



PERSONAL SAFETY FOR SENIORS

A guide to protecting yourself while at home or
away

PURPOSE

- This presentation is intended to provide information, tips, and tools to assist you in protecting yourself, your home, and personal belongings whether you are home or away.



HOW TO AVOID BECOMING A VICTIM

○ Be alert

- Be aware of your surroundings whether at home or away. Things can happen anywhere.

○ Be cautious

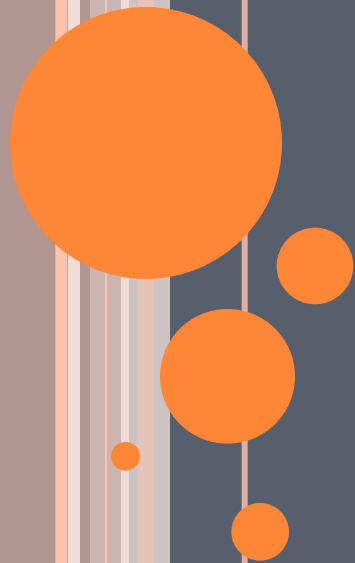
- Do your best to stay in areas you are familiar with. If traveling, research where you will be.

○ Be self-confident

- Consider what you will learn and you will have the confidence to beat or overcome obstacles.



HOME SECURITY



FACT...

- The national average states 1 out of 12 homes will be targeted by a burglar.
- These homes are targeted due to ease of access and an easy getaway.



SECURITY MEASURES TO TAKE

- Ensure all outside doors are metal, metal-clad, or solid wood.
- Keep all doors and windows locked including basement and garage.
- Use deadbolts on outside doors.
- Never attach ID tags to your key chains.
- If you lose your keys, replace the existing locks.
- Install a lens peep hole in all outside doors to view the person(s) trying to get your attention prior to opening the door.



CONTINUED...

- Do not let anyone know, except family, you are home alone.
- Ask for photo identification from all service/delivery people.
- Utilize metal “Charlie bars” or spring pins on all sliding patio doors.



7 HELPFUL SECURITY TIPS

- If leaving your home for an extended period of time, ensure your house appears to be occupied.
 - Have family, friends, or close neighbors keep an eye on your house.
 - Have driveway cleared of snow
 - Lawn is mowed
 - Use automatic timers to turn lights on at night.
- Be cautious of large landscaping near the house
 - Large bushes offer hiding spots for criminals.
- Install outdoor lighting
 - Over all keyed areas
 - Utilize motion sensor lights



CONTINUED...

- Ensure common areas inside the house are well lit
- Do not leave notes on doors indicating you are gone, where you are at, or when you will be back.
- Keep an up-to-date household inventory list of your valuables.
- Ensure fire stairs have an emergency exit at the ground level and that these exits are not accessible from the outside.

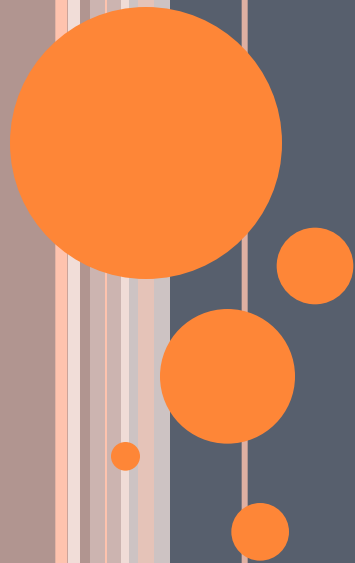


ADDITIONAL STEPS TO TAKE

- Keep your home phone / cell phone within reach at all times
- Have emergency numbers programmed in for easy dialing.
- Avoid routine – be unpredictable
- Utilize security devices or alarms
 - Home alarms
 - Life alert / medical alarms



PERSONAL SAFETY



FACT...

- 1 in 4 women, 1 in 6 men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.



The best defense is a
good offense!



OFFENSIVE WEAPONS

- Your mind is your **MOST** valuable asset!
 - Mental preparation
 - Keeps you aware and alert
 - Provides survival instinct
- Your Hands, feet and teeth
 - Hands can be used for striking, gouging, and scratching
 - Feet can be used for kicking, stomping, and tripping
 - Teeth are used for biting.

Body and Mind Influence Each Other



OTHER WEAPONS

- Mace
- Shriek alarms
- Purse
- Keys
- Any item that is moveable and within arms reach

REMEMBER...

Anything not attached to you and is out of your possession could also be used against you!

BE SMART, BE SAFE

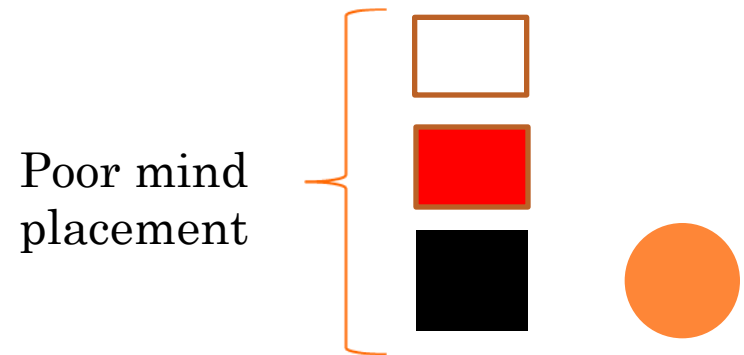
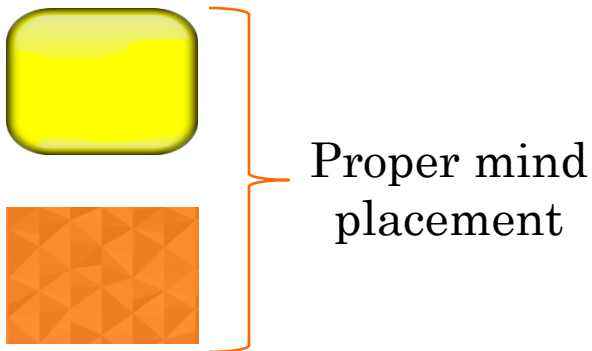


THE MIND AS A WEAPON

- Mental preparation
 - Plan ahead
 - Visualize scenarios
 - If this happens, I will do _____.
- Be confident
 - Know your limitations and use rely on your strong abilities.
 - Criminals prey on easy targets – DON'T be one
- Be alert and aware of your surroundings
- Use your anger to your advantage
 - Will give you boost of energy along with the will to survive!



- Trust your instincts.
 - Used for thousands of years to keep us alive
- Keep calm and think
 - Color codes (avoid black and white)
 - White – clueless / obliviousness
 - Yellow – relaxed and observant
 - Orange – cautious and ready
 - Red – Danger/aware/ready to fight or flee
 - Black – panic state, not thinking, freezing



MENTAL PREPARATION

- Be prepared to cooperate with suspect(s)
 - By cooperating, this could provide you with an opportunity to escape.
 - Make the suspect feel at ease.
- Observe your suspect
 - Get a good physical description of the suspect(s)
 - Hair and eye color
 - Height, weight, build
 - Scars, marks, tattoos, physical disabilities.
 - Try to get the suspect(s) name



MENTAL PREPARATION

- Prepare yourself to strike, kick, or bite the suspect if the opportunity permits
 - If able to do so, commit to the attack and make it count!
 - Examples –
 - Kick to the groin – might give enough time to escape
 - Eye gouge – feels disgusting but will blind your suspect allowing you more of an opportunity to escape



WEAPONS – HANDS AND FEET

- Target areas on your attacker(s)
 - Eyes – Use of your hands
 - Gouge the eyes
 - Blinds the attacker
 - Face – scratch and claw.
 - Let your attacker know you mean business
 - Throat – kicking or punching
 - Can cause your attacker to severe discomfort and/or inability to breath
 - Groin – Use of feet and/or hands
 - Strike, kick, or squeeze as hard as you can. The harder the target is struck, the more time the suspect will need to recover!



WEAPONS – OTHER OBJECTS / ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTS

- Mace, purse, keys, shriek alarms
 - Be familiar with how to utilize these weapons
- Not always reliable but will cause a distraction that could buy you some time
- Environmental Weapons
 - Cars
 - Gasoline
 - Tree branches
 - Sand / dirt
 - Cleaning supplies / chemicals



REMEMBER...

- Any weapon you possess or can be used can also be used against you. Make it count!



IF YOU ARE ATTACKED

- Fight, scream, kick, hit – Make a scene to bring attention to you and your attacker
- Tell your attacker you are sick
 - Make yourself vomit
- Do not enter a vehicle or leave with the attacker if at possible. Bad things happen when this occurs.
- Go limp, harder to move a person without that is like a limp noodle. Remember what it's like moving a sleeping child?



SUGGESTION

- Enroll in a self defense or martial arts class
- Become efficient with what you learn
- Classes are available for aging adults
- Have a cell phone with you at all times



REMEMBER...

- No one has the right to harm you
- There is no right or wrong way to act.
- You will react instinctively to what you have learned
- Practice, practice, practice a good mental mindset and you will survive!





VEHICLE & TRAVEL SAFETY

VEHICLES



VEHICLES

- When approaching your vehicle...
 - Have car keys ready
 - If equipped with remote unlock, do not unlock your vehicle until you are at your vehicle.
 - Does not allow anyone to enter your vehicle prior to you arriving.
 - Look inside your vehicle prior to entering
 - Check for unwanted person or signs someone has been in your vehicle.
 - Keep the interior clean – ensures easy viewing inside
- Attach a small flashlight to your keychain
 - Allows for better lighting when approaching your vehicle



- Do not leave bills, money, or valuables in plain sight to a passersby.
- Keep up with vehicle maintenance
 - A maintained vehicle is less likely to fail when you need it the most.
- Always have your gas tank filled.
- If you believe you are being followed
 - Go to police department
 - Open business
 - Gas station
- If you break down
 - Use your cell phone and call for help
 - If no cell phone, keep windows up and doors locked
 - Place a sign for help in your window
 - Turn on your flashers



- Know your location
- If someone stops, DO NOT exit your car. Instead, have them call the police if you don't have a cell phone. If you have a cell phone and called for help, let them know the police are coming
- Always keep your cell phone charged and keep a charger in your car to avoid losing your cell phone as a life saving device.
- Program emergency numbers on your phone.
 - Allows for easy access to call police without being noticed by an attacker
 - Cell phones can be “pinged” and triangulated to find your location
- Park in well lit parking areas



TRAVEL



TRAVEL SAFETY

- Know your routes if traveling by car
- Inform family members of your destination and route taking
- Have emergency numbers written down for the areas you are traveling
- Do not keep all of your cash in one spot
 - Divide between clothing pockets, wallets, purses, or stored in safe place in your vehicle
- Do not travel with all of your credit cards
- Travel during the day and with groups of three or more people for safety



TRAVEL SAFETY

- Get a tune-up on your vehicle prior to leaving on your trip
- Keep luggage and packages hidden in the trunk
 - Out of sight, out of mind
- If renting a car –
 - Keep rental papers, maps, and other indicators of a traveling person out of plain sight
- Know your license plate number, make, model, and color
 - Assists law enforcement in locating you or your vehicle.
- Never take shortcuts



COMPUTER SAFETY



COMPUTER SAFETY

- Install spyware, malware, anti-virus software to protect your private data
- Utilize passwords
 - Upon starting your computer
 - Separate login for individual users
 - To access certain private websites
 - Banking
 - Medical
 - insurance
- Change your passwords often
 - Every 60 days is recommended
- DO NOT share your passwords with anyone that does need them



COMPUTER SAFETY

- Turn your computer off when not using it
- If you leave your computer on, lock it to avoid easy access to your personal data
- An unprotected computer could provide a criminal enough information to:
 - Access banking records
 - Medical records
 - Social security number(s)
 - Routines
 - Most commonly visited websites
 - Family history



COMPUTER SAFETY

- If you believe your computer contains a virus...
 - Do not enter personal data
 - Full name
 - Date of Birth
 - Address
 - Phone number
 - Social Security Number
 - Get your computer checked by a professional
 - Will remove viruses, malware, spyware, and anything else that can corrupt your personal data



COMPUTER SAFETY

- Be cautious surfing the web!
- Not all websites are safe
- If information on a website contains inaccurate information, chances are good your computer could become infected with a virus, spyware, and/or malware
- Opening links on sketchy websites will lead to pop-ups that if accidentally opened, will infect your computer



COMPUTER SAFETY - EMAILS

- Do not give out your email password
- Logout of your email when not in use
- Know who you are sending mail to
- Know who you are receiving mail from
 - If you do not know the sender of an email and there is an attachment, **DO NOT** open the attachment
 - Opening the email itself is generally okay
 - Opening the attachment can lead to a corrupt computer, corrupt files, virus, spyware, malware
- If you receive an email from an unknown person/company...
 - Delete the message immediately!



FINANCIAL SECURITY

Banking and Credit Cards



FINANCIAL SECURITY

- Financial crimes against seniors is becoming the crime of the century!
- Financial crimes are generally committed by family members
 - Sons, daughters, and their spouses
 - Grandchildren
 - Nieces and nephews
- These crimes are under reported and can cost you hundreds to thousands of dollars in the end



HOW TO AVOID BEING A VICTIM

- Keep banking records in a secure location
- Keep check blanks out of site in a secure location
- Do not provide banking information to anyone that does not need have a legitimate reason to need it
 - Banking passwords
 - Account numbers
 - 401K balances
- Do not provide your PIN (personal identification number) to anyone
 - Debit cards
 - Credit cards



IF YOU FEEL YOUR INFORMATION HAS BEEN STOLEN...

- Report unusual account activity to your banking institution
- Report suspicious activity to your local law enforcement agency
- Request new cards
 - Debit cards, Credit cards, ATM Cards
- Change your passwords or PIN
- Close your account and reopen a new account
 - Banking institutions will assist you
 - Easily completed with minimal time involved
- Cancel checks you are missing



CONTINUED...

- If you receive a credit card in the mail that you were not expecting or a bill for a credit card you do not have:
 - Report this incident to your local law enforcement agency immediately!
 - Contact your banking institution
 - Contact the three major credit reporting agencies

WHY is this important?

You have just fallen victim to Identity Theft!

Identity Theft crimes can take a long time to resolve

You will receive bills, calls from bill collectors, and possibly letters from attorneys to pay a bill you did not create.





HEALTH SAFETY

HEALTH

- Keep up with regular doctors visits
- Keep up an active lifestyle if possible.
 - This is your time, enjoy every moment!
- Exercise regularly
 - Check with your doctor for exercise programs that fit your needs
- Eat healthy / nutritious meals and snacks
- Drink plenty of water
- Keep up on your medications
- Stretch daily



HEALTH

- Remember –
 - Keeping healthy and remaining active will allow you better opportunities to defend yourself if you are ever placed in position that threatens your safety
 - By keeping yourself active, you will also be using your thinking skills that will assist in keeping your mind sharp and focused

Live. Life. Healthy



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION



Thank you for attending!
If you have any further
questions or comments, please
contact
952-361-1212



Carver County Sheriff's Office

"Leading the way ... and then some"

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