaster preparedness, and we cover them ad nauseum.

All this is a long and roundabout way of saying that I haven't just spent a few classroom hours learning the basics of home defense, or that I've casually thought about what might happen if the power goes out, or that I've only been interested and exposed to attacking high value targets. I have spent literally thousands of hours talking about strategies for every kind of emergency event with some of the most capable, adaptable, toughest, orneriest and canny soldiers on the planet. When it comes to disaster preparedness, I've got the equivalent of a PhD.

All of this information, the results of countless talks in deserted airfields, of planning attacks on enemy strongholds, of rough and ready military briefs on quiet ships, last minute details shouted during loud helicopter rides, or just sitting around discussing the effectiveness of 7.62 vs 5.56 in some ghost town we used to practice military operations in urban terrain on, all of it is condensed into the practical advice you'll find in this book.

None of what I'm going to tell you is classified, and I think you'll be pleasantly surprised with the practicality of it all, and of the overarching idea. We are practical guys, we SEALs, not pie in the sky dreamers, and we've learned (usually the hard way) what works and what doesn't when there are no rules, when the only law is

what you make yourself, and when a nation and a civilization are counting on you to do the right thing, unseen, unsung, on the far side of the world.

As we go through the basics of disaster preparedness Tim Keith style, I'm going to walk you through the first few steps until you "get it", and then I'll show you ways to figure out the details for your specific situation. That way when you make your plan, whether you're a housewife in Dallas or a waitress in New York, you'll have a custom designed plan that you know inside and out, and if any part of it breaks down you'll know how to fix it because you built it.

We'll begin with the "How". The "How" of anything can be broken down into three phases: Assess, Identify, Rectify. They're easy to remember, it's A.I.R. Everyone needs air to survive, right? Just breathe and you'll remember it.

Let's start with our first general rule, "what people don't see they won't pursue." As you read through and understand the rule, please notice how much depends on your efforts to implement it. Having been in many a hidden spot, and having been uncomfortably discovered a time or two and gotten away a only through luck and quick thinking, I can tell you from long experience that the very best way to protect yourself is to never actually have to defend yourself.

### **CHAPTER 1: What people don't see they won't pursue: The Hidden House**

Have you ever played capture the flag? You might remember this game from way back in summer camp; two teams post flags deep inside their own territory. Your goal is to get your enemy's flag back into your territory. There are only two safe zones for you; within 10 feet of where the enemy flag is placed, and in your own territory. If you're in enemy territory, it's open season. If you're "tagged" by the enemy in their territory, you become a prisoner, and usually sit out the rest of the game in a "POW" area. Tagging can take the form of everything from a gradeschool hand slap to a fully automatic paintball shot guided by laser sights.

Everyone thinks that the secret to winning is a strong offense, but they remember as soon as the game starts that first, they've got to find the flag. A team that can successfully "hide" their flag can usually win the game because they can devote the majority of their time to searching out the enemy flag, and relatively little energy in defending their own.

This principle of "hidden defense" holds as true in home defense as it does in children's games; what people don't see they won't pursue. If you can hide your home from attention, even while it's in plain site, nobody will think to search it; they won't see it! Once it's known what you have, and attention is drawn to it, well, you saw what happened with WMD and Iraq; an entire country was invaded at a cost of billions of dollars and thousands of lives lost.

It doesn't cost much more than effort and thought to hide your home, you strengthen the essential habits of confidence, self-reliance, and common sense while

you do it, and it can build exactly the kind of non-physical defense that can be essential in almost every survival situation. This is one of the best “first steps” you can take, as it’s not that difficult, it trains the essential qualities, and the results will last without any noticeable further input.

How do you hide your home? Remember A.I.R.? First you’ll need to ASSESS your current position. While the specifics are different for everybody, I’ve included a checklist of the essential basics at the end of this chapter. Take care of those and the details will work out.

Start by taking a walk around your neighborhood. Imagine yourself as hungry, or poor, or cold and tired. Which houses scream out to you “come on in!” Which houses do you barely register? Which houses do you walk by and not even notice the house?

Now that you’ve assessed the neighborhood, it’s time to use the I in A.I.R. and IDENTIFY the signs of a great hidden house. Note that you don’t have to physically hide your house, although that helps. It’s just as effective to blend your house in so it goes unnoticed even when it’s in plain site.

Houses with signs of wealth outside, like expensive cars, well kept gardens, lit up windows, water features or fountains all tell a tale of further wealth and “safety” to be had inside the house. Perhaps you enjoy some of those benefits of the modern life yourself, the key here is to be able to quickly transform your house into an unremarkable, even unnoticeable property.

Take note especially of those houses that you have trouble remembering; use Google earth for this. Once you get home, bring up your neighborhood on Google Earth and “re-trace” your footsteps virtually.

I’ve taken some Google Earth screen shots for you to show you what I’m talking about. Take a look at this image and note the brown house on the left. See it?



Exactly! You don't even notice it, sitting as it is between the grey house and the tan house.

It's only when you walk right by it



that you notice it, and even then it's shadowed a bit by the trees

Print out an image if you need to, going through it and marking every house. Do you remember that house well? Give it a 1. Did this one blend in a little? 2 points. Did you completely miss that one? 3 points. If you saw one that was so blatant and obvious that you laughed as you went by, give it a big ol' goose egg. Are there ones you didn't even notice? Great! You've got a teacher in your own neighborhood who will give you information for free that is custom tailored to your area. That's something that not even I can do!

Now we move into the R of A.I.R. and RECTIFY any problems. Some very effective ways to hide your home are:

- bushes and shrubbery in front. Much more effective than a wall (which begs to be peeked over), bushes and shrubs give off a "natural" look and are equally at home in our modern enjoyable life or in a post-apocalyptic government meltdown. Many times they are walked by without you knowing there's a house behind them!
- a house set back behind other houses, perhaps at the end of a driveway
- houses with nondescript yards that require little or no upkeep, xeriscaping is a great way to landscape

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### XERISCAPE BOX

The word xeriscape comes from the Greek "xeros", meaning "dry", and landscape. It is a way to garden that reduces or eliminates the need for extra water. You can xeriscape in a couple of ways. First (and easiest), use plants that don't need a ton of water, plants that are adapted to dry living. Examples of these are cacti and succulents. This has an added benefit of presenting a "don't tread on me" look to your house. You may or may not like that look, and there are plenty of ways to



design a xeriscape landscape that are inviting and peaceful. Note in the picture the beauty of it mixed a little bit with the “spikiness” of that huge aloe plant. Great messages for times of peace as well as the hard times.



A second, more advanced way of xeriscaping depends heavily on spacing and building up the soil. The idea behind this is that each plant needs a specific amount of water. In a conventional garden, the soil surrounding a plant can neither hold enough water for the plant nor, with the close spacing endemic to conventional gardens, provide enough water for all the plants that are tightly squeezed into a small space. You can remedy this by amending your soil with compost and minerals AND by increasing your plant spacing dramatically, allowing each plant’s roots to really reach out and grow into their full space capacity.

Using this second manner allows you to grow vegetables as well as decorative plants, an excellent strategy for long term food provisions.

Whichever way you decide to xeriscape, as we move into exaggerated seasonal swings this will become more and more important.

END XERISCAPE BOX

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-large glass windows can offer current account enjoyability, but beg to be broken during troubled times. Think about how you could quickly transform them from entry points into vantage points; could you quickly reinforce them with plywood, could you use breezeblock to create cover, or could you grow a tree or bushes in front of them to hide their vulnerability? That way you can have your cake and eat it too.

- park your car in your garage. Nothing screams wealth like a car parked in the driveway when there's a garage available; what do you think is in the garage?
- neutral paint colors that make your house blend in to others in the neighborhood.

As you go through and implement the various suggestions and use the checklist, notice how the three essentials of survival being to emerge; self reliance comes out because no one else can go out and do this for you, you have to do it yourself. Confidence comes from actually walking out and moving among your neighbors by yourself, and also comes from implementing some of the methods and techniques; there's nothing for building confidence quite like doing your own home project! Common sense is developed as you take a look at my suggestions, bring them to bear on your own property and see what will work and what doesn't fit.

If you're looking to buy a house, then looking for a house set back from the street is a viable option, but if you've already moved in, moving your entire house to the back of the property just isn't reasonable. One of the most powerful tools in your arsenal is your ability to look at the world you live in and apply common sense solutions; start at home and grow your power!

### **Hide your house checklist:**

#### **ASSESS**

- assess your home against homes around you
- print out a Google Earth map use the following point system to rate houses in your neighborhood: 3 points for fully "hidden", 2 points for nondescript, 1 point for out in plain site, and 0 for screaming neon.
- assess both from a "bird's eye" view and from the street view you get from walking around.

#### **IDENTIFY**

- identify the most attractive targets
- identify the least attractive targets, homes around you that draw little or no attention

#### **RECTIFY**

- write down what blares "break in here" and what doesn't speak a word in specific forms for your neighborhood: "Smith's house with Porsche in front will be the first to go, but I'd never even realized that an old woman lived in a small house behind the fencerow! Bamboo works really well here."
- use your self-reliance, confidence, and common sense to bolster your "passive" home defense of hiding your house.
- plant trees or bushes to screen the view in
- paint your house a neutral color
- move your car out of the driveway
- make removeable all exterior signs of wealth or plenty

## **CHAPTER 2: You don't have to be an impossible target, you just have to be harder than the guy next door.**

This lesson has been learned the hard way by far too many over the years. As an example, an American diplomat in Greece was targeted to be murdered by a terrorist group. The terrorists were going to plant a bomb in the diplomat's car, but before they did, they, like anyone else, went through a surveillance period. First, they assessed the diplomat.

They noticed that every morning when he went out to his car he did a very thorough check of it, even looking underneath the car every day in a methodical manner, carefully checking to make sure no one had tampered with his vehicle. After a few weeks of surveillance, the terrorist cell decided that if this diplomat spent as much time as he did on checking his car out in the morning he would probably be too hard of a target to hit with a car bomb, and by extension a hard target to hit anywhere. They decided to call off the hit on this particular diplomat and focus on other targets who weren't so thorough in their personal security measures.

End of story, right? Nope! When the terrorist cell was eventually discovered and rooted out years later (see how powerful a "hidden defense" can be?!), their notes on the planned attack were discovered. By this time, the diplomat had moved to another post, but due to his impressive preventative measures, the State Department interviewed him in order to learn his very thorough and effective method of vehicle inspections. It turns out that he had an oil leak, and was just checking to see how bad it was, so he looked underneath the car every morning! That's what saved his life; not armed guards, or dogs, or walls, or anything technologically advanced, nothing more than a simple oil leak and the appearance of a steadfast determination to observe security precautions.

This powerful method works exceptionally well almost everywhere you apply it; it works as well on the African plains as it does in the streets of New York. You don't have to be the fastest gazelle on the plains, you just have to be a little bit faster than the slowest gazelle. In fact, this method is so effective that entire books have been written about it, including a famous book called "On the Origin of Species" (the theory of evolution) by Charles Darwin.

Evolution and survival cull out the very weakest, most unfit. They don't punish the second tier up, or anything beyond that. In the same manner, you don't have to be the toughest nut in your neighborhood, you just have to be a little tougher than the folks around you.

This principle is the one used by various security companies when they put a sticker in your window. All of their security features are relatively easy to circumvent if you know what you're doing, but why bother going to the effort of circumvention when a crook can just as easily go next door?

Now, the really powerful part of this idea is that it can be scaled for targets all the way from choosing between 2 people to choosing between 2 cities. This means that you can share this idea with neighbors in order to make your whole neighborhood, and not just your house, a “tougher nut to crack.”

This is a key element of overall survival, this idea of building not just yourself up, but your neighbors as well. It sounds counterintuitive to this rule, because if your neighbors all get tougher, then your property could be the “weak” one at risk, right? Wrong! If every house in a neighborhood looks like it has been prepared for home defense, no crook in his right mind will stop to look for the “weakest of the tough”, they’ll just move on to another neighborhood!

This idea also speaks strongly to the idea of enjoying the life you have now; by building a community that is preparing for the future together it makes it much easier and more enjoyable to enjoy the present together. This is an important idea, and one worth delving further into now. This one is the concept of “Smoke ‘em if ya got ‘em”, and it’s important enough that I’ll revisit it throughout the book.

One of the mistakes made by many preppers is to live in the future. Look, there is NOTHING wrong with thinking about what might happen and preparing for it, but changing your entire present life in order to be prepared for a future possibility? That’s crazy! Think about how many gloom and doom predictions there have been, and think about how many have come true.

The current period is almost a carbon copy re-run of the 70’s; remember how many people had chicken coops, were growing their own food and building bunkers for a nuclear apocalypse? Here’s the kicker; think about how many of those people have since changed and moved back to the life they had? The disheartening truth is that the majority of them did, and only when they came back into a normal society did they realize how much time they’d lost.

Look, it’s a lot of fun to live out in the boonies for a while and be totally responsible for your own life, but it’s not the full potential that you can realize in today’s world.



Is isolation and total self reliance a clean life? Sure. Is it simple? Absolutely. Can you be satisfied living out where no one else can see you, where you can walk around naked anytime you want, and you are completely off the grid in a way that no one “owns” you? Without question you can be, but...

The flip side is that by living in that manner you don't get to explore and experience the many amazing and wonderful things that a modern life offers. I'm not talking about ice creams and candy bars, you can make those yourself, I'm talking about the kinds of experiences that are *impossible* to have when you're isolated. I'm talking about building a close knit community of neighbors who live within walking distance, who can go their own way while you go yours but still be able to come together at the end of a day and share the things they saw, sometimes things that you'll never see.

I'm talking about creating your own successful life, whether it's building a business or working for a great company. I'm talking about the extraordinary health power of remaining connected to humanity in all it's glorious weirdness (and believe me, we can get pretty weird) and then, at any time, being able to cut those ties and venture off into your own new adventure and community, whether it's forced by a disaster or a choice you make on your own.

That community is an essential part of our make up as humans. Sure, you can go off and live in the woods with your family and be safe and fine, but let me tell you; I have traveled the world, been in more countries than I can count, lived on a sailboat

for months at a time (sailing, mind you, not just anchored in some pampered harbor), sharing meals and extended stays with people from all walks of life, and out of the hundreds if not thousands of people I have met, I have only met 1 family whose children were not in some way warped out of reality due to constant close proximity to only a few people.

See, I'm not telling you it can't be done, and there are plenty of snot-nosed little buggers raised up in a "normal" society who are just as batshit crazy as the kid I met on his parent's boat in Mexico with only his parents for company. That kid had no sense of humor, no sense of connectivity with other people, and a complete loss of child like qualities. He was an adult in a 7 year old body, which means he's going to miss out on 18 years of the normal growing up cycle and it'll change him for next 60.

What sane person would offer that up for their child, or themselves? This book wasn't written for the wolfmen (and women) of Maine or Montana who are happy to live in a cave and subsist on raw venison and berries in season. I wrote this for people like me, people who want to enjoy the good life while it's here and then, IF something happens, be as prepared for it as they are for the stock market to rise or fall, for a nuclear disaster to hit or not, who can weather any storm and enjoy all the best qualities of any event. This is your right and your responsibility, and by being prepared for anything, from ultimate success to ultimate failure, you've taken some very important steps toward fulfilling your potential.

For now, let's get back on the "hard target" track, but keep in mind the higher purpose of all this, and weave it into your survival plans no matter what they are.

Before we go much further, rest assured I'm not talking about a castle next to a regular house, here's an example of a "harder" target in a regular suburban neighborhood:



A garden in front lets you know that the people care about their food. As silly as it sounds, the Jeep in the driveway projects that “tough” Jeep image, and the house itself has high windows to watch out of and doesn’t have huge plate glass windows across the front of the house. Again, we’re not talking about making your house the hardest target possible, just a “pass on by” kind of place.

This place is right down the street and all those windows just beg to be broken into:



Let’s talk about some “hard target” suggestions and some things you can do that don’t cost anything extra, and then we’ll finish up with an easy checklist you can print out and go through on your own.

Just as we did with the “Hidden House” principle, we’ll use the A.I.R. method to help develop a strong plan of action for making you and your property a harder target. First, ASSESS your neighborhood. Which looks like it’s the toughest house to break

into? Which looks like an easy target? What are the commonalities between “tough” targets in your neighborhoods? “Weak” ones?

Think about how you can make not just your house, but the whole neighborhood a tough target, and think about how that “future-proofing” can benefit you today.

Now IDENTIFY the key elements in your house and the houses around you by writing down what works at what doesn't, like this: “Huge windows in the front of Joe's house, could we screen those with bushes or trees? Megan's house looks like it's not worth breaking into; all the junk in her driveway is a clear message that there's only more of the same inside, plus she seems a little crazy; might have a gun.”

Finally, RECTIFY the issues you found. Use your common sense to figure out the best way to do this; it may be as easy as planting a fruit tree in front of a window or as complex as adding twists and turns to a long driveway. Whatever you do, keep in mind that you don't have to be impregnable, you just have to be tougher than the houses near you.

#### **“Toughen up” checklist:**

##### **ASSESS**

- what does my neighborhood look like?
- how does my house fit in on the “toughness scale?”

##### **IDENTIFY**

- are entryways easy to see and get to?
- are there a lot of windows that offer easy entry? How can those be mitigated?
- what is the appearance of my house? Is it obvious who (an older woman, a young man, a small family, a gang of thugs) lives here?
- are there any ways I can set up my house to quickly switch from warm and welcoming to tough and bristly?

##### **RECTIFY**

- security stickers on the windows
- Heavy metal signs for the lawn with “Guarded, keep out” are easy to set up in an emergency but can be stored during the good times.
- metal screens to be quickly placed over doors and windows
- locks on back gate fences
- motion detector lights around the house

### **CHAPTER 3: PERCEPTION IS REALITY**

When I first checked on board to a SEAL Team I was all fired up for what I expected would be a non-stop roller coaster ride of kicking necks and cashing checks, so you can imagine my chagrin when an older guy pulled me aside and said “Hey, New Guy: Perception is reality. Get a fucking haircut.”



His point was not that I wouldn't be a good SEAL, it wasn't that I wasn't strong enough or couldn't shoot straight or set up demolitions or a dive rig, it was that I didn't *look* like I could. For all the pictures you see in the media lately about the SEAL Teams and how wild they look, for the right time and occasion, they know the critical importance of being able to look every part the consummate professional. Here's the distinction; in their off time, or when in the field, you'd have a hard time recognizing them as the guy who, when it was time to brief a mission looked like a spit-shined soldier. Like professionals around the world, they know that as shallow as it seems, image matters, and they know how to dress the part.

It doesn't hurt that that they know how to act the part, and do it better than every other unit on the planet, but they wouldn't get the big important jobs if they couldn't play both sides of the warrior statesmen.

That idea is just as true in the world of home defense as it is in the SEAL Teams, and it's the basis for many a victory pulled out of the jaws of defeat. From the tale of the Trojan Horse to puffed up roosters in a barnyard, what you see can be deceptively powerful in affecting what you believe.

How is this possible? Humans are, for the most part, extraordinarily visual and emotional creatures. What we *see* and *feel* affects how we behave far more than what we stop and think about. Let me demonstrate this idea of visual power with a thought experiment.

Imagine for a moment that you are walking through your neighborhood. It's at night, and as you enjoy the gentle night air and walking on your favorite route, you notice two large shadows creeping towards you. Instantly your senses go on high alert, your heart quickens, your breaths become shallow, your muscles tighten up in the classic fight or flight response. This could be a fight for your life! These guys are sneaking along, looking for a victim just like you!

The shadows step out into the light and become a couple quietly engaged in deep conversation as they too enjoy the night. You breathe a sigh of relief, maybe say something like, "Wow, you scared me!" Your body starts to calm down, but it can be minutes or hours before you shake off the biological effects of the adrenaline dumped into your bloodstream.

This is a classic example of perceptions becoming reality, if only for 30 seconds. Think about it; you were ready to *fight for your life* or *run for your life*! Those are costly physical actions, and to base that decision on what you see *without thinking* is irrational! That is exactly the point, your visual perceptions can work just as well for you as they can against you.

The other extraordinarily powerful piece to a perception is the emotional response. As a rule, humans are emotional inclined toward acting based on fear far more than

on greed. This idea is the basis of using the idea of “Perception is Reality” in your home defense plan.

As much as we’d each like to think we rule ourselves with ration and constraint, the human history is one of emotional chaos. Think back to the last time you were angry, or sad, or even ebullient; how did that affect your *rational* actions?

There may have been a time to make a good decision that you saw, acknowledged, and blew right past. I have certainly made that mistake, and more than a few times, but again, it’s the human condition. We can deny it exists and continue making the same mistakes, or we can acknowledge it and in our saner moments create a structure where this powerful rule works *for* us.

So how does this change your home defense plan? It allows you to control the perception, both visually and emotionally, of your home in a structured way. When it’s time to enjoy the good life, you can let it all hang out and be relaxed with your neighbors. When it comes time to get in the trenches and present the image of a wild savage not to be trifled with, you have a plan.

I’ll give you the broad concepts of the plan and the image, but as always, the details are up you to. Rather than hold your hand throughout the process and end up with a weaker human for it, I’m going to guide you to walk your own path, providing a method to increase your self reliance, confidence, and common sense.

Let’s start with an understanding of how perceptions work, and how to leverage common human perceptions in order to guide would be intruders away from your house and neighborhood.

What are humans visually inclined to avoid? The idea of being watched, dark spaces, sharp or pointed edges, inclines to move up, slippery or slimy areas, and dark water. How do you currently present your home to the world? Hopefully in the opposite way of all of those! Remember, we live in a time of plenty and the present moment is the only one you can ever physically enjoy, so it doesn’t make sense to make your home a scary and uncomfortable space right now; just have a plan for it in the future.

This is a point worth making more than once: As you move through your current life with all of it’s amenities, you can continue to share and show your life through anything from a front yard vegetable garden (excellent for building community relations, which are incredibly important not matter what your situation) to enjoying the view through large windows, to a roaring fire and soft cushions.

All of those are part of enjoying what we have; you don’t have any choice regarding where or when you’re born, it’s a lot of fun to work hard and be rewarded well for it, and it’s foolish to spit in the face of good fortune, no matter how small or large, so while it’s here, *enjoy it!*

Just be ready when the time comes to be able to turn the *perception* of outsiders regarding all of those things on its head. A vegetable garden is a sign of resourcefulness, self reliance, confidence, and common sense no matter how you look at it. You can choose to make it inviting with signs to your neighbors asking them to help you share the bounty just as easily as you can place a new sign on it reminding people that this garden and the property are guarded by women (or men) who can handle a gun just as well as they handle a shovel.

While it's more effective to actually be able to back it up, anyone who reads that sign is going to think long and hard before taking a step onto your property, and they're much more likely to follow the path you've laid out for them (NOT bothering you) if you followed the advice in chapter two and made yourself a harder target than the one next to you.

A classic example of an excellent *perceptual deterrent* is a barking dog. [Full disclosure: As an avid dog lover and someone who has rescued more than one of the little yippers, I'll be the first to admit I've got a bias toward dog ownership.] Now, with that out of the way, it is a well known fact that a barking dog is one of the easiest ways to get people to move on from your property. It doesn't matter if it's a Chihuahua yapping or a Belgian Malinois getting ready for some hard and pipe hittin' bite work, the bark of any dog is a two part deterrent. First, it's a noise, something that alerts both owners and neighbors that something isn't right. Whether it's a fire in the kitchen or an intruder at the back gate, a dog will usually know about it long before you, and they'll pass that message on to you as clearly as they can. Second, the bark of a dog summons to the imagination of an intruder the thought of sharp teeth and the pain of a potential bite, and remember earlier I wrote that sharp pointy things are an effective deterrent?

Now, this is not to say that a dog is an unbeatable defense; it clearly is not. Still, it's the idea that it is a *perceptive deterrent* that allows you in normal times to enjoy the good life (there's not many things more unrestrained in their love and joy than a dog greeting you at the door) AND, when times get tough, to have an easy way to let potential intruders know that this is a house serious about security, and not a house worth the potential pain of entry.

Does this make sense yet? Remember, home defense is not about living in a heavily fortified castle waiting for the "just-in-case" scenario. Modern home defense is about living a good and full and healthy life prepared for anything. That anything can be as bad as full societal breakdown and death squads in the streets to as good as developing your own independence and enjoying all the warm and beautiful things a loving and supportive community can provide. A lot of that has to do with perception. Let's move on to the "how".

The way to develop an effective perception for your situation is to run through the A.I.R. process. First, ASSESS what your house currently presents. By this time you

should have a good idea of how well your property is hidden and how hard of a target your home *actually* is, now we're going to see just how much you can change the perception so it *seems* to be a much harder target.

Next, IDENTIFY possible deterrents to entry. Do you have a gate that you could add a row of spikes to the top of? They don't need to be a permanent addition, you can do it yourself or hire a handyman, the important point is to make it visually appear to be a heavily fortified space. Can you quickly darken your house, making it visually much less appealing? At the same time, can you direct powerful lights to shine *out* so it's much harder to see *in*? Lights that shine out give a strong sense of being watched, and not many humans enjoy the feeling of being observed from a hidden vantage point.

Notice how none of these are difficult or permanent additions. All of them can be quickly turned from enjoyment of your present life to defense of a possible future life, which means that you can get full use out of them whether you live in a bountiful world or a place of scarcity.

Finally, RECTIFY the problem areas you see. Get out of the house and get your hands dirty! Take the checklist at the end of this chapter with you, along with any notes you have and either make the changes or prepare the changes to be made at a moment's notice.

As you can see, none of these actions cost much in either money, time, or much more importantly, current opportunity. It's worth saying over and over again that preparing for the future does NOT mean missing out on the present. With the proper mindset and by focusing on self reliance, confidence, and common sense, you can build the life of your dreams that will outlast any nightmare scenario.

## **PERCEPTION CHECKLIST**

### **ASSESS**

- what is the current perception of my house? Is it warm and inviting? Why?
- what does my neighborhood look like? Do some of my neighbors have more inviting houses than others? What is different about them that I can use?

### **IDENTIFY**

- what is the easiest thing for me to add that falls into the list of visual deterrents?
  - the idea of being watched
  - dark spaces
  - sharp or pointed edges
  - inclines to move up
  - slippery or slimy areas
  - dark water
- is there a gate or other visual barrier around my property? If not, how can I quickly and easily erect one?

## **RECTIFY**

- set up lights that can be used for landscape lighting in good times and as “I’m watching you” spotlights in time of emergency
- create shadows and dark spaces in and right next to the house. You can use your spotlights to accentuate those shadows.
- develop a plan for emphasizing the sharp and pointy things in your garden. Weld up a top cover of spikes for your gate, think about putting metal spikes on “storm windows”, or strategically plant spiky cacti around your entrances
- inclines are easy to make, it’s as simple as a 4 x 8 piece of  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” plywood painted black and propped up on hinged 2 x 4s. They are not that effective physically, but visually they scream “this person is SERIOUS about home defense. Easy to store, quick to set up and breakdown, these create mini inclines anywhere your property can use them.
- slippery and slimy areas can be accentuated if you have them, but are usually not worth the trouble of creating on your own. Marshland, swampland, and mud flats are all elements to be used if available.
- Dark water is a weird one. It’s not that difficult to build a small pond that any child could climb out of; it doesn’t need to be deep. The mere presence of a dark pool of water can visually deter anyone sneaking around, and there’s nothing more distracting than a bootful of cold water when you’re not expecting it.

## **CHAPTER 4: USE CONCENTRIC RINGS OF DEFENSE**

This brings us to a more “strategic” level of thinking. The first rules (what people don’t see they won’t pursue, you don’t have to be an impossible target, you just have to be harder than the guy next door, and perception is reality) can be applied concretely; this rule requires more birdseye thinking.

This “birdseye” or “10,000 foot” thinking is a reference to getting some real distance (or elevation) on a problem and seeing what actually invites the problem in. This is the kind of thinking used by generals deciding major strategic movements, and is an important part of developing your self reliance, confidence, and common sense.

For the most part, strategic thinking is made up of practical knowledge based on experience applied to solve a problem. Every so often you’ll make a leap of faith (and genius) and come up with some awesomely creative solution, but don’t worry if that doesn’t happen every time. That brings to mind another saying from the Teams: “If it’s stupid and it works, it’s not stupid.”

Never be afraid to come up with your own solutions and if they work, implement them. It’s the easiest way to continually develop your self reliance, confidence, and common sense.

The idea of concentric rings of defense is not a new one, in fact, it dates back to the very first human settlements that had a fence around them and a hut or other structure inside the fence. The idea, in a nutshell, is to create multiple lines of defense that progressively become harder and harder to penetrate.

A easy to understand example is the lead singer of a band at a rock concert. If you want to meet him (or her), you're going to have to get through the concentric rings of defense. The first line of defense for them is a gated entry into the parking lot. Easy enough for most people to pass, and in modern society all it takes is the ability to pay the parking fee. Still, that fee keeps out people who might, if they saw the singer in a grocery store, line up for autographs.

Next, you'll need to pass barrier number two: the ticket counter. This is a slightly higher barrier to entry, namely because the fee is higher, and less people are willing to pay it. You've already removed the general population by two steps and now the number of fans willing to rush the stage is a discrete number (as opposed to an unimaginably huge horde.)

Before any fans get closer, they usually have to get down to the pit in front of the stage, and if it's anything like the rock concerts I've been to, there's a pretty rowdy crew of folks down there; that's ring number 3 in this "concentric rings" idea. It's now getting harder and harder to get through these defenses and, more importantly, there's very minimal "cost" to the defender; moshers LOVE to mosh!

There are two more rings to go; first, you've got to actually get up on the stage, which can post varying degrees of difficulty and is much more difficult if there are active security members. This is a great example of a passive defensive feature; it costs something to build, but once erected requires only minimal maintenance and is super effective; how many people do you know who can easily scramble up onto a 6 or 7 foot ledge?

Finally, you've got to get through security members who are watching the stage just for people (a.k.a. "threats") like you. Think about the genius of this! Instead of having to watch the 7 billion people who inhabit the planet (outside ring 1) or the 20,000 people in the parking lot (ring 2) or the 10,000 people at the concert (ring 3) or the 200 people in the mosh pit (ring 4), they only have to *watch for* the 10-20 people who try to climb on stage (ring 5) and they only have to *act on* the 1 or 2 (ring 6) enterprising fans who actually climb up to greet the singer.

Think of this whole idea as a numbers game; you're eliminating people from affecting you through passive measures, and you're getting the number of people who actually get through the outer defenses to a reasonable enough number to handle. You're also putting them in a position of being tired and having exhausted resources to get to you, all at no long term cost to you.

Can you see how powerful this idea is? It has stuck around so long because it works so well, and it is used everywhere there is a need for security. Whether it's the President giving a speech in a tight urban environment, a soldier in the mountains of Afghanistan setting up a hide site, or a single woman in the suburbs, this idea will work for you.

What lines of defense protect you now? For many of us, we tend to think of whether or not we have a fence around our yard, and that being our first line of defense, but you can think beyond the fence (and outside the box) about every single ring of defense you can use, starting with your neighborhood.

Now you can see these ideas beginning to tie together; the idea that people won't pursue what they don't see is an outside ring of defense. The idea that you don't have to be an impossible target, just harder than the targets around you, is another ring. The "perceptual reality" of how hard a target your home is a third ring of defense; do you see how little these very effective defenses will cost you if you take the time now to put them into effect?

Just because "rings" is in the name doesn't mean that these have to be perfectly symmetrical circles around your house and property; you can develop and direct these lines of defense to provide additional benefit. One reason we use flexible concentric rings of defense is to allow us to direct attackers into what we call a *fatal funnel*. This is a place that we have thought about and designed beforehand to convey as much advantage as possible to the defender and as little advantage as possible to an attacker.

An example of a *fatal funnel* is the pathway that runs from the public property to your door. You deflect potential intruders via walls, fences, prickly plants, dark spaces, inclines etc to use this pathway, whether it's a concrete walkway, a walled alley or something as simple as a sandy path lined with rocks, and then you set the path up so at a certain point all the advantages lie with you.

It could be a turn in the path leads to an incline that visitors have to walk up. In times of peace and plenty this is just an opportunity to gain some (micro) elevation and enjoy a view, but in time of danger this can be a way to force attackers to struggle up an incline slippery with oil, backed at the bottom by a thorny bush or metal spikes and bounded on either side by a high hedge. If you're sitting up high, either on your roof or at the top of the path, you can see who's coming and prepare for them at the top of the hill; the element of surprise, traditionally an advantage of the attacker, is in your favor as they come around the corner and into your funnel.

What are some other ways you can use concentric rings of defense? So far we've thought of this "from the outside in", now I'd like you to switch gears and think from the inside out. What is your last line of defense? It's you! You can work on the basic skills of self defense, but this can be both the hardest and the easiest line for an attacker to cross; think about how hard it would be to take down a professional

MMA fighter when he's ready and warmed up versus when he's peacefully sleeping; I know when I'd approach if I had a choice! Think of your alertness as your last line of defense, and build the next ring to trigger that alertness.

In the previous chapter I suggested a dog as a great way to maintain an alert posture and as a perceptual deterrent, but there are other ways to trigger your alertness and set up that first concentric ring. Remember, this isn't something you have to have all the time, and for some of them it'll be highly inappropriate in normal circumstances, but if you invest time now in thinking about and preparing for these rings of defense it'll pay off handsomely in the event of disaster.

So, imagine your last line of defense, your alertness, is down; you're tired and you've gone to sleep. What needs to happen to wake you up? For most of us, a few loud noises will do. You could invest in a whiz bang security system around your house (and I'm certainly not telling you not to), but if the power goes out and you don't have any kind of back up energy supply then the system is useless. A great back up, one that's easy to implement, very effective, and pretty cheap is to string a bunch of empty cans on either a thin line or a piece of barbed wire and lay it out by the door or any points of approach to your sleeping quarters. You can keep this device under your bed for those times when you want to enjoy the good life and not freak out visitors; very rarely do houseguests peek under beds.

In the event of an emergency though, if you do need to get to sleep and haven't yet implemented the very last step in this book (which I'll get to in the next chapter), drag the "noiseline" out and you can sleep peacefully knowing that something as simple and cheap as twisted wire and empty cans will tangle any intruder's feet and give you the seconds you need to get ready to repel an attack or summon help.

Now that we've addressed the most important line of defense (your awareness), think about the basics of denying access to your living quarters. Locks on doors & windows are standard, and metal grates or plywood barriers that can be placed over windows are easy to make and store, and can be quickly put into place, adding not just to the physical security but acting as an effective visual deterrent.

The outside of your house can offer both visual and physical deterrence, just remember that what you're after for the *possible* future usually doesn't match what you need for the *present* moment, and while moats and walls and fences and barbed wire are effective barriers, they tend to turn friendly visitors away as well.

If you're in the process of building your house, think about reinforcing the street facing walls with steel plate or sandbags hidden inside the walls, but if, like the majority of us, you already are in a house and you're happy with the set up and layout, think about what you can do in the course of an afternoon or two to turn your current welcome and inviting property into one that clearly says "Well guarded. Don't bother us."



Now we're a few rings out, think about what's in between your house and the fence (if you have one.) This is building on all you've learned so far, so both the perception and the reality of your defenses begins to matter here. Remember, any one ring doesn't have to block the entire horde by itself, you've just got to steadily eliminate threats as they get closer and closer.

A lot of times folks will focus on the actual implements of defense and expend tons of time and energy in bulldozing earth or building walls and fences. While building stuff is always fun, remember that humans are primarily visual creatures and respond well to signs. It can be as easy as keeping a couple of "Keep Out" signs in the garage, along with escalating force signs that can be made or scavenged. "Use of deadly force authorized" is a great way to let people know where you stand on trespassing issues, and you can find these signs at government auctions for dirt cheap.

Remember back to the "perception is reality" rule. You don't have to build an actual castle, you just have to make each ring have the appearance of being not worth the effort to penetrate.

Again, rings don't have to be physical barriers, they can be perceived barriers as well. People, especially folks intent on negative activities, don't like to be watched, so one of your rings of defense can simply be a "watching" network of your neighbors and posting signs throughout the neighborhood that your area is one that people care about and watch over.

Once you get to the boundaries of your neighborhood, start looking at potential access points, whether those are landscape barriers like cliffs or rivers, human built access ways like roads or paths, or simply beaches and other open space. How can you quickly bolster those from being easy access points in times of peace and plenty to vigilantly guarded security checkpoints?

Now let's recap and apply our A.I.R. metric.

"Concentric rings of defense" is a concept that uses progressively more difficult "filters" to dissuade people from actually entering your house. The furthest ring out usually eliminates the most people, and each ring eliminates a percentage of what is left. The intent is to reduce the numbers of potential threats down to a manageable level for whatever your defenses are, and to allow you to "prepare the battlespace" so that all the advantages are in your favor.

Implementing concentric rings of defense is as easy as using the A.I.R. metric. First, ASSESS your current situation. Take a walk around your neighborhood and look for possible "ring" placement. What is already in place? Are your neighbors amenable to implementing basic rings of defense? Take a look at Google Earth and think about what you can use that's already there.

In this picture, what are the natural rings of defense?

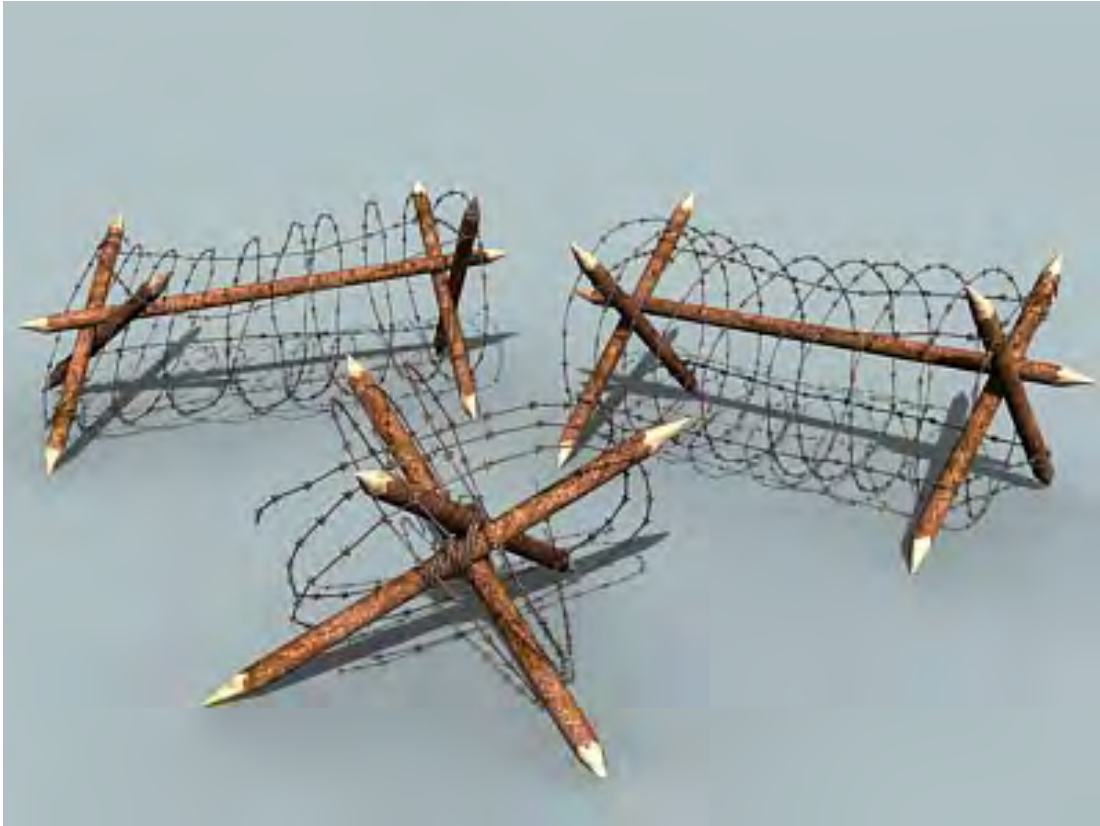


When I look at it I see the rivers and beach as natural barriers, and I see the two main bridges at the top as possible fatal funnels.

When we zoom in a little, we this:



This is a classic suburban neighborhood, probably a lot like yours. In times of peace and plenty all the driveways are open and the alley is accessible to anyone. It wouldn't be that hard to spend a weekend making blockades out of wood and barbed wire to block all those entry points and create an additional "ring of defense" that also is a perceptual block and advertises that this is a "tough target".



You could store the wood and barbed wire in a garage or the corner of a property in this block until needed, preserving the image of a welcoming block until you need to change that image.

Using those same barriers you could implement a single access point that acts as a fatal funnel. See how easy this is?

Remember, this is the thinking stage, don't rush it, take your time, and if possible, get a second opinion from trusted neighbors or friends. It can sting a little to have your plan shot full of holes, but it's way better than YOU being shot full of holes, which is what could happen if you don't subject your plan to rigorous assessment.

This planning stage is so important to your sense of self-reliance and common sense; YOU are the one responsible for your safety, and YOU are the one who can and will implement all these tools. None of them mean you have to give up freedom or enjoyment of the present moment "just in case", they just mean that you've taken the time upfront to invest in yourself by thinking about possible scenarios.

Next, you'll need to IDENTIFY both what you have and what you don't. What are your "last line" rings of defense, the ones inside your house? What are the mid-line rings, the ones around your property and maybe your neighbors? Is there a way to use your current landscaping to create a "fatal funnel"? Finally, what are the outside rings, the ones that filter out a ton of people? How many entrances to your

neighborhood are there, and could you easily block them if you had to? Are there physical and geographical barriers around you? What materials will you need to build up the rings of defense you identified in the assessment stage?

Finally, RECTIFY any problems you've identified, and implement any solutions you've come upon. Gather your materials, schedule a few work days, and build up what you'll need for alerting you to intruders or building barriers or painting signs. Move some earth around if you need to, or just plant bushes in a way to funnel attackers where you want them to go.

Making and building stuff is a great way to build confidence. Many of these are not technically difficult projects; how much schooling do you need to string wire through empty cans? Remember, the bulk of success in a defense plan comes from foresight; the advantage will always lay with the more prepared side; take the time now to decide which side you'll be on when your life is on the line.

## **RINGS OF DEFENSE CHECKLIST**

### **ASSESS:**

- walk around your neighborhood and look for the natural lines for rings of defense
- print out a Google Earth map to take with you, it helps to have an aerial vantage point
- spend some time thinking about the path people currently take to your house and if that differs from the path you'd want an attacker to take

### **IDENTIFY:**

- write down your rings, working from the inside out. What's around your bed, your bedroom, your house, your property, your neighborhood?
- where can you implement the "fatal funnel"?
- where are all the current public access points to your neighborhood, your property, and your house?
- where can you set up vantage points to create an "alert network"?
- what materials do you need to build a fatal funnel? Bushes, trees, a fence, a bulldozer?
- where can you place signs to let people know that your neighborhood and house are watched over and guarded?

### **RECTIFY:**

- get out there and implement that plan!
- plant the bushes or build the fence for your fatal funnel
- build a wire and can alert device
- paint the signs, and put 'em in the garage for when you'll need them quickly
- talk with your neighbors about your plan, one of them may have a large storage space where you can keep collapsible roadblocks and other elements of your lines of defense

## **CHAPTER 5: 1 + 1 = 3, OR THE POWER OF FORCE MULTIPLIERS**

Let's talk now about one of the most powerful defenses you can create, and one that seems to be used less and less as we become more and more of a technological society. It's not magic, literally anyone can do it (in fact, we're genetically wired to do it), and it allows you to multiply your efforts in a degree that doesn't correspond with normal math. This is the element of community.

Since the dawn of time, humans have banded together for defense. They do this because it works. It's not complicated, it's not a sign of weakness, and it's not even hard, but this is one of the most overlooked and underutilized methods of protecting not just yourself but your home and your neighborhood.

I call this 1+1=3 because that'll get your attention and it's easy to understand, but it's not a trick, it actually works. You've seen this work every time you've been around friends or your spouse/significant other. The synergy between two people who are working and thinking together goes far beyond what would happen if they were to work along and then combine their results at the end of the work session.

The reason I included this idea in the book is because it is overlooked so much. In fact, it's usually taken for granted; in times of difficulty, people tend to band together anyway, to reach out and form groups for support, to help bring in food or provide security or raise children. This is just the way humans are built; we're a social species.

The unsung trick is to be aware of this propensity and develop this community beforehand.

Why is it so important to develop a community of preparedness before the event? If it happens anyway, why should you expend effort before hand? It's like paying twice, right? Wrong, and you couldn't be more so.

The first few seconds of any attack or disaster are when the most ground is made, usually because the group being attacked is at the most vulnerable due to chaos and disorganization.

The element of surprise is an attacker's chief advantage, as (most of the time, and definitely in your case) the defenders are prepared and have thought out possible scenarios before hand. A community of people can take turns keeping watch, staying alert, and making sure that you're never in a position to be totally surprised.

Now, I'm not saying that if you enlist the help of everyone in your neighborhood you'll be invulnerable, or that you'll never be surprised. Attackers are sneaky types, and they'll do their best to circumvent the defenses they see. In fact, almost every kind of person you're going to have to defend against will do some kind of preliminary assessment, whether it's a 30 second gut feeling check as they slowly drive by or a week long survey of vulnerable neighborhoods and targeted houses.

Having an active community, one that is visibly alert and watchful, can be the difference not only between the perception of awareness or lack thereof, it can mean in actuality having a prepared and cohesive citizenry who work together to maintain the boundaries and framework of modern civilization.

Think about how powerful that would be in a time of disaster? Where will the best and brightest people go? Will they move toward rumors of savage neighborhoods and areas without the rule of law, or will they make haste towards the one place that still upholds those rules, that is still functioning on a "normal" level?

There is no question, like attracts like, and strength builds upon strength. It's as true in the wilds of societal breakdown as it is in a kindergarten classroom. If you want to live in a world of orderliness, safety, and rules you have to help build it.

The super powerful part of this, and for me, as paranoid as I can get and as much fun (yes, fun, remember what I said about skills only valued in the military?) as it is to prepare and to think about preparing, the best and brightest part of this strategy is that it's not just an "emergency-only" tactic. It's not a sign you keep in your garage that you bring out when disaster strikes, it's not a rifle under your bed that reminds you of all the possible negative outcomes, it's not barbed wire or security lights that intimidate visitors in times of peace and plenty, it's a source, a constant source, of positive loving encouragement in all times.

That's the key to this whole mindset, to remember that while it may be fun to prepare for what *might* happen, it's far more important to remember to enjoy the *present moment*. That enjoyment only happens if you focus on it and plan for it and remember to feel it when it actually happens.

This idea of living in the present is lost on anyone who gets caught up in preparing for all the "what if?" scenarios, and I know because I've been about as deep down that rabbit hole as you can go. I've spent days, whole weeks, even a month (one time) discussing almost non-stop with a VERY prepared friend of mine about the various disasters that might happen (he was pretty convinced it would be a financial meltdown), and while the first five to ten minutes of those talks were useful, the rest of it was pure worrying!

Sure, it's a fun kind of worrying, you get to think about buying silver and gold and guns and planting a hidden garden and having your little fortress, but at the end of it, what did you accomplish? Two things: First, increased stress levels throughout

the conversation. Second, you diverted the time that would have otherwise been spent laughing with friends and enjoying what you have into a stream of negative thoughts, leaving you worse off at the end of it than when you started! What kind of healthy preparation does that?

Sorry, I got a little off track there, but it's so vitally important to remember while you're making any kind of preparations for disaster to remain as much as possible in the only scenario you're sure of, and that's the present.

Ok, back to the power of the group: How do you go about doing this? Why bother learning how when I've already told you that you're genetically wired for it? In the same way that a trained racehorse can run far faster than an untrained horse even though both are genetically designed to run fast, a thoughtfully assembled group of people can be orders of magnitude more effective than a jumbled together hodgepodge of what's at hand.

Let's start with the one critical piece of any group: Leadership. Volumes of books have been written on leadership, on how to do it, on what makes a good leader, on effective strategies and tactics for leading others. I won't try and recreate all of human history's lessons on leadership, I tend to trust that people know it when they see it and for the most part you learn it at an early age or you never quite get it.

With all that said, don't despair if you're not the world's greatest leader, or even if you're not a leader. All you've got to do is identify someone in your area who is, and ask them to help you out. You don't have to formally present them with a title, or grant them dominion over your neighborhood or house, just let them know that you're looking for people to enjoy the good life with, and that if things ever go south you think they'd be a real benefit to the group. If they're good, they'll get it.

Second, and just as importantly, you'll need a practical problem solver. This is the tinkerer, the fixer, the mechanic, the engineer type. They're in every neighborhood I've ever visited, and you can usually identify them pretty quickly because their garage door is open and they've turned it into a shop. Another (not so well known) way to find problem solvers is to look for the artists. Artists are so often pictured as flighty types, dreamers chasing butterflies and unicorns, but the more artists I meet the more impressed I am with the practical realities facing each one of them, and the sheer amount of creativity they can bring to bear on any problem. They are the unsung heroes of the problem solving world, and you are exceptionally lucky if you have one to incorporate into your group.

Third, you'll need the enthusiasts. These are the workers, and anyone who tells you anything other than the fact that enthusiasts are vital elements to every group has never, and I mean NEVER had the opportunity to work around one. I'm not talking about the bouncy cheerful ever full of energy type, although they do fit the category, I'm talking about people who care.



I'm also most emphatically NOT talking about worker bees. Enthusiasts are people who can think for themselves, who can and do solve their own problems, and who are constantly seeking for a better way to live. They are special not for being able to do all these things, but for having the foresight and perception to see that a group of people is so much more powerful than they can be by themselves, and for working to bring that group together.

Every single person who reads this book is an enthusiast; you searched for this information, you bought it, and you took the time to read it. None of those qualities, as simple and easy as they seem to be to express, is that common, and when you put them together you have the makings of an unstoppable force. You are in the minority of people in the world who are actually going to make this a better place by the sheer energy of your efforts, and I'm so stoked to be on this planet with you.

Now that we've gone through the importance of community, the concept behind  $1+1=3$ , and the elements of an effective group, let's recap the ideas and then I'll give you an actionable list to help you thoughtfully build a healthy and prepared community.

First, we as humans have been designed to work together. Second, when working together our efforts can produce far more than merely the sum of their parts. Third, a thoughtful approach to building a group can produce an exceptionally stable society that can really enjoy the good times and navigate with accuracy and tenacity through the tough times. Fourth, the elements of a strong group are a good leader, a good problem solver, and at least one enthusiast who takes the time to put it all together.

Finally, this idea of community is important not just in times of disaster when it's *necessary* but is just as valuable for the rest of the time, as it's the only way to launch yourselves as individuals and a group into the full rollicking enjoyment of all the bountiful plenty that this planet has to offer.

It just happens to be that a strong peacetime community translates instantly into an exceptionally tough adversary in times of trouble, an adversary that won't be surprised by attack and is much more likely to never have to defend against an attack by dint of their perceptual presence. By building this community thoughtfully in time of peace when time is on your side you'll reap the rewards when any event happens, from natural disaster to terrorist attack. Your leadership will be in place, your defenses will be technically & structurally sound, and you'll have enough of the right kind of people to make leadership and structural aspects mean something; very few forts are ever successfully defended by a single person.

As you can see, these principles of building a solid and working community rely heavily upon your application of self reliance, confidence, and common sense. Wait a second, did I say you need self reliance to build a community? Isn't that a case of

opposite ideas? Absolutely not! A strong community is not one made up of individually weak people who band together and can only be effective in a group.

A strong community is one made up of a majority of self reliant and fairly independent people who have the common sense to see that a group is far stronger than the sum of its parts, and who have the confidence to see that they lose nothing by working together with other like minded folks to achieve a common goal.

Notice that in the above paragraph I said “majority”. One of the best and most enjoyable things about a community is being able to help those who can’t help themselves. Not those who won’t, but those who can’t. The old, the very young, the sick, weak, and infirm. As strong as you may be when you read this (as I write this I’m about as physically strong as I’ve ever been, but I’ll save how I got this way for another book), at one point every single one of us passes through those phases. We were all children once, we’ve all experienced sickness and moments of weakness, we’ll all get old and infirm.

It is neither fair nor does it follow the laws of common sense (and decency) to ignore those in need, and as anyone who has spent time with an older generation knows, they have a BOAT LOAD of experience. In fact, bringing in the old woman down the street to your community is probably more powerful than the strapping young buck who juggles logs next door.

That’s because the old woman has lived through more disasters than you can count, and she has all the knowledge and experience you’ll ever need to get through tough times. I highly encourage you to include in your community all sorts of people of every age and capability.

Now, let’s use the A.I.R. principles to develop a plan for building a strong  $1+1=3$  community, and then I’ll give you a basic checklist (remember, the checklists you make on your own once you know what you’re looking for will be far more powerful than the generalized ones you find here) to start you on your path. Here we go!

First, ASSESS your current community. Are you a healthy and communicative bunch of people? Have you dealt with any kind of disasters before, and if so, were there leaders who stepped up, problems solvers who got to work, and enthusiasts who made sure there was enough energy to get the work done? How would you rate your current state of preparedness, and what do you think it *could* be?

Next, IDENTIFY the basics and highlight deficiencies. Who are your leaders? Your problem solvers? Your enthusiasts? Do you live close enough together to assemble in hazardous times? Do you have a way to communicate when the power is out? What ideas and structure do you have in place? Are you getting together regularly now to enjoy the good times and working together to continually build stronger relationships? Who is missing from the group who could really help out?

Finally, RECTIFY any problems. Write down where you need to improve and then start working on each issue. No leader? Decide if you'll fill that role or if someone else is better suited to it. Missing a problem solver? I doubt it, but there's an easy way to test and IDENTIFY one: Set a community task, something as simple as a barbecue, invite over a group of friends and see how each person responds to the situations. The guy tinkering with the smoker or the woman who fixes the gas connection? Yep, they're your problem solvers! All you've got to do now is help them develop into full fledged MacGyvers (and they're probably already pretty close.) Do you have a good communications plan, a rallying point (actually 3, each one getting further and further away from your house in case disaster crushes the local area), and tasks designated to at least 2 people? There's an old saying in the SEAL Teams: "Two is one and one is none." While this is usually applied to technical gear among the uninitiated, it is just as applicable to people and tasks when the mission is critical.

Ok, let's list it up!

### **1 + 1 = 3 Checklist**

#### **ASSESS**

- spend as much time as you need thinking about your neighborhood and the community you have
- where are you weak?
- where are you strong?
- what can you do to shore up those weak points?

#### **IDENTIFY**

- who are the leaders in your personal community.? I'm not talking about the Mayor (although if you're in his circle he can be an acceptable candidate)
- who are your problem solvers?
- who are the enthusiasts?
- where does everybody live?
- what is your communications plan?
- what are your rally points?

#### **RECTIFY**

- write down and share your plan with your community; none of this will work as well as it could if you don't have everyone on board BEFORE disaster happens
- arrange weekly or monthly events to bring your community together; practice your roles, build your relationships
- write down and share your communication plan
- write down and share your rally points
- take the time to enjoy the present moment with your friends; remember, this is the only time on this planet you're really sure about!

## CHAPTER 6: PLAN YOUR DIVE, DIVE YOUR PLAN

There's a saying in the Teams, "Plan your dive, dive your plan." It's used to remind us how important both aspects of planning and execution are to a successful operation. It's also a lesson written in blood; far too many soldiers have learned the hard way and paid the ultimate price because they didn't bother to plan out their mission in enough detail or, having planned it out, did not follow through on execution.

This idea of planning and executing on that plan is dependent on your application of self reliance, confidence, and common sense. As you read through this book and learn the A.I.R. principles, as you go through the chapters and the checklists, it is vitally important that you not only read the action steps but that you actually do them. All the knowledge in world won't make a bit of difference if it's not applied, and if you've gone through and read this book you know that very few of these ideas can be applied last minute and remain effective.

We've now gone through the major points that will radically increase your probability not just of survival in hard times, but enjoyment of good times, please use this information to affect your life positively. Remember, there's no sense in getting to any "finish line" without having enjoyed as many steps along the way as possible.

Remember too that what people will talk about as the "good old times" after a disaster are the very times you are living in today. Don't forget to enjoy all the massive abundance available to you right now; get outside and enjoy a sunset, go see a movie with friends, share a dinner with family or organize a barbecue with neighbors, the time to do this is now. There is no time like the present for sheer enjoyment of life; this time is yours, use it!

Let's do a final recap, then you can get out there and get to work!

**"What people don't see they won't pursue."** Hide your home from possible attackers, whether you hide it out of physical sight or you hide it in plain daylight by blending in. Remember, the easiest attack to repel is the one that never happens.

**"You don't have to be an impossible target, you just have to be harder than the guy next door."** There is only one "toughest target", all the rest are just varying degrees of toughness. You don't have to be the top dog (and there's a HUGE price to pay to get there), you just have to be tougher than the other targets around you. This applies just as strongly to your neighborhood and community as it does your home and family.

**"Perception is reality."** This is one of the most powerful points of home defense, as it allows you capitalize on the major human sense of vision to appear to be a much more difficult target than you actually are. Remember, "seeing is believing", so

even if there's not much substance to your defense the very appearance of it may be the strongest defense you can put up.

**“Use concentric rings of defense.”** This is the method of gradually winnowing away attackers as they get closer and closer to your stronghold, whether that's your house, your block, or your neighborhood. You don't have to beat off the hordes all at once, you can gradually funnel them through harder and harder “gates” so that the few who do get through the outside defenses are tired, low on resources, and easily repelled.

**“1+1=3”** A powerful method of home defense is to be confident enough to reach beyond your own limited abilities to protect what is yours and to share the burden of defense with those around you who you trust. The enormous and added benefit of this is the immediate enjoyment of the present moment DURING the process of preparing for a multitude of uncertain futures.

As you have learned, none of these strategies rely on highly technical knowledge, none are applicable only to elite soldiers, and none of them are reserved for a select group of “survivors”.

Every one of these strategies is heavily bolstered through the use of self reliance, confidence, and common sense, and these qualities in turn are developed and grown through constant thought and application of the strategies.

These strategies can be used by anyone in any place, and require only time and forethought, resources available to everyone, to effectively implement.

I wish you the very best in your application of these strategies and hope that the main message woven throughout this book of remembering to enjoy the present has as much impact on your disaster preparedness as any one of these individual strategies.

Yours in peace, love, joy, and readiness,

Tim Keith