

THE RLSH MANUAL

Welcome to www.RLSH-MANUAL.com

The unofficial, unauthorized online reference manual for the real life super hero community.

" There is no more honored steward than he who compassionately serves; not out of subjugation, but moral obligation."

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1.0 WELCOME

THE SUPERHERO IN YOU: LET IT OUT!

Greetings fellow heroes!

I'd like to take a moment to say hello to you all and would like to make each of your acquaintance. I will be posting as often as my busy schedule permits some new and exciting info that I am pleased to share. I hope you find it both informative and educational. I do not know what any of you do in real life, as a civilian, but I believe that the training I've completed has benefited myself , and in combination with the experience of fellow RLSH, we can be of great service to others. To those who have come before, many thanks for paving the way. Your example is a beacon. For those that follow, keep the faith and believe in the unifying cause that is the service of your fellow man.

THIS WEBSITE IS MADE FOR YOU. The purpose of creating this online manual is the first attempt at compiling an all-encompassing online reference for Real Life Super Heroes, costumed activists, and socially minded citizens who simply want to make the world around them a little safer, both for themselves and others.

That said, browse through the content on the following pages. This site is just getting started in the past few months, and I have quite a bit of material to upload... just not the time nor the bandwidth I'd prefer to be working with. So bear with me and please be patient. Until then, feel free to ask questions, make suggestions, or email me with a request to become a contributor to the articles.

Thanks,

K.O.

* * * * *
* *

"You're going to change the world today."

No, don't try to deny it. And you know, I understand that it can be a little overwhelming, to have the entire world depending on you. But I know that you can do it.

Actually, I knew you could do it when I first met you. When I first saw the hunger in your fingertips and the fire in your eyes.

When you spoke in just that way, with just those words, in just that rhythm that said, "I'm going to change the world. Gonna make it a little better, a little sweeter, a bit more true."

And I remember the way you said that nothing on this or any other planet was going to stop you. Then you turned and walked away, confident and clear.

And I remember thinking to myself that you were amazing, that I'd never met anyone quite like you, and I was sure that, if you put your mind and hands to it, there was nothing that could break you.

So there you sit, knowing that today's the day. Because I see the way you're shifting nervously in your chair, the way your body crackles and zaps, the way your grin says that you've decided that there is no time like now to move.

You're going to change the world today.

I'm just glad I was here to see it.

Jim Warda, author of *Where Are We Going So Fast?*, writes for *Chicken Soup for the Soul* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

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2. DISCLAIMER

SITE DISCLAIMER, PLEASE READ BEFORE PROCEEDING
WELCOME, HEROES! Please take a moment to read the following material, as it is vital to the context of site.

While many of the concepts are theoretical, the purpose behind the activities performed by some real life super heroes is to defend life and property. Violence and crime are an unfortunate reality of our everyday lives. In reacting to the depraved, it is sometimes necessary to match or exceed their level of violence in order to neutralize threats. And though I will not intentionally publish material that I deem inappropriate, please be aware that some mature subject matter relating to crime and violence will be part of the content contained herein.

It is with that in mind that I state, in no unclear terms, I will make NO attempts to encourage anyone under the age of 18 to perform any actions described on www.rlsh-manual.com or any of the websites related to the subject matter. PARENTS, IF YOU ARE READING THIS, the responsibility to govern your children lies with you. Any and all information posted here is already easily accessible from any unfiltered internet service and public safety resources. All I have attempted on this project is to compile as many useful links into one readily accessed source.

As you make your way through the articles contained in this site, you might notice some possibly incongruent theories and philosophies on how to approach the lifestyle, training, and purpose of one RLSH to another. Please keep in mind there are many of us spread out across the globe, and what is good for the goose is not necessarily always good for the gander. What is ideal for one person may be completely ineffective in your particular situation. Take this to mean that despite the combined years of cumulative experience between the others active in their respective communities, there can be no correct and concrete answer for every person in every circumstance. We can only guide you so far; you have to make your decisions and manage the subsequent consequences.

Til next time, "Knight Owl" (OvO)

Unofficial, Unauthorized Reference Manual for Real Life Super Heroes

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I TRULY APPRECIATE YOU STOPPING BY,
FEEL FREE TO CHECK BACK OFTEN AS MORE CONTENT IS
UPLOADED.

3. SO, WHAT IS AN RLSH?

So, you ask, "What is this Real Life Super Hero thing anyway...?"

Foreward...

Not much is know regarding exacty when the modern incarnation of the first RLSH put on a uniform and hit the streets to make the world a better place. What we are certain of, is that late in the last century, ordinary people decided that the insidious few million were intimidating the billions of decent citizens in the world who only want to live in peace. Armed only with home-made weapons, colorful monikers, and iron determination, they set out into their repective communities to set things right.

Read on, to see just what it means to be a RLSH, in their own words.

WHAT WE ARE

by Entomo, RLSH. (Naples, Italy)

The term Real Life Superhero is variously applied to real-world people who dress and/or act like comic book superheroes. Sometimes, this label is bestowed upon them by those whom they have helped or the media, while at other times, the aspiring superheroes apply the label to themselves.

Some media reports have focused on an Internet-based community that's developed around creating superheroic identities and helping others. These people wear masks or otherwise disguise themselves in order to perform "heroic deeds" like community services or fighting crime when they come across it.

(From Wikipedia entry on RLSH).

That's what Wikipedia reports and - to a certain extent - it is true.

Officially, a Real Life Superhero is whoever chooses to embody the values presented in superheroic comic books, not only by donning a mask/costume, but also performing good deeds for the communitarian place whom he inhabits. You don't necessarily need to engage in a violent fight to be a crime fighter - you might patrol and report whatever crime you see. So basically, terms like "good deed" or "crime fighting" are open to various interpretations.

Many of the Real Life Superheroes retain peculiar characteristics, abilities, special training and paranormal faculties that make them even closer to their comic book counterparts.

Since Stan Lee's TV Program "Who Wants To Be A Superhero?" has gained tremendous popularity in U.S.A, lots of people who invented superhero personas popped-up in recent times. Some of them are quitting the search for fame in order to "employ" their alter-egos in RLSH-like performances, thus becoming Real Life Superheroes by all means. So the borderline is heavily blurring in favor of the predominant tendency "to get real".

MySpace is augmenting the movement by the establishment of a valid communication network between the Real Life Superheroes scattered all across the world.

WHAT WE DO:

- Crime fighting patrols and/or reporting illegal actions to Police.
- Fliers asking for help with specific unsolved crimes.
- Missing person's fliers.
- Promoting social/environmental awareness.
- Helping the homeless with food/water/blankets.
- Donating blood

WHY THE RLSH WAY

In my mind, Superhero personas (not just dull "codenames"; "personas" meant as "personalities"), costumes and mystique are what make you DIFFERENT (and not superior) from 99% of the people out there who perform good deeds or even crime fighting.

True, you don't need a costume to become the "hero" you feel to be inside --- but, at a certain point of your life, you might feel the

impulse to physically manifest that same "hero" in order to live better with yourself and round out a process of psychological growth. A Superheroic persona is the excellent VEHICLE to release the hidden identity you keep locked in some departments of your soul since the day of your birth. Once this identity has been revealed to world, you're ready to embrace your destiny: you're stronger, you're more confident, you can do EVERYTHING you want for the sake of those you care for and the values you stand for. It's not just a revelation/manifestation. By doing so, you're providing people with a real symbol, and yourself with somewhat of a "self-avatar", one million of times stronger than your former "civilian-self".

Inspiration plays a major role in this, of course. You can inspire people to believe in a symbol. You can inspire people to believe they can CREATE themselves a symbol and embody it --- and it's not a lie. It's all true. It's the projection of an internal truth. Everyone can lead his/her own destiny. We're pawns of ourselves on the great, universal chessboard. It's up to us to establish if the great game of reality must end in good or evil.

-Entomo.

WHAT DEFINES US?

by Phantom Zero, RLSH. (NJ)

Some real life super heroes are vigilantes who literally fight crime, hand to hand.

Some do detective work, going undercover and collecting findings, anonymously reporting said info to the authorities or exposing corrupt bureaucracies.

Some act as neighborhood watch, their presence on the street a deterrent, reporting dangerous crimes as concerned citizens.

Some are endorsed by local and state law enforcement, their role being predominantly that of a symbolic doer of good-- visiting school children, attending state events, and supporting town sponsored events and programs.

Some support causes in the form of collecting charity or raising awareness about a certain subject.

Some donate time to do community service in any number of forms.

...and the list goes on and on and on.

All the above are likely Real Life Super Heroes. And as such, Real Life Super Heroes can fall into a broad spectrum of individuals.

So what, then, defines a Real Life Super Hero? I can discern a few common threads.

One, is they have a specific identifiable heroic motif. I've seen this range from near-plain clothed people with a touch of panache (like a domino mask) to individuals in utilitarian police or military gear, to bright four color symbol-on-chest Spandex clad cape wearing heroes right out of a comic book.

I suppose the reasoning behind the heroic identity is varied. People may be influenced by the ideals of heroes in comic books, people may wish to express individuality through the medium of their costume, people may have a deep personal meaning tied to their motif, people may want the anonymity of a secret identity, people may want clothes which will allow them to hide in shadows, people may want armor to protect themselves, or any number of reasons...

...and the list goes on and on and on.

The heroic uniform is significant because it is an identifying trait. To be identified as a super heroic character, a heroic personae, name and all, is important. Super heroes are culturally significant and iconic. Society associates the super hero with "good," and as such that identity likely aids any mission.

What separates a uniform from a costume is intent. A uniform is garb with a purpose. It embodies a concept. It plays a role in one's life. While wearing a costume cool, comforting, or fun--a costume doesn't make you a hero.

A uniform is an aspect of being a real life superhero. One's image is important, but by far it's not the most important component of heroism.

The most important aspect of being a Real Life Super Hero is as simple as this:

You selflessly serve a pro social mission.

It's not about conquering groups of people to display your physical or martial prowess.

It's not about having scads of cutting edge technology at one's disposal.

It's not about training one's mind to the limits of human perfection so they can out think everyone and everything that comes their way.

It's about being a champion of good (and almost everyone has the capacity to do a little good every day). The reward one receives from doing good deeds is the deed itself, the service to the greater good, and the benefit that said service offers to mankind.

At least, in my mind, that is what being a Real Life Super Hero is.

-Phantom Zero

WHY DO I DO THIS?

by Geist, RLSH. (MN)

Heroes are about the needs of OTHERS, and not ourselves. Not me. And not for our self-gratification. I could ask a number of Heroes about how their best-attempts went and they'd probably have the same answer as me. "It could have went better if..."

Hindsight is 20/20. And we all learn to do better or be more prepared the next time.

I could ask a Hero out of costume how their day went and they might say, "It really sucked because..."

But I could ask the same person in-costume and they'd say, "It rocked! because..."

WHY DO I DO THIS?

Because someone's gotta do something.

Because I like to see people smile when I can help, especially the kids.

Because I don't want to die wishing I would have done something.

Because I didn't want to miss the opportunity to have the true friends that I've found here on Heroes Network and Myspace, Herolinks and various other places.

Because I have a couple of Loved Ones who know about this whole deal who support me and I want to make them very proud.

Because there's crime on the streets and I want to see what I can do about it.

Because there are hungry people and I can help them.

Because there are children with cancer and I might make their days brighter.

Because I needed to patrol Manhattan and Central Park last year in full costume solo before Superheroes Anonymous 1.

Because there's a guy I've come to know who lives under a bridge, Thomas, who looks forward to meeting me again each and every time.

Because the kitties and puppies need the food and litter I bring them and the staff is getting accustomed to seeing me.

Because gang graffiti needs to be painted over. (Caution Newbies: It's a DIRECT and potentially lethal insult to the gang.)

Because I wanted to buy pizza for the homeless during the filming of SA1, but it wasn't enough and it will never be enough until we all chip in something.

Because someone needs me and four other guys to lift their car out of a ditch in the snow.

Because towns in my area were flooded, with fatalities and they needed any supplies immediately after the fact.

Because there was a creepy Fake Cop pulling over teenagers and asking them creepy questions. (The cops got him in the area I was recently searching.)

Because there was a guy who raped a 17-year-old girl and I thought I knew who he was (and was right).

Because, as good as the cops are in my city, I'm another set of eyes

for them. And they don't need to pay me for it. I call them first, then move into action.

Because (And feel free to call me a kook for this. I don't claim to be psychic or anything. I still get this strange suspicion that there's some greater reason and future cause that all of us have become RLSHs. - Collective (un)Concentiousness? Whatever it is, we'll ALL know it when we see it. And then, suit up.

FINALLY: Because I get a kick out of it.

Got enough?

And I'm not even getting into my personal reasons... And I'm afraid that you're not going to hear them here.

-Geist

4. RLSH FOR NEWBIES

Working Glossary of common RLSH terminology:

R.L.S.H.: Noun ; acronym.

Real Life Super Hero; a person who emulates the archetypical superhero found in popular fiction. He/she usually wears some sort of costume or uniform to serve as an alternate identity from the everyday civilian lifestyle and then attempts to go into the community and do good deeds WITHIN the confines of the law. RLSH are a civically minded group with a mission to supplement existing governmental/social agencies and services that protect lives and property.

S.H.I.T.: Noun ; acronym.

Super Hero in Training; slang term for a younger RLSH who has not yet acheived a mature level of preparedness for freelancing super-heroics; is pursuing the path that will eventually lead to full fledged street level hero. Often a term used for any RLSH under 18 years old, due to age of legal accountability.

Kevlar: Noun

Trademarked synthetic composite; particularly useful in the process of manufacturing body armor and abrasion resistant materials.

Nomex: Noun ;

Trademarked synthetic composite; particularly useful in the process

of manufacturing garments that are flame and heat resistant.

L.E.A.: Noun ; acronym

Law Enforcement Agency; any establishment that upholds the law, ie Sherrif, Police, Security forces, etc.

VIGILANTE: Noun ;

A person who ignores due process of law and enacts his own form of justice in response to a perception of insufficient response by the authorities. RLSH are NOT vigilantes.

COSPLAY: Verb ;

Short for "costume play", a type of performance art whose participants outfit themselves, with often-elaborate costumes and accessories, as a specific fictional character. Characters are usually sourced in various Japanese and East Asian media, including manga, anime, tokusatsu, comic books, graphic novels, video games, and fantasy movies. RLSH are NOT cosplayers, due to the facts that A) RLSH do not simulate a fictional character, rather they are representing themselves. B) RLSH serves more of a purpose than to dress up and socialize.

LARP-ING: Verb ;

A live action role-playing game (LARP) is a form of role-playing game where the participants physically act out their characters' actions. The firstLARPs were run in the late 1970s, inspired by role-playing games and genre fiction. Players physically portray characters in a fictional setting, improvising their characters' speech and movements somewhat like actors in improvisational theatre. RLSH are NOT larpers for the same reasons as listed in COSPLAY.

CITIZEN'S ARREST: Verb ;

A citizen's arrest is an arrest made by a person who is not acting as a sworn law enforcement official. In common law jurisdictions, the practice dates back to medieval England and the English common law, when sheriffs encouraged ordinary citizens to help apprehend law breakers.

Despite the title, the arresting person does not usually have to be a citizen of the country where he is acting, as they are usually

designated as any person with arrest powers.

Each state with the exception of North Carolina permits citizen arrests if the commission of felony is witnessed by the arresting citizen, or when a citizen is asked to assist in the apprehension of a suspect by police. The application of state laws varies widely with respect to misdemeanors, breaches of the peace, and felonies not witnessed by the arresting party. American citizens do not carry the authority or enjoy the legal protections of police, and are held to the principle of strict liability before the courts of civil- and criminal law including but not limited to any infringement of another's rights.

Though North Carolina General Statutes have no provision for citizen's arrests, detention by private persons is permitted and apply to both civilians and police officers outside their jurisdiction.

Detention, being different from an arrest in the fact that a detainee may not be transported without consent, is permitted where probable cause exists that one has committed a felony, breach of peace, physical injury to another person, or theft or destruction of property.

5. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

LEGAL ISSUES

Tips on maintaining your positive relationship with the Law

Dealing with the Police

by SuperHero of Clearwater, FL

Knightstrike asked me a question on Myspace:

How exactly did you curry such favor with your local police force? I mean, sometimes reading your blogs you seem to actually be officially sanctioned by the authorities or something. How exactly does that work? Does it help that you don't have a secret identity? I'm just curious. You'd think that they would classify you a vigilante, therefore an outlaw, or even worse a nutjob and stop you.

Stay Super!

Superhero :

Well Strike, I put a LOT of emphasis on Police relations. Clearwater has one of the Top SWAT teams in the country. They always finish in

the top 20 at the Roundup every year, sometimes in the top ten! & they compete against teams from all over the world. Being a Police Academy Grad, I have a deep respect for these men, and when I found out how badly undermanned they are, One of the first big "Hero Missions" I set out on was to support them, Bring Lunch when they don't have time to eat, Be a extra set of eyes & ears for them, etc. So they pretty much classify me as "Nuts, but the good kind of nuts" I think. Also most of the SWAT guys work out during the day at my gym, I know these men on a first name basis, so I have an unfair advantage over most heroes in that department, BUT that does not mean YOU can't build a rapport with your Local police the same way. Stop & talk to your local cops, call in wrecks, help at accidents UNTIL they arrive. Cops are not out to get you, you'll make friends.

Does it help that you don't have a secret identity?: Yes it does, I've never been a big fan of hidden Identities anyway, But Police are wary of anybody they don't know. This way, I don't have trouble with "Let's see some ID" & red tape like that.

You'd think that they would classify you a vigilante, therefore an outlaw, or even worse a nut job and stop you. I have almost been shot once, arrested once too. I accidentally interrupted a Domestic Violence call thinking it was a lost child. That's a serious offense & I didn't know the officers involved. Fortunately my actions carry a little weight & when I said: "I'm Superhero" the next words out of the cop's mouth were "Oh yeah! I know who you are!" with a big smile. (You think he would have seen the big SH on the car & my chest before hand though, scared the crap outta me.) The Police do NOT view me as a Vigilante, BUT they have no official stance on me either. When WTSP called them for an interview all they would say was 'No Comment'. I'm no Vigilante I operate well within the law. One time I helped pursue a hit & run driver who killed a kid. The police found him first, which was good because I had every intention of yanking this guy outta his SUV and jamming all his teeth down his throat. "Officer Tom" told me "If I see you doing that, I gotta haul you in too." The law is the law & you guys have to remember that. Equal force ONLY! You guys CAN build up this kind of relationship with your local police, Talk to them, don't evade them. I think MR. X even walks right into his Local PD and tells them when He'll be on patrol. If they request you stay out of a certain area of town it's for YOUR safety. Just be

respectful, they'll respect you back. We're all in this together."

S.H.

How to Avoid Getting Shot by a Police Officer

Hey guys. For those of you who patrol frequently, odds are this might be an issue. Like I mentioned in a previous blog, don't be shocked if law enforcement mistakes you for a criminal. Here's how to walk away from such an encounter without extra holes to breathe out of.

Taken from: <http://www.wikihow.com/Avoid-Getting-Shot-by-a-Police-Officer>

Know What to Do

Even if you have done something wrong, there is no reason to be shot by a police officer -- that is, unless you give them one. Here are some ways to avoid personal harm in situations with a police officer that has their gun drawn.

Steps

Stop. Do not move unless directed by the officer. At this point, any movement you make that is unexpected is one step closer to getting shot.

Keep your hands in clear view. If the police officer cannot see your hands, he or she will assume you are going for a weapon. This can lead to you getting shot.

Follow all directions. The officer will tell you exactly what he or she wants you to do. That typically includes putting your hands on the back of your head, walking backwards toward the sound of their voice, or lying down on the ground. Do it. At this point you've either already broken the law and don't need to make it worse on yourself, or you are the victim of a misunderstanding and need to cooperate to help prove your innocence.

Do not talk. Chances are good that there is not much you can say to help the situation. If the officer has drawn their weapon, you will almost certainly be arrested, and there is not much you can say to stop that from happening. If they've drawn their weapon, they're certain it's needed. There will be plenty of time to talk once you are in

cuffs and no longer considered a threat. You may wish to consider answering questions posed by the police officer-however, you have the right to refuse to do so. Answering questions, if you choose to do so, is the only exception to this rule.

Go slowly. Sudden movements make officers nervous and nervous officers are more likely to whip out their guns.

Don't brandish a weapon. If you have got a gun or knife in your pocket or waistband, leave it alone. Don't draw it, even to surrender it. The officer would much rather find it on his or her own than have you whip it out and wave it around. If you would prefer to surrender the weapon, clearly speak words to the effect of "I would like to turn over my weapon." before drawing it.

Let yourself be handcuffed. Yes, it may be uncomfortable, but retaliation or struggling is only going to result in serious injury. In many cities, it is police protocol to place handcuffs on even the most cooperative of suspects.

Tips

"Do not talk."

An exception to this, if the officer tells you to do something that involves moving, it's good to tell him what you are doing, even if it seems redundant. Especially if it's something "unusual", it will keep them feeling safe so they don't shoot you. For example:

Officer: Let me see your I.D.

You: It's in my glove box/backseat/sock/etc. I'm going to reach down/over and get it for you. (Then move slowly)

Officer: Lay down on the ground!

You: I'm going to lie down on the ground, but I have a bad hip/back/knee, so I need to hold on to this pole/fence/wall to get on the ground.

Although, do not go out of your way to make conversation unless the issue at hand has passed. Answer with simple 'Yes Sir/Ma'am, No Sir/Ma'am' until asked to say your piece. This will minimize the chances of you saying something that could be potentially damaging.

Keeping calm is hard, but also important. Informing them about your movements slowly and calmly will keep the officer calm. If an officer doesn't feel threatened, they *probably* won't shoot you.

Avoid the situation entirely by obeying the law and staying out of situations in which such an occurrence might come up. Innocent people are occasionally confronted by police officers, whether it is due to an honest mistake or an officer acting inappropriately, but law-abiding behavior decreases the chances dramatically.

Don't be a hero unless you have to. Do not attempt to get involved in police gun battles in any way unless your aid is specifically requested-they're more likely to confuse you for an additional suspect than they are to realize you're coming to their aid. Do not, under any circumstances, attempt to engage the suspect with your own weapon-this will get you shot, either by the suspect or the police. The sole exception to this is a situation where the police have not arrived and the suspect is actively firing upon you or others. You will never be asked to join a battle-if you have superior firepower, the police will simply commandeer your weapon and return it when they're finished. Disengage and retreat the moment the police arrive. If you kill or disable the suspect, or otherwise neutralize him, cease fire. If at all possible, avoid attempting to render first aid until the fight is over. Also, don't touch any evidence that may have been left behind leave it alone engage the safety and holster your weapon. Then after you are positive that the threat has been eliminated don't panic but take several deep breaths and get control of your self. This will make your eventual testimony in court clearer.

Never shine a laser pointer toward officers. This can very easily be mistaken for a laser sight- a modification commonly affixed to pistols or sniper rifles to enhance a weapon's accuracy.

WHEN IN TROUBLE WITH THE POLICE

some tips if things don't go your way...

WHEN QUESTIONED BY A POLICEMAN:

After giving your name and address YOU SHOULD THEN BE QUIET. But if you think you are innocent and that you could quickly

explain what happened, you might answer the policeman's questions, but YOU CAN STOP TALKING WHENEVER YOU WANT. Remember, anything you say may be used against you in court. You do NOT have to produce ID or give your name unless the officer has other grounds to arrest you.

WHEN ARRESTED:

Even if you are innocent of any crime, DON'T FIGHT BEING ARRESTED. A policeman can use force if you resist. If the policeman searches you, TELL HIM YOU DO NOT WANT TO BE SEARCHED, but do not try to stop him.

WHEN QUESTIONED AT HOME:

You have a special right to privacy in your home. Even if a policeman asks, DO NOT ASK HIM INTO YOUR HOME. But if he has a search warrant, you must let him in.

WHEN STOPPED IN YOUR CAR:

Show the policeman your driver's license, car registration and insurance certificate when he asks for it. Remember, YOU SHOULD KEEP QUIET and YOU CAN STOP TALKING AT ANY TIME. If the officer asks to look inside your car, TELL HIM YOU DO NOT WANT HIM TO SEARCH YOUR CAR, but do not try to stop him. An officer usually does not need a warrant to search a car, but he does need probable cause of a crime such as an informer's tip, the smell of marijuana, or a furtive gesture.

WHEN TAKEN TO THE POLICE STATION:

If you are not free to leave, ASK TO SEE A LAWYER IMMEDIATELY. You have the right to make a telephone call to get a lawyer or to call your family to get one for you. If you cannot pay a lawyer, you have a right to a free lawyer if you are charged with a serious crime. DO NOT SAY OR SIGN ANYTHING UNTIL THE LAWYER IS WITH YOU.

BAIL:

After being arrested, the police must take you to a judge. The judge will say how much bail you must pay to get out, but if you live or work in the town YOU SHOULD ASK THE JUDGE TO FREE YOU "O.R." (on your own recognizance) instead of paying bail or

posting bond. This means you promise to come to your trial on the day the judge says. If you are a juvenile, you ordinarily can be released to your parents without bail, so demand that the police call them.

Most importantly: DO NOT MAKE ANY DECISIONS UNTIL YOU SEE A LAWYER.

The Law and You: Citizen's Arrest

Remember folks, the name of this game is stopping crime if we see it, not breaking the law ourselves.

And remember what we talked about in my first blog: SCENE SAFETY. Unless bullets really DO bounce off you, there is the inherent risk of injury or even death by approaching and/or attempting to apprehend a perpetrator engaging in criminal activity. Remember, your first priority always is and always will be your own personal safety. I've said it before and will keep saying it- you're no good as a public servant when dead. Don't go looking for trouble. Take a cue from SuperHero...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Z7-vixoBlg>

It would be highly advisable to check your region's law regarding this topic before proceeding. For those of you who might carry cuffs or zipties as restraints, see the highlighted portion below. It is worth noting that engaging in certain behavior, despite your best intentions, places you in the position of possible legal action being taken against you as a private citizen, not an authorized and sanctioned law enforcement official.

Oh, and one more thing- don't be surprised when the authorities arrive if they treat you as a suspect as well. It is highly possible Law Enforcement may not have all the information they need before they get to the scene of the crime, and they will probably see you as a potential threat. DO NOT be shocked if they draw weapons on you too. Consider some of the costumes a few of you wear (... you know who you are...) and you should easily understand. A MASK IS A MASK. Comply with all of their instructions and be respectful as possible.

Now all that said, let's get to it.

How to Make a Citizen's Arrest

In many countries around the world, civilians are empowered to stop a perpetrator in the act of a serious crime and take the arrested to a courthouse or police station, or keep them from leaving until an officer of the law arrives. The conditions under which this is permitted vary from place to place, but in case you are ever in a situation where you can stop a criminal, you should know what your options are.

Steps

Notify authorities if you can. Law enforcement officials strongly encourage citizens to phone in a complaint or tip rather than try to stop a crime themselves. You should carefully consider whether you're putting yourself or others in more danger than necessary by making a citizen's arrest. A citizen's arrest is only an emergency measure to stop a suspect until law enforcement officials can take matters into their own hands. If you think that the local police will be able to find the suspect, a citizen's arrest may not be necessary. With a detailed description and a license plate number, you can arm the police with the information they need to apprehend the suspect.

Evaluate the situation clearly. You could be legally liable if you make a false accusation or if you assault someone without a very strong reason to think they are in the middle of a crime. How close are you? Can you see what's going on? Do you know the participants? The best time to make a citizen's arrest is when you've witnessed the suspect in the very act of committing a crime, without any doubt as to who the suspect is and what they were doing.

Remember that things are not always what they seem. What you might interpret as a child being kidnapped could, in actuality, be a parent or a relative carrying away a child who's throwing a temper tantrum. In this case, assumptions about whether the person is related to the child (if, for example, the person is of a different race than the child, and/or is misinterpreted to look like a homeless individual) can result in legal action against you.

Consider the severity of the crime being committed. Citizen's arrest laws vary by the degree of the crime in suspicion. In many places, it

must be a felony (usually a serious crime involving violence) in order to justify a citizen's arrest. You should know where the line is drawn in the country you're in when you witness the crime. Borderline crimes include vandalism and driving while intoxicated.

Say "Stop". Tell the suspect loudly and forcefully to stop what they're doing. Hold up your hand to indicate stopping. If they have a weapon, tell them to put it down (Think twice about making a citizen's arrest of an armed subject).

Tell the suspect that they're under citizen's arrest. Tell them that they're not allowed to leave until a police officer comes and that they can explain the situation to the police when they arrive. Be firm and matter-of-fact.

In the U.S., don't give any kind of Miranda Warning (i.e. "You have the right to remain silent...You have the right to an attorney..."), or you may be accused of impersonating a police officer.

If the suspect tries to leave, think very carefully before physically restraining the suspect. Not only will you put yourself in physical danger, but you could be subject to legal liabilities for use of excessive force. You can only use enough force to restrain the suspect. If they manage to run away, then the arrest has not been completed. Also, note that in at least some countries it is illegal to lock up the suspect or tie him to something.

Remember that you have no right to question or search the suspect, or to seize any kind of evidence.

Call local authorities. Get in touch with the local police department on the spot if you have a cell phone. Call your local emergency number e.g. 911 in the U.S. and Canada; 17, 112, 117, or 999 in the UK or 112 in Europe (it can differ from country to country); 000 in Australia. If you don't have access to a phone, send someone to call from a payphone. It is not recommended that you attempt to transport the suspect to the local authorities yourself.

Identify yourself to the police when they arrive. When the police arrive, let them know who you are, what you saw, and why you held

the suspect.

Remember that you will probably need to be in court to provide eyewitness testimony for the crime, so stay calm and stick to the facts. Don't tell them what you think happened, tell them exactly what you saw and who you saw doing it.

Tips

When dealing with potential criminals, it's better to err on the side of caution and leave the crime control to trained professionals.

In most cases, you don't need to be a citizen of the country you're in in order to make a citizen's arrest.

Be as observant as possible. Even if you aren't able to keep the suspect at the scene, you will be able to act as witness and identify the suspect later.

Be confident. Showing the suspect that you don't know what you're doing will make them more likely to leave the scene of the crime.

Warnings

Every state in the US has different laws; guidelines are not the same, and your best option is often simply to observe and report. Crime Stoppers may pay you a reward.

A citizen's arrest must be made during or immediately after the crime, or else it is illegal. In some states the crime must be a felony, only a Police Officer may make an arrest on a misdemeanor.

By making a citizen's arrest, you're exposing yourself to possible lawsuits or criminal charges (e.g. impersonating police, false imprisonment, kidnapping, or wrongful arrest) if the wrong person is apprehended or if you violate a suspect's civil rights. This risk varies considerably from country to country, but in the U.S. in particular, a citizen's arrest is a legal minefield, and dealing with a suspect's lawyers is often more dangerous than apprehending the suspect.

The State of North Carolina does not recognize a citizens arrest. In fact, you are more likely to be arrested for trying it than anyone you

might bring in, due to the state's vigilante laws.
Wonderful.

Knowledge is power, folks, and would highly encourage you to research this issue in depth before exercising it. Know your rights, and remember that even criminals have them, too. As always, I'm looking out for you and your safety, so until next time.. be safe.

The Law and You: Good Samaritan legal issues

More legalese I will attempt to decipher into practical comprehension. And being that we're discussing legal matters, here's where I'll be sure to cite my sources:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Good_Samaritan_law

Note a few prevailing themes you will find in this article deal with the legal issues of protection from liability and duty to act. This is the crux of your ability to provide care to those in need, WITHOUT GETTING SUED.

OK, class is in session!

Good Samaritan laws (Acts) in the United States and Canada are laws/acts protecting from blame those who choose to aid others who are injured or ill. They are intended to reduce bystanders' hesitation to assist, for fear of being prosecuted for unintentional injury or wrongful death. The name Good Samaritan refers to a parable told by Jesus in the New Testament (Luke 10:33-35).

In other countries (as well as the Canadian province of Quebec), Good Samaritan laws describe a legal requirement for citizens to assist people in distress, unless doing so would put themselves in harm's way. Citizens are often required to, at minimum, call the local emergency number, unless doing so would be harmful, in which case, the authorities should be contacted when the harmful situation has been removed. Such laws currently exist in countries such as Israel, Italy, Japan, France, Belgium, Germany, Andorra, and Spain. The photographers at the scene of Princess Diana's fatal car accident were investigated for violation of the French Good Samaritan law ("non-assistance à personne en danger", or deliberately avoiding providing assistance to endangered persons, can be punished by up

to 5 years of jail time and a fine of up to 100 000 €). In Germany, "Unterlassene Hilfeleistung" (neglect of duty to provide assistance) is an offense; a citizen is obliged to provide first aid when necessary and is immune from prosecution if assistance given in good faith turns out to be harmful. Also the helper may not be held responsible if the action he should take in order to help is unacceptable for him and he is unable to act (for example dealing with blood). In Germany, knowledge of first aid is a prerequisite for the granting of a driving license.

In the United States

The details of Good Samaritan laws/acts in various jurisdictions vary, including who is protected from liability and in what circumstances. Not all jurisdictions provide protection to laypersons, in those cases only protecting trained personnel. In some cases, laypersons are only protected when rendering aid in narrow circumstances, such as during a declared a public health emergency.

General guidelines

Unless a caretaker relationship (such as a parent-child or doctor-patient relationship) exists prior to the illness or injury, or the "Good Samaritan" is responsible for the existence of the illness or injury, no person is required to give aid of any sort to a victim.

Any first aid provided must not be in exchange for any reward or financial compensation. As a result; medical professionals are typically not protected by Good Samaritan laws when performing first aid in connection with their employment.

If aid begins, the responder must not leave the scene until:

It is necessary in order to call for needed medical assistance.

Somebody of equal or higher ability can take over.

Continuing to give aid is unsafe (this can be as simple as a lack of adequate protection against potential diseases, such as vinyl, latex, or nitrile gloves to protect against blood-borne pathogens) — a responder can never be forced to put himself or herself in danger to aid another person.

The responder is not legally liable for the death, disfigurement or disability of the victim as long as the responder acted rationally, in

good faith, and in accordance with his level of training.

Consent

The responder must not commit assault by giving aid to a patient without consent of the patient (or of the patient's legal parent or guardian if the patient is under 18 years old).

Implied consent

Consent may be implied if the patient is unconscious, delusional, intoxicated, deemed mentally unfit to make decisions regarding their safety, or if the responder had a reasonable belief that this was as such; courts tend to be very forgiving in adjudicating this, under the legal fiction that "peril invites rescue."

Consent may also be implied if the legal parent or guardian is not immediately reachable and the patient is not considered an adult.
Parental consent

If the victim is not an adult (warning: definitions vary), consent must come from the legal parent or guardian. However, if the legal parent or guardian is absent, unconscious, delusional or intoxicated, consent is implied (with the same caveat as above). Special circumstances may exist if child abuse is suspected.

Laws for first aiders only

In most jurisdictions, Good Samaritan laws only protect those that have had basic first aid training and are certified by the American Heart Association, American Red Cross, St. John Ambulance, American Safety and Health Institute or other health organization. In other jurisdictions, any rescuer is protected from liability, granted the responder acted rationally.

6. HERO HEALTH

Tips on maintaining your health and well being

I know what you're thinking;
Get real.

You're probably a grown adult, reading this blog about people living vicariously through a supposedly fantasy or roleplaying experience

who think they are going to go change the world clad in spandex and a cowl. Be honest, you thought it was a joke.

You even giggled a little at first. Maybe even a booger shot out of your nose a bit when you scoffed audibly. A person with dual identities that goes out in parades around in a cape? "There are nerds who do actually this crap?!", you exclaimed. Then it slowly dawned on you after an article in the newspaper, or a site dedicated entirely to RLSH, that this was a reality of modern times.

We are indeed. But we are human, all of us. And the stresses of an ordinary everyday life are magnified exponentially when living a double life. The relationships with family, friends, and coworkers suddenly become more complex with the addition of fellow RLSH activities. Crusading to make the world has the potential to be highly self-destructive and thankless. Keeping a proper perspective is essential to your survival.

The ability to separate the job and your personal life is the distinguishing marker between a professional and an amateur. Now, do not take offense to this comment, it's not intended as inflammatory, merely objective.

We MUST all accept that there will be minor victories and defeats, and a whole lot of gray in between. This should not dissuade you from your mission of making the world a better place, but instead act as a catalyst to inspire you that there is still more work to be done.

I know the mixed feelings on citing works of popular fiction in the forum as gospel but I think if you allow me, you'll see my point momentarily. This past weekend I finally completed reading Watchmen. Ozymandias saw that in his quest to rid the world of crime and evil, he was only treating the symptoms, never really attacking social ills at their heart. Which is what led to his plot to instigate a great evil in order to facilitate a greater good. What we need to be aware of is that fact that we will always be treating the symptoms, never really knowing the why behind the actions of criminals, only the why behind our reactions.

This is something you must settle on being satisfied with. Not for the

sake only of maintaining a measure of distance between you and the crime you're attempting to thwart, but moreover for your over all well-being.

Assuming you've been around the community of heroes for any length of time, by now you are aware more than most the cost of defending others will inflict upon your body. You can protect yourself from the largest caliber bullet out there by purchasing futuristic armor that will repel every puncture, ballistic and blunt trauma imaginable. But, if you haven't prepared for the toll this task will take upon you mentally or emotionally, you will sacrifice all of your interpersonal relationships for the cost of quantifiable gratification, justifying your lack of meaningful human contact as an acceptable collateral loss. We aren't Batman, and don't have the resources to keep others at bay to afford the privacy of a personal crusade. If you want my opinion about events like this in the future, do some research and make up some business card with contact info for local social programs including children's services, social workers, shelters, etc. business cards are very cheap at most quick print places; when I was a graphic designer, we would sell 1000 black and white cards for \$20, all labor done in-house. Not a bad investment if you really want to address the societal woes by directing people to the proper authorities who are more capable of and properly equipped to handle them.

I know it contradicts all the stereotypes you most likely have had ingrained into you by movies and television regarding the behavior of a typical hero, but as odd as it might sound, you **MUST** put yourself first. Your well-being will enable you to perform at your best capacity; and when you are stressed to the breaking point, you are beyond offering help to anyone. My recommendation is that you are more than entitled to some "me-time". Get some (or all) of the following: tail, beer, a cigarette, a nap, and/or a vacation.

You aren't prepared to save others if you cannot save yourself.

SHIFT WORK

Sleep deprived from pulling patrols several nights a week?

You ought to be. I'd be willing to bet your eyes have more bags than

Miami Airport luggage claim. God knows I've been an insomniac for about a decade, and the use of coffee and tobacco doesn't help. Shift work has been around for the most of human history, but it was mainly limited to soldiers and sailors. That all changed with the invention of the lightbulb that lengthened workdays with all the worklight employers would ever need. So really the main use of shift work has only been around for about a century. The unfortunate part is, shift work may be good for businesses but it takes it's toll on workers and their families.

The Effects of Shift Work

Shift work is an employment practice designed to make use of the 24 hours of the clock, rather than a standard working day. The term shift work includes both long-term night shifts and work schedules in which employees change or rotate shifts. Due to the disruption in the circadian rhythm (see Circadian Rhythm) and the impairment of the normal sleep pattern, shift work has been shown to have the following effects:

Chronic fatigue.

Feeling tired is a most common problem among shift workers. Fatigue can also make a person more vulnerable to illness. Fatigue can lead to poor job performance and sagging motivation.

Reduction in concentration and attention span, increased reaction time.

This can lead to mistakes and accidents.

Gastro-intestinal and digestive problems.

Due to the irregular shifts, in many cases a poor diet results. Lack of access to proper cafeteria services at night or other facilities can lead to "junk food" eating. The fatigue feeling can lead to an increase in consumption of caffeine. (link to caffeine information.) Poorer eating can lead to indigestion, heartburn and stomachache. It also can lead to weight gain. For some, shift work results in the loss of appetite.

Increased chance of heart attacks.

This relates to studies that have shown shift workers have poorer dietary habits, smoke more heavily, and participate in fewer leisure activities.

Disruption in family and social life.

Shift work affects the entire family. Due to shift work, family routines can never be fully set. Participation in outside activities such as clubs or sports become complicated. Social isolation can be a real problem for the shift worker.

Safety.

Shift work may be a contributing factor to increased injuries and accidents.

Medication.

Shift workers tend to take more medicines and drugs to help them sleep and work. It also has been shown that some medications may not have the same effect on the body of a shift worker as it would for someone working a normal day schedule.

ALSO... according to Wikipedia:

The February 15, 2005 issue of American Family Physician noted that shift work has been associated with cluster headaches. The consequences of disturbing natural circadian sleep rhythms has been investigated also.

A study by Knutsson et al in 1986 found that shift workers who had worked in that method for 15 years or more were 300% more likely to develop ischaemic heart disease. Ethan Franklin, Senior Partner at Core Practice Partners, points out that most companies blame shift length for health issues. "This is absolutely the wrong way to look at it," says Franklin. "These health challenges are directly attributed to circadian issues and not length of shift. Companies do an extreme disservice to their workers by limiting alternative scheduling options."

In 1987, working the night shift first became associated with higher rates of cancer. This may be due to alterations in circadian rhythm: melatonin, a known tumor suppressant, is generally produced at night and late shifts may disrupt its production. The International Agency for Research on Cancer, part of the World Health Organization, lists night work as a "probable cause" of cancer since December 5, 2007

CHECK OUT THESE TIPS FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF

YOUR SLEEP:

a) Proper diet and eating patterns.

- maintain eating patterns as regular as possible.
- at night, shift workers should eat light and healthy foods.
- before bed after a night shift, have a moderate breakfast so one will not wake up due to hunger or be kept awake because of fullness.
- limit the intake of caffeine, alcohol and salt.
- avoid as much as possible the use of sleeping pills.

b) Sleep maintenance.

- try to sleep on a set schedule to make sleep during the day easier. make sleeping quarters as much like night as possible. Examples include fans or a "white noise" generator to drown out outside daytime noises. Two small fans, one on each side of the bed, drowns out most noises.
- use ear plugs and an eye mask.
- darken the room with heavy blinds or curtains. I use a hardboard (like heavy cardboard) cut to fit the window. Darkness of the room is very important as it prevents the sunlight from interfering with your body clock.
- turn off ringer on any nearby phones. Use an answering machine to field any missed calls. One strategy is to use a beeper that only family members know the number for and can contact you if there is an emergency.
- make sure your family and friends understand the importance of your daytime sleep. Let them know what your schedule is.

- take time for quiet relaxation before bed to ensure better daytime sleep.
- relax using breathing or muscle relaxing techniques.
- block out unpleasant thoughts using mental imagery.
- limit your commitments to late in the day or on another day so you are not thinking about what you need to do before trying to sleep.

c) Other Considerations.

- try to adjust your sleep schedule before you move to a new schedule. For example, going to bed 1 or 2 hours later than usual prior to nights.
- increase your physical fitness. Physical fitness can help reduce stress.

- take leisure time seriously.
- work at communicating and keep communication lines open. Let family and friends know how important your daytime sleep is. To really get educated, do some more research to find out the physical changes sleep (and the lack of) has on your body. Portions of this blog were taken from:
<http://members.tripod.com/~shiftworker/index.html>

SMOKING

Another vice of mine that I will hopefully rid myself of shortly. Read on, for those of you who are with me in our bad habits.

Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body; causing many diseases and reducing the health of smokers in general.¹ The adverse health effects from cigarette smoking account for an estimated 438,000 deaths, or nearly 1 of every 5 deaths, each year in the United States.^{2,3} More deaths are caused each year by tobacco use than by all deaths from human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), illegal drug use, alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries, suicides, and murders combined.^{2,4}

Cancer

Cancer is the second leading cause of death and was among the first diseases causally linked to smoking.¹ Smoking causes about 90% of lung cancer deaths in women and almost 80% of lung cancer deaths in men. The risk of dying from lung cancer is more than 23 times higher among men who smoke cigarettes, and about 13 times higher among women who smoke cigarettes compared with never smokers.¹ Smoking causes cancers of the bladder, oral cavity, pharynx, larynx (voice box), esophagus, cervix, kidney, lung, pancreas, and stomach, and causes acute myeloid leukemia.¹ Rates of cancers related to cigarette smoking vary widely among members of racial/ethnic groups, but are generally highest in African-American men.⁵

Cardiovascular Disease (Heart and Circulatory System)

Smoking causes coronary heart disease, the leading cause of death in the United States.¹ Cigarette smokers are 2–4 times more likely to develop coronary heart disease than nonsmokers.⁶ Cigarette smoking approximately doubles a person's risk for stroke.^{7,8}

Cigarette smoking causes reduced circulation by narrowing the blood vessels (arteries). Smokers are more than 10 times as likely as nonsmokers to develop peripheral vascular disease.⁹ Smoking causes abdominal aortic aneurysm.¹

Respiratory Disease and Other Effects

Cigarette smoking is associated with a tenfold increase in the risk of dying from chronic obstructive lung disease.⁷ About 90% of all deaths from chronic obstructive lung diseases are attributable to cigarette smoking.¹ Cigarette smoking has many adverse reproductive and early childhood effects, including an increased risk for infertility, preterm delivery, stillbirth, low birth weight, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).¹ Postmenopausal women who smoke have lower bone density than women who never smoked. Women who smoke have an increased risk for hip fracture than never smokers.¹⁰

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For Further Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Office on Smoking and Health
E-mail: tobaccoinfo@cdc.gov
Phone: 1-800-CDC-INFO

Media Inquiries: Contact CDC's Office on Smoking and Health press line at 770-488-5493.

taken from:

http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/Factsheets/health_effects.htm

CAFFEINE

One of my favorite topics; caffeine. I love it, you love it. But consider some of the health effects. Those who patrol late into the night. or early in the morning. read on..... "I'm going to put on a kettle," as Black Arrow would say.

Around 90 percent of Americans consume caffeine in one form or another every single day. More than half of all American adults consume more than 300 milligrams (mg) of caffeine every day, making it America's most popular drug by far. The caffeine comes in from things like coffee, tea, cola, chocolate, etc.

Have you ever wondered what it is that makes caffeine so popular? What does this drug do that causes its use to be so widespread? In this article, you will learn all about caffeine.
What is Caffeine?

Caffeine is known medically as trimethylxanthine, and the chemical formula is $C_8H_{10}N_4O_2$ (see Erowid: Caffeine Chemistry for an image of the molecular structure). When isolated in pure form, caffeine is a white crystalline powder that tastes very bitter. The chief source of pure caffeine is the process of decaffeinating coffee and tea.

Medically, caffeine is useful as a cardiac stimulant and also as a mild diuretic (it increases urine production). Recreationally, it is used to provide a "boost of energy" or a feeling of heightened alertness. It's often used to stay awake longer -- college students and drivers use it to stay awake late into the night. Many people feel as though they "cannot function" in the morning without a cup of coffee to provide

caffeine and the boost it gives them.

Caffeine is an addictive drug. Among its many actions, it operates using the same mechanisms that amphetamines, cocaine, and heroin use to stimulate the brain. On a spectrum, caffeine's effects are milder than amphetamines, cocaine and heroin, but it is manipulating the same channels, and that is one of the things that give caffeine its addictive qualities. If you feel like you cannot function without it and must consume it every day, then you are addicted to caffeine.

Caffeine in the Diet

Caffeine occurs naturally in many plants, including coffee beans, tea leaves and cocoa nuts. It is therefore found in a wide range of food products. Caffeine is added artificially to many others, including a variety of beverages. Here are the most common sources of caffeine for Americans:

Typical drip-brewed coffee contains 100 mg per 6-ounce cup. If you are buying your coffee at Starbucks or a convenience store or drinking it at home or the office out of a mug or a commuter's cup, you are consuming it in 12-, 14- or 20-ounce containers. You can calculate the number of milligrams based on your normal serving size.

Typical brewed tea contains 70 mg per 6-ounce cup.

Typical colas (Coke, Pepsi, Mountain Dew, etc.) contain 50 mg per 12-ounce can. Things like Jolt contain 70 mg per 12-ounce can. Typical milk chocolate contains 6 mg per ounce.

Anacin contains 32 mg per tablet. No-doz contains 100 mg per tablet.

Vivarin and Dexatrim contain 200 mg per tablet.

By looking at these numbers and by knowing how widespread coffee, tea and cola are in our society, you can see why half of all American adults consume more than 300 mg of caffeine per day. Two mugs of coffee or a mug of coffee and a couple of Cokes during the day are all you need to get you there. If you sit down and calculate your caffeine consumption during a typical day, you may be surprised. Many people consume a gram or more every single day and don't even realize it.

Caffeine and Adenosine

Why do so many people consume so much caffeine? Why does caffeine wake you up? By understanding the drug's actions inside the body you can see why people use it so much.

In the HowStuffWorks article [How Sleep Works](#), the action of adenosine is discussed. As adenosine is created in the brain, it binds to adenosine receptors. The binding of adenosine causes drowsiness by slowing down nerve cell activity. In the brain, adenosine binding also causes blood vessels to dilate (presumably to let more oxygen in during sleep).

To a nerve cell, caffeine looks like adenosine. Caffeine therefore binds to the adenosine receptor. However, it doesn't slow down the cell's activity like adenosine would. So the cell cannot "see" adenosine anymore because caffeine is taking up all the receptors adenosine binds to. So instead of slowing down because of the adenosine level, the cells speed up. You can see that caffeine also causes the brain's blood vessels to constrict, because it blocks adenosine's ability to open them up. This effect is why some headache medicines like Anacin contain caffeine -- if you have a vascular headache, the caffeine will close down the blood vessels and relieve it.

So now you have increased neuron firing in the brain. The pituitary gland sees all of the activity and thinks some sort of emergency must be occurring, so it releases hormones that tell the adrenal glands to produce adrenaline (epinephrine). Adrenaline is the "fight or flight" hormone, and it has a number of effects on your body:

Your pupils dilate.

Your breathing tubes open up (this is why people suffering from severe asthma attacks are sometimes injected with epinephrine).

Your heart beats faster.

Blood vessels on the surface constrict to slow blood flow from cuts and also to increase blood flow to muscles. Blood pressure rises.

Blood flow to the stomach slows.

The liver releases sugar into the bloodstream for extra energy.

Muscles tighten up, ready for action.

This explains why, after consuming a big cup of coffee, your hands get cold, your muscles tense up, you feel excited and you can feel

your heart beat increasing.

Caffeine and Dopamine

Caffeine also increases dopamine levels in the same way that amphetamines do (heroin and cocaine also manipulate dopamine levels by slowing down the rate of dopamine re-uptake). Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that, in certain parts of the brain, activates the pleasure center. Obviously, caffeine's effect is much lower than heroin's, but it is the same mechanism. It is suspected that the dopamine connection contributes to caffeine addiction.

So you can see why your body might like caffeine in the short term, especially if you are low on sleep and need to remain active. Caffeine blocks adenosine reception so you feel alert. It injects adrenaline into the system to give you a boost. And it manipulates dopamine production to make you feel good.

The problem with caffeine is the longer-term effects, which tend to spiral. For example, once the adrenaline wears off, you face fatigue and depression. So what are you going to do? You take more caffeine to get the adrenaline going again. As you might imagine, having your body in a state of emergency all day long isn't very healthy, and it also makes you jumpy and irritable.

The most important long-term problem is the effect that caffeine has on sleep. Adenosine reception is important to sleep, and especially to deep sleep. The half-life of caffeine in your body is about 6 hours. That means that if you consume a big cup of coffee with 200 mg of caffeine in it at 3:00 PM, by 9:00 PM about 100 mg of that caffeine is still in your system. You may be able to fall asleep, but your body probably will miss out on the benefits of deep sleep. That deficit adds up fast. The next day you feel worse, so you need caffeine as soon as you get out of bed. The cycle continues day after day.

This is why 90% of Americans consume caffeine every day. Once you get in the cycle, you have to keep taking the drug. Even worse, if you try to stop taking caffeine, you get very tired and depressed and you get a terrible, splitting headache as blood vessels in the brain dilate. These negative effects force you to run back to caffeine even if you want to stop.

Taken from: <http://health.howstuffworks.com/caffeine.htm>
For more information on caffeine and related topics, check out:
<http://www.pe2000.com/caffeine.htm>

7. THREADS

A word on Costumes, Battlesuits, & Uniforms

Ever ask yourself, "does this cape make my butt look big?"

Different equipment to suit the needs of the individual. If the clothes truly make the man, than cowboy up, it's time for a fashion lesson you'll find more handy in alleys than runways.

Protection, range of movement, durability, price, how obvious it is, the style of the garment/armor, how easily it can be maintained or laundered, and what environmental conditions it will be used in are all factors to consider.

Assuming you live on Earth, you know how hot it gets in summer, especially in the south. Of course, if all your missions are community service oriented (public relations) then Jack over at <http://hero-gear.org> is the right route for you. I can think of at least half a dozen guys or gals right now that wear his product. You'll probably recognize his handiwork on some contestants from "Who Wants To Be A Superhero?", comic book & sci-fi convention goers, and of course, me. And from what I can attest, he does pretty good work.

On the flipside of the coin, let's say you approach things less like Squeegee Man and more like Nostrum. You rough a few punks up, and you're bound to get a tear wearing spandex. While not right for everyone, here's a possible solution. In the wake of the X-Men and Daredevil flicks we're seeing a shift to practical and utility "battle suits".

Leather

Check out some motorcycling pants from Vanson Leathers.
<http://www.vansonleathers.com/>

Expecting some rough and tumble? Got ya covered. Many riding

pants (and jackets for that matter) come designed to accommodate removable armor and high density foam pads. And if your heart desires a uniform look, get the one or two piece racing suit. Either setup provides comfort, durability, and ventilation. However they don't come cheap, so shop around. Vanson's high end competition-grade, so if you have the money... well ...give it to me. Rent is due and my car isn't making its own payment. Hey, we can't ALL be Bruce Wayne.

Logically 100% leather isn't the smartest option if you plan on wearing them all the time. Choose a textile or composite like cordura. Launderers better. A more economical investment would be Alpine or Joe Rocket.

And anyway.... ARE you expecting combat? Because the spidey suit idea is kinda nonfunctional as a combat uniform, UNLESS you planning on not getting struck at all. (no offense intended to Jack or anyone who buys from him, cuz I have one of his battle shirts). Worn under clothes, by the time you observe a crime, you either have time to intervene or to contact authorities. If you have time to both to protect your identity then you're probably lucky, but the time it would take to change is a probably a prohibiting factor. Better off scheduling set patrols during the week, and if you can, help civilians when you're able to.

Not to sound callous, but your favorite fictional heroes who influenced you the most should not be the deciding factor when it comes to selecting a uniform/battlesuit. Their personalities and actions are motivating sure. But bullets don't bounce off me. Or you. Mimicking their costumes is not a life saving choice, however by emulating them in the design then fine, more power to ya. But be utilitarian about your selection. You get what you pay for, and if you take care of your equipment (read uniform) it will take care of you.

I choose the practical route. If you want to make comparisons to characters in movies, I'd have to say for this work, again, X-men, Daredevil or the Batman Begins uniforms are the most practical choice for combat-orientation. I have large goggles, a mil-spec flight suit, tactical boots, and a motorcycle riding jacket with some dense core foam. For me, I find this will allow me the freedom of movement

and the protection against abrasion and force.... Once I get some more padding and armor. With a little tailor modification you could insert a ballistic/trauma plate or a back protector on this jacket, for example.

Anywho, just me thinking aloud...well..typing aloud..... moving on.

Gloves

My recommendation HATCH. Hatch provides quality gloves and other protective gear for uniformed duty, tactical, corrections, military, industrial safety/medical rehabilitation, and more. Hatch brands include Friskmaster-- cut resistant gloves, Operator-- Tactical Gloves, Centurion-- and ExoTech® disturbance control gear and B.O.S.S. tactical eyewear.

<http://www.hatch-corp.com/>

Also, from personal experience, I love my Shelby extrication gloves. They are used in fire rescue departments when an occupant becomes trapped in a vehicle and the car needs to be peeled away from them. Very cut-resistant, and I do almost any manual labor wearing these because they are comfortable and allow for a hell of a lot of dexterity. I have two pairs that have lasted me two years. The only wear I notice is the sun bleaching, thinning of the rubberized fingertip grip, and the logo is peeling off. That's all!

<http://www.shelbyglove.com/index.html>

...and it looks cool.

Goggles

After perusing a thread in which I read about Nostrum's unfortunate loss of vision in his left eye, I thought I might share something about eye protection. I hope in the interest of self-preservation as well as awareness, the Big N will not mind me having used him as an example.

(porions of this article have been taken from:

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/eyeinjuries.html>)

The structure of your face helps protect your eyes from injury. Still, injuries can damage your eye, sometimes severely enough that you could lose your vision. Most eye injuries are preventable. If you play sports or work in certain jobs, you may need protection.

The most common type of injury happens when something irritates the outer surface of your eye. Certain jobs such as industrial jobs or hobbies such as carpentry make this type of injury more likely. It's also more likely if you wear contact lenses.

Chemicals or heat can burn your eyes. With chemicals, the pain may cause you to close your eyes. This traps the irritant next to the eye and may cause more damage. You should wash out your eye right away while you wait for medical help.

For examples of trauma to the eye and treatments:

<http://www.merck.com/mmhe/sec20/ch227/ch227a.html>

As always, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". Taking a few steps to prevent injury is your first defense. Choose a style that is a wrap around, or uses a strap to secure to your face. Recreational Sport type, occupational safety, or public safety/military/tactical will probably be the best sources to begin your search. You only have one set of eyes, therefore remember the 3 F's: Form Follows Function. Incidentally, a good theory to apply in all aspects of your uniform.

Lenses:

choose a durable material, like polycarbonate, or even Lexan. These have beneficial attributes of being highly shatter resistant. Glass will end up in shards with one smartly delivered blow to your face. Also consider the time/place of your patrols. Daytime? Opt for smoke tint, or polarized. Night time? Consider yellow or amber lenses like those found in shooting glasses or motorcycle goggles. The lighter tint actually helps highlight in low level light conditions.

And if you're really in a bad situation, check out

<http://galls.com/gaweb.dll> In the event you get shot point blank in the face, these offer some resistance. OR if you're on a budget like me, go to a hardware store and look for glasses with ANZI Z87.1 on the packaging. This is an occupational safety standard, much like OSHA. Oh and be sure to pick some with good ventilation so they wont be fogging up.

Cowls

Looking for a professional looking cowl? Or maybe a domino mask? Check this site out, it's got a ton of prosthetic latex or resin costume/uniform accessories.

<http://www.xtremedesignfx.com/>

EDIT: here's an addendum from Phantom Zero.....

The sculpts I saw in the Heroes section looked good.

A warning on the cowls: perhaps good for costuming, but I think it would be bad for everyday patrol use. These masks are made of latex. Same stuff pull-over Halloween masks are made of. The process they are made by is likely the same, too.

Latex Masks

A mold is made of someone's face (using alginate or similar skin safe casting substance). A plaster cast is made, which is a replica of the person's face. Clay is used to sculpt the mask on the plaster. Then another mold is made, this time out of plaster.

Plaster is porous, and absorbs moisture. Latex is poured into this mold, and then poured out. The latex sticks to the sides of this mold and is allowed to dry before the process is repeated. Many layers are built up, which bond to the last, creating a thick sheet of latex (about 1/16th to 1/8th of an inch for a mask). This is known as a slush mold process.

Why are cowls bad? Anyone who has worn a full face pull-over Halloween mask should know that there are inherent problems with slush mold masks. If the latex is too thin, it is prone to tearing. Also, any hollows are prone to wobbling. If it is too thick, it is heavy and uncomfortable. There is no way to custom fit it unless it was made specifically for you (barring trimming the mask itself, and that can weaken the structure as a whole). It is hot, and sweat makes it wet (with no means for the heat or moisture to escape). Any paint applied needs to "bond" with the surface, thus acrylic and another substance (an adhesive) is needed for it to stick. It may wear, peel, or crack. It needs to be stored on a stand so it retains its shape. Latex eventually breaks down from contact with skin's natural oils. Exposure to

extreme heat or cold, chemicals, or sunlight will degrade the latex. It is nearly impossible to fix if it tears without leaving unsightly scars.

There are ways you can compensate for the inherent drawbacks of a mask such as this. You can wear an absorbent material underneath (such as cotton) to absorb sweat. Limit the amount of time you wear it. Find a neutral filler, like open cell foam, to fill the negative space. Talcum powder prevents sticking and will help get your mask on.

Of course, if you can mass produce your own latex masks. This isn't a problem. However, if you are shelling out \$100-150 a pop, it could get dicey.

Latex Appliances

Popular for domino style masks. A slush mold latex appliance may not blend well with the skin if it is poorly made, since you want the edges to be thin and fanned out, but in the case of a superhero mask, that may not be a problem (it may even be desirable to make it look like it is part of the face). Acetone can be used to blend the edges. Spirit gum or a surgical adhesive is used to put the mask on and take it off. An appliance may be fouled after a few applications and removals.

Other Options

It all depends on your budget and the look you are going for. Cloth works well, as it is breathable, absorbent, washable, and durable. It's also fairly commonplace.

Leather is another good material. Weather stitched, formed, or pressed, it's usually more comfortable than latex, more porous and breathable, and becomes more-so with time. It's fairly durable, but certain special care and use is required (if you've ever owned leather shoes or a baseball glove, it's made of the same stuff). Immersion in water is bad.

For appliances (not full face masks), nothing beats gel filled silicone. The temperature regulates to match your own, it is exceptionally durable, resistant to most chemicals, and moves with the face much better than foam latex or slush molded latex. It has a good shelf life, too. Reusable. The downside is it's expensive and difficult for a

novice to work with.

<http://www.hero-gear.net>

<http://www.myspace.com/herogear.net>

Jack runs Hero Gear. He comes highly recommended by other Real Life Super Heroes who will most definitely vouch for the quality of his work and service. His masks are spandex, and for custom commissions, unbelievably affordable. There are also testimonials and plenty of examples of his work on his site.

<http://www.myspace.com/maskedbird>

Masked Bird is a Real Life Super Hero who is keeping the ancient craft of leather forming masks alive and well. Masked Bird offers quality craftsmanship.

8. BATTLE RATTLE

A look at the various types and levels of protection of armor

Alright. Let's face it-

You, my friend, are mortal.

A quick review of today's headlines in your nearby big city, or casually scanning the latest news updates online ought to be enough to convince you that our modern world is a dangerous one. Bullets do not bounce off you. Knives will not glance off you like an insect when jammed into your soft spots. As a street level hero, intending on scrapping and engaging with a combative, either you must be downing a super-secret fictional serum that makes your skin as tough as granite...admittedly, unlikely... OR there will come a time an individual intends to use you as a pincushion. If this is you, you must consider the wearing some sort of protection.

Of the possibilities, several trends have emerged among the RLSH community, most of them stemming from the application of currently available self defense products utilized into the costume/battlesuit/uniform of a RLSH. These choices stem from the user's:

Background & Experience

Personal Preference

Available Resources

....& lastly, the Local Threat Level

Prior military will probably favor ballistic vests AKA "Bullet Proof Vests / Stab Proof Vests". Due to the various different types of projectile, it is often inaccurate to refer to a particular product as "bulletproof" because this implies that it will protect against any and all threats. Instead, the term bullet resistant is generally preferred.

A ballistic vest is an item of protective clothing that absorbs the impact from gun-fired projectiles and shrapnel fragments from explosion. This protection is for the torso. Soft vests are made from many layers of woven or laminated fibers and protect wearers from projectiles fired from handguns, shotguns, and small fragments from explosives such as hand grenades. When metal or ceramic plates are used with a soft vest, it can also protect wearers from shots fired from rifles. In combination with metallic components or tightly-woven fiber layers, soft armor can offer some protection to the wearer from stab and slash from a knife. Soft vests are commonly worn by police forces, private citizens and private security guards, and hard-plate reinforced vests are mainly worn by combat soldiers in the armies of various nations as well as police armed response units.

Modern body armor may combine a ballistic vest with other items of protective clothing, such as a helmet. Vests intended for police and military use may also include ballistic shoulder, and side protection armor components.

Textile vests may be augmented with metal (steel or titanium), ceramic or polyethylene plates that provide extra protection to vital areas. These hard armour plates have proven effective against all handgun bullets and a range of rifles. These upgraded ballistic vests have become standard in military use, as soft body armour vests are ineffective against military rifle rounds. The layers of very strong fiber in these vests catch and deform the soft bullets and spread its force over a larger portion of the vest fiber. The vest absorbs the energy from the bullet, bringing it to a stop before it can penetrate the vest. A deformable handgun bullet mushrooms into a dished plate on impact with a well designed textile vest. Some layers may be penetrated but as the bullet deforms the energy is absorbed by a larger and larger fiber area. While a vest can prevent bullet penetration, the vest and

wearer still absorb the bullet's energy. Even without penetration, modern pistol bullets contain enough energy to cause blunt force trauma under the impact point. Vests' specifications include both penetration resistance requirements and limits on the amount of impact energy that is delivered to the body. Vests designed for bullets offer little protection against blows from sharp implements, such as knives, arrows or ice picks, or from bullets manufactured of non-deformable materials i.e. steel core instead of lead. The force of the impact of these objects is concentrated in a relatively small area, allowing them to puncture the fiber layers of most bullet-resistant fabrics. Corrections officers and other law enforcement officers often wear vests which are designed specifically against bladed weapons and sharp objects. These vests may incorporate coated and laminated para-aramid textiles or metallic components.

Body armor standards are regional. Around the world ammunition varies and as a result the armor testing must reflect the threats found locally. Law enforcement statistics show that many shootings where officers are injured or killed involve the officer's weapon. As a result each law enforcement agency or para-military organizations will have their own standard for armor performance if only to ensure that their armor protects them from their own weapon. While many standards exist a few standards are widely used as models. The US National Institute of Justice ballistic and stab documents are examples of broadly accepted standards, In addition to the NIJ, the UK Home Office Scientific Development Branch (HOSDB - formerly the Police Scientific Development Branch (PSDB)) standards are used by a number of other countries and organizations. These "model" standards are usually adapted by other counties by incorporation of the basic test methodologies with modification of the bullets that are required for test. NIJ Standard 0101.04 has specific performance standards for bullet resistant vests used by law enforcement. This rates vests on the following scale against penetration and also blunt trauma protection (deformation) (Table from NIJ Standard 0101.04):

Armor Level

Type I (.22 LR; .380 ACP)

This armor protects against 22 calibre Long Rifle Lead Round Nose (LR LRN) bullets, with nominal masses of 2.6 g (40 gr) at a reference velocity of 329 m/s (1080 ft/s \pm 30 ft/s) and .380 ACP Full Metal

Jacketed Round Nose (FMJ RN) bullets, with nominal masses of 6.2 g (95 gr) at a reference velocity of 322 m/s (1055 ft/s \pm 30 ft/s)

Type IIA (9 mm; .40 S&W)

This armor protects against 9 mm Full Metal Jacketed Round Nose (FMJ RN) bullets, with nominal masses of 8.0 g (124 gr) at a reference velocity of 341 m/s (1120 ft/s \pm 30 ft/s) and .40 S&W calibre Full Metal Jacketed (FMJ) bullets, with nominal masses of 11.7 g (180 gr) at a reference velocity of 322 m/s (1055 ft/s \pm 30 ft/s). It also provides protection against the threats mentioned in [Type I].

Type II (9 mm; .357 Magnum)

This armor protects against 9 mm Full Metal Jacketed Round Nose (FMJ RN) bullets, with nominal masses of 8.0 g (124 gr) at a reference velocity of 367 m/s (1205 ft/s \pm 30 ft/s) and 357 Magnum Jacketed Soft Point (JSP) bullets, with nominal masses of 10.2 g (158 gr) at a reference velocity of 436 m/s (1430 ft/s \pm 30 ft/s). It also provides protection against the threats mentioned in [Types I and IIA].

Type IIIA (High Velocity 9 mm; .44 Magnum)

This armor protects against 9 mm Full Metal Jacketed Round Nose (FMJ RN) bullets, with nominal masses of 8.0 g (124 gr) at a reference velocity of 436 m/s (1430 ft/s \pm 30 ft/s) and .44 Magnum Semi Jacketed Hollow Point (SJHP) bullets, with nominal masses of 15.6 g (240 gr) at a reference velocity of 436 m/s (1430 ft/s \pm 30 ft/s). It also provides protection against most handgun threats, as well as the threats mentioned in [Types I, IIA, and II].

Type III (Rifles)

This armor protects against 7.62 mm Full Metal Jacketed (FMJ) bullets (U.S. Military designation M80), with nominal masses of 9.6 g (148 gr) at a reference velocity of 847 m/s (2780 ft/s \pm 30 ft/s) or less. It also provides protection against the threats mentioned in [Types I, IIA, II, and IIIA].

Type IV (Armour Piercing Rifle)

This armor protects against .30 caliber armour piercing (AP) bullets (U.S. Military designation M2 AP), with nominal masses of 10.8 g (166 gr) at a reference velocity of 878 m/s (2880 ft/s \pm 30 ft/s). It also provides at least single hit protection against the threats mentioned in

[Types I, IIA, II, IIIA, and III].

In addition to the NIJ and HOSDB standards, other important standards include:

German Police TR-Technische Richtlinie, Draft ISO prEN ISO 14876, Underwriters Laboratories (UL Standard 752)

Textile armor is tested for both penetration resistance by bullets and for the impact energy transmitted to the wearer. The "backface signature" or transmitted impact energy is measured by shooting armor mounted in front of a backing material, typically sculpture modeling oil-clay. The clay is used at a controlled temperature and verified for impact flow before testing. After the armor is impacted with the test bullet the vest is removed from the clay and the depth of the indentation in the clay is measured.

The backface signature allowed by different test standards can be difficult to compare. Both the clay materials and the bullets used for the test are not common. However in general the UK, German and other European standards allow 20-25 mm of backface signature while the US-NIJ standards allow for 44 mm, which can potentially cause internal injury. The allowable backface signature for body armor has been controversial from its introduction in the first NIJ test standard and the debate as to the relative importance of penetration-resistance vs. backface signature continues in the medical and testing communities.

In general a vest's textile material temporarily degrades when wet. Neutral water at room temp does not affect para-aramid or UHMWPE but acidic, basic and some other solutions can permanently reduce para-aramid fiber tensile strength. (As a result of this, the major test standards call for wet testing of textile armor). Mechanisms for this wet loss of performance are not known. Vests that will be tested after ISO type water immersion tend to have heat sealed enclosures and those that are tested under NIJ type water spray methods tend to have water resistant enclosures.

From 2003-5, a large study of the environmental degradation of Zylon armor was undertaken by the US-NIJ. This concluded that water, long-term use, and temperature exposure significantly affect tensile

strength and the ballistic performance of PBO or Zylon fiber. This NIJ study on vests returned from the field demonstrated that environmental affects on Zylon resulted in ballistic failures under standard test conditions.

For more information, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ballistic_vest

Typical Brands include: Pinnacle, American Body Armor, Protech, Second Chance

A great place to look would be to start with suppliers to law enforcement, military, and corrections.

<http://www.chiefsupply.com/>

<http://www.globalarmour.org/>

<http://www.armourofamerica.com/>

<http://www.pinnaclearmor.com/index.php>

<http://www.galls.com/index.html>

<http://www.511tactical.com/>

<http://www.israelmilitary.com/>

<http://www.military-surplus-wholesale.com/>

<http://uscav.com/>

<http://www.bulletproofme.com/>

OTHER SOURCES OF PROTECTION

Some have found the "battle rattle" rather cumbersome and perhaps even overkill relating to their particular situation. Not really a need for ballistic armor, say in the UK, for instance, where gun control legislation highly restricts firearm ownership. Or perhaps you patrol a quiet suburb. No need to go all Rambo down Mainstreet, Smailville is there?

If you're still concerned with getting scuffed up on patrol by some random intoxicated fool or a mugger looking for an easy mark, you may choose to follow the example of lightly armored heroes. If you're a standup fighter who likes counseling the crooked with his fists, perhaps lightly armored motorcycle gloves. Conversely, if you are able to kick a fellow's cajones into his throat, tactical boots with reinforced toes and a shank in the sole are excellent from fending off knicks to the lower leg.

Consider some of the following options, perhaps even in conjunction with your existing arsenal:

Sporting goods. Look for gear like lacrosse breastplates, football, soccer, baseball padding, etc.

Public safety suppliers. Riot & tactical gear for law enforcement.

Martial arts equipment. Padding, joint & athletic supports, sparring gear.

Motor sporting armor. Motorcycling is inherently dangerous and many of the modern garments include provision for high speed trauma protection; armored gloves, leathers, etc.

Re-enactment costuming. Period clothing such as medieval styled leather vambraces, pauldrons, etc may provide a minimal prevention of general scuffs and scrapes. You can try <http://www.armory.net/> or Museum Replicas

Also on the horizon, with the advent of newer technologies, we can make extreme activities more viable by lowering the risk to our personal safety.

"What is d3o? d3o is a material containing 'Intelligent Molecules' which flow freely under normal conditions making it soft and flexible, but lock together on shock to absorb all of the impact energy. But, enough of the science... what does this actually mean? Well for anyone participating in sport, or any kind of activity with a danger of injury from impact, it means you get protection that is both lightweight and flexible but that works when you need it to. d3o makes you faster, stronger, and smarter."

For RLSH work, this is an ideal base layer for the minimalist who wants to keep some layers between his/her tailbone and the asphalt.

*** UPDATE ***

I found a few more sporting goods carriers who stock protective gear suitable for street level RLSH "underoos".

shock doctor

<http://www.shockdoctor.com/>

mcdavid

<http://www.mcdavidusa.com/index.asp>

9. ANATOMY STRIKES

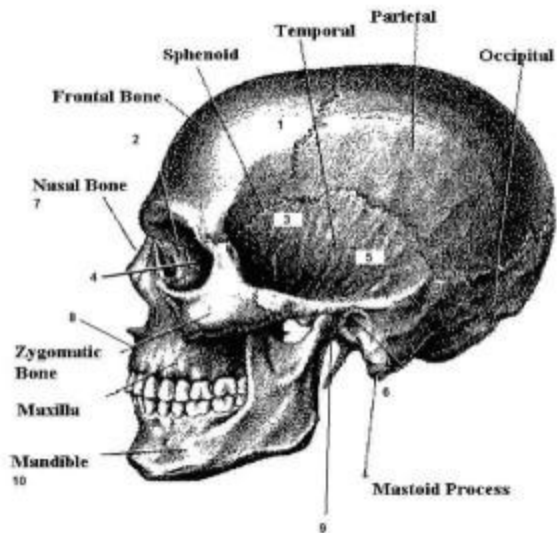
ANATOMY STRIKES

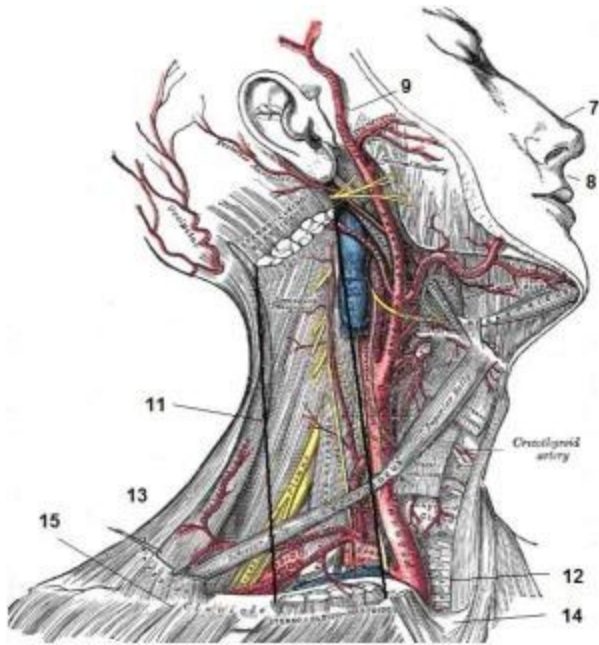
Targets on an attacker to be exploited when defending yourself & others.

BEWARE USING THESE TECHNIQUES, EVEN WHILE IN TRAINING. EXECUTED PROPERLY, MANY OF THESE STRIKES CAN CAUSE IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE INCLUDING DEATH.

Strikes to the Head and Neck

This article concentrates on some of the major pressure points of the body. Of course, there are quite a few more, but these are the basics from the neck up. All of the points are classified into 2 categories:





Numerical

I -brain/skull

II -sense organs

III-life support, cardiorespiratory, organic damage

IV -muscular functions & nerves damage

V -mechanical functions, skeletal, cartilages & joints

Alphabetical

A-immobility from pain

B-immobility from structural or major organs & tracts

C-Unconsciousness from nerve or organic

D-death from physiological damage

The ventral transverse plane consists of the face, the front, top, & sides of the head, the neck, & the upper torso, including the collarbone. There are 15 pressure points in this area as follows:

1. coronal suture I-C
2. trigeminal nerve & frontal bone I-D
3. temple & fossa temporalis I-D
4. eyes II-B
5. ears II-B
6. mastoid II-A
7. septal cartilage II-A or II-D
8. anterior nasal spine I-A

9. temporomandibular joint V-A
10. tip of mandible I-C
11. sternocleidomastoid region III-D
12. anterior neck region III-D
13. brachial plexus & trapezius muscle IV-C
14. suprasternal notch III-D
15. clavicle V-B

1: This region lies on top of the head, more towards the forehead. It is also known as the soft spot on babies. It is the space between the skull bones that is covered with a membrane that close up usually by 18 months, but the coronal structure is still weaker than the rest of the skull. Directly beneath this is the sensory portion of the brain & under that the optic cavity. A downward strike of about 45 degrees depending on the force could cause concussion, temporary blindness, unconsciousness, brain hemorrhage, even death (very powerful blow).

* Use hammer fist or downward elbow strike.

2: This region is located just below the centermost point of the forehead. The nerve is on the outside of the skull thus when the bone is struck it will trap the nerve. This could result in jarring the cerebral hemispheres, concussion, unconsciousness, impaired vision, & paralysis. If and only if maximum impact is applied; death could result from brain hemorrhage.

* utilize forceful downward elbow.

3: I'm sure we all know where the temple is, but for those of you that don't know, it is located on a horizontal plane across from the top of the ear. It is the recessed part on each side of the head. It is actually the bone tip of the sphenoid. The trigeminal nerve runs through the temple. This nerve controls several facial functions. Also passing through is the middle meningeal artery which is the largest branch supplying dura matter. A direct hit could break the tip off the sphenoid causing it to enter the brain. The meningeal could burst. Contact to the trigeminal could result in loss of control of facial functions. Compression of the brain, hemorrhage, concussion, shock, & death are likely results of striking the temple with a horizontal blow directed towards the opposite temple.

* Strikes to this target would be a sideways hammer-fist, hook, fist

with protruding knuckle (or other foreign object) or tip of elbow.

4: The eyes are located...uh I think you know. The eyes are very sensitive even to the slightest touch. They are held in by fascia bulbi (a soft membrane) and eye muscles. This makes them easy to pop out. They are also very soft, and if a blow reached the vitreous body (center of eye) the eyeball would collapse. Other than causing temporary or permanent loss of sight a deep thrust could puncture the brain causing death.

* Strikes to this target include a finger whip, thrusting attack like a finger/thumb gouge.

5: These are located on each side of the head. Air is easily trapped in the external acoustic meatus (the tunnel from the outer ear to the inner ear) and forced into the eardrum causing it to bust. This in turn ruptures the hammer or malleus within the middle ear. Damages would cause severe pain, loss of hearing, bleeding from the mouth and ear, and bleeding into the throat via the internal auditory tube. Also, the inner ear is the center of equilibrium (balance) for the cerebellum. A forceful strike could leave the victim sprawled on the ground with no balance!

* The blow should be delivered horizontally driving into the ear.

6: The mastoid is located directly behind the earlobe. It is the recessed area where the skull meets the neck. It is filled with air pockets which are used to communicate with the middle ear. A thrust should not be used; rather apply pressure with a knuckle or thumbnail in an upward direction. Prolonged pressure could cause damage to the auditory system.

7: Known more commonly as the nose, the septal cartilage is the head substance that makes up the nose. Two strikes are used here for different measures:

II-A: a horizontal strike causing breakage of the septal cartilage and nasal bone which ruptures the angular vein producing a lot of blood along with great pain, however, not enough to stop some attackers.
*downward hammer fist or elbow strike.

II-D: an upward 45 degree strike forcing the septal cartilage through

the internal nasal cavity and crista galli (a small bone formation between the nasal cavity & the brain) into the brain. Death would be instantaneous because of compression of the brain.

* upward elbow, uppercut punch, or palm heel strike.

8: This is located beneath the nose and above the lips. It is the area between the 2 lines running from the nose to upper lip. Many of the facial nerves run through this area. A direct hit would cause the sensory fibers to relay the shock to the pons, causing dizziness. A hit would also cause damage to the maxilla bone which holds the gums & teeth. This could cause extensive bleeding possibly scaring the victim about the blood loss. A straight blow is needed to achieve this aiming towards the back of the head.

* beware the teeth, which can damage your fist

9: This is the joint that holds the jaw bone in place. It connects with the skull in front of the ear. The joint is really made up of 2 separate joints, thus dislocation can be unilateral or bilateral. With a 45 degree downward strike (preferably with the mouth open) will dislocate the mandible (jaw bone). An easier way to break the bone is to strike the joint itself or anywhere on the jaw bone really while the head is turned to one side or the other. This reduces the absorption of the blow by the neck. This method requires the least amount of force.

*punch, palm heel, elbow, or head level kick.

10: The mandible is the jaw bone and of course the tip is located on the very end of the chin. Boxers use this point for a quick K.O. Hitting this area sends a shock sensor to the cerebellum causing unconsciousness.

* Hit this point with an upward blow.

11: This is the area at the frontal sides of the neck. The sternocleidomastoid muscles run from behind the ear down to the clavicle bones. Beneath these muscles lie the jugular vein and carotid artery which supply blood to the heart & brain. This area is very sensitive. Try poking yourself there. A medium strike results in dizziness. A more forceful blow could blister, swell, collapse, or burst 1 or both of the blood lines. This could easily cause death because of lack of oxygen to the heart or brain.

* A strike should be done on an up sloping plane at 45 degrees on

either side of the chin in the neck area.

12: Referred to as the windpipe or throat; is located in the center portion of the neck. This is a tubular passage running from the mouth to the stomach & lungs. When a straight on blow is delivered the thyroid cartilage (Adam's apple (the lump in your throat)) and the hyaline cartilage (hold the windpipe in a cylinder shape) are pushed through the larynx and/or trachea resulting in blood drowning or partial or complete obstruction of the vital air passages. The cartilages act as cutting devices.

* can be struck with the webbing between thumb and index finger

13: The muscle is the one that runs from the base of the neck to the shoulder. It rises up on most people. The brachial plexus is a nerve center which supplies info about the shoulder & arm down to the wrist. It runs through the trapezius. Striking the trapezius (from either front or back) with a downward 45 degree motion could paralyze the arm & shoulder temporarily. With a maximum blow unconsciousness & paralysis could be attained.

* knife hand blow or hammer fist

14: This lies between the collarbones; it connects them. A blow here could dislodge the collarbones from the sternum, collapsing the shoulders. But there are better targets behind the sternum. Such as the aorta, the superior vena cava (major blood lines to the brain), and the trachea all these pass directly behind the sternum. A forceful blow would follow these reactions: dislodge both clavicles from the sternum, the sternum would split, the 2 clavicles & sternum would be forced against or puncture the aorta and vena cava, the cartilages & bones would then be forced against or puncture the trachea. The strike should be delivered at a downward 45 degree angle. The suprasternal notch is a MAJOR death target

* finger jab works here to trachea

15: This is the bone on each side of the body that runs from the shoulder to the center of the chest. It supports the shoulder so breaking a clavicle (collarbone) would result in the collapse of the shoulder. It is possible for the broken bone to puncture a lung or possibly the heart or one of the things mentioned in #14. A simple break would immobilize the victim due to structural damage & pain.

An inward & down motion should be used when attacking also at 45 degrees.

* alternatively, insert fingers into hollow between the collar bone and yank down forcefully.

That concludes Part I. I hope you have learned from this lesson in human anatomy.

Please use this information wisely for I take no responsibilities in the misuse of these facts. This was intended for informational purposes only.

Further volumes down the road...

10. WOMEN'S SELF DEFENSE TIPS

Information reproduced from the "Dave's Planet" website at <http://www.davesplanet.net/> 02/12/2009

Young Women's Self Defense Class

I hope that you will never need the information presented here, but the truth is that most of you will experience some sort of violent crime in your lives. Of the statistics that are known, 1 out of 8 women in this country are rape victims, and those statistics are drastically under reported. You need to be prepared to defend yourself. You need to know how, and you need to know what you yourself are capable of.

If you read this material and participate in this class and then don't ever think about it again, chances are it won't do you any good at all when you really need it. You need to take this out at least once a month and carefully review it. Think about these situations and how you will react before you need them. Be prepared emotionally and physically before a situation gets out of control.

Buddy System, body movement, and awareness

Don't travel alone; don't be by yourself away from lighted areas. Attackers will almost never attack more than one person. Be aware of your surroundings, know where the danger points are and stay with a friend. Always walk like you have a purpose, head up, shoulders back. Walking around timidly looking at your feet is like wearing a sign that says "attack me, I'm weak". You want to radiate self-confidence. If someone is looking for a victim, you want him to see

that you are not a person to be trifled with; you want him to move on to the next person down the street, not you.

SCREAM

The most important thing for you to do the moment you first feel threatened is to let out the loudest, most blood curdling scream for help that you possibly can. Attackers rely on stealth and privacy. A good solid scream for help will be the single biggest deterrent you have available. When your attacker realizes that someone is likely to respond to your cry for help, they will probably flee. An especially effective addition to this technique is to use a piercingly loud whistle.

If you just aren't sure about a person and they are getting too close for your comfort, hold up your hand and yell "STOP" at them, use a command voice. You don't want it to sound weak; you want it to sound like a commandment from God.

RUN

If it doesn't put you at a disadvantage, you may decide that running away from an attacker toward lighted areas with people is your best bet. If your shoes are more of a hindrance than bare feet, better to replace a pair of shoes than to be attacked. If you do run, do it with all out effort, not a half way attempt.

DEFENSE

There is no such thing as a limited response!

Use the points above to avoid a physical confrontation. A man will be larger, stronger, and more aggressive than you will. You are much less likely to prevail in a physical confrontation. This is also the point where you have to decide what kind of damage you are willing to inflict on your attacker in order to avoid being raped. If you choose to defend yourself it must be an all out effort, you must be willing to gouge out his eyes, crush his neck, and break bones. If you are not willing to mount an all out defense, then you are only going to make your attacker angry and cause him to inflict more injury on you.

You are not to blame for anything that happens when someone attacks you. You are not to blame for the violence they inflict on you, and you are certainly not to blame for the damage you inflict on them in your defense. Many women are not emotionally capable of inflicting

the kind of damage on an attacker that will bring him down. Those women fight back, but not with the resolve needed to destroy an attacker. That kind of response will only make a bad situation worse; it will make your attacker angry but won't stop him. You must be prepared to either live with the emotional trauma of maiming or killing a man, or the emotional trauma of rape. I know people who have killed, and I know people who have been raped, and I can tell you that it is easier to live with having killed a man than it is to live with the aftermath of rape. Neither choice is an easy one, but it's best to discover now what you are capable of. In your defense it is absolutely critical to use the most debilitating blows as quickly as you can. You aren't going to win a fair fight standing toe to toe with an attacker but you can win a fast, devastating surprise attack and fight dirty.

Breaking Grips

Once an attacker has gotten hold of you, your chances of a successful outcome are greatly reduced. You must quickly break free. You may do so by any of the following attacks with your free hand and feet, or you may try a breaking grip technique. Pulling directly away from an attacker will not work; you must rotate your wrist inside his grip until the narrow part of your wrist forces his fingers apart and quickly snap your wrist through the gap in one fluid motion. This will be demonstrated in class. The other effective grip breaking technique is to grab one or two of his fingers at the farthest joint out and pull them quickly and forcibly backwards.

Gouge the eyes

This is by far and away your best option for defeating a larger, more aggressive attacker. You must be fast and vicious in order to make this work. Scratching at the eyes is not an effective enough deterrent. Force your fingers or other object as deeply into his eye socket with as rapid a blow as you can. Don't make it a big swinging blow that he will easily block by grabbing your wrist. You may want to try an unexpected move like using both hands at once. You can use fingers or thumbs in this attack; I believe fingers work best for a fast straight-hand blow and that thumbs work best in close quarters combat. We will demonstrate both kinds of moves.

Smash the neck

The neck is a terrific target. The front is especially vulnerable below

the Adam's apple. Striking above the Adam's apple isn't nearly as effective, so aim low on the front of the neck. The sides or back are also great targets, especially if you have a hard object in your hand to smash into the neck. You can also use your fist, elbows, or knife edge hand. If he is on the ground, use your feet.

Another very effective technique is to put your fingers around one side of his neck, thumb on the other, just around the esophagus, and crush it in your fist. Your goal here isn't to choke him a little, it is to try to crush the esophagus between your fingers. Force your fingers and thumbs deeply into the groove on both sides of the neck and crush it.

Grab the testicles

They are about the size of walnut shells (it's important to know what you are looking for). Be sure to grab under the groin and press into him as well as squeezing, if you don't press hard into him while you squeeze you will lose your grip. You can grab them through clothing or when an attacker exposes himself. Grab and crush them as hard as you can. This is likely to be completely disabling to an attacker if done with enough force. Do not grab the penis, you won't hurt him that way.

Bite

The neck is a terrific target to bite. Get the entire esophagus between your teeth and crush it. The nose and ears are also good bite targets. They won't disable an attacker but if he's holding you it may get him to release you so that you are free to deal out some more serious damage.

Smash the feet and knees

If the attacker is holding you from behind, strike down with the heel of your foot, try to crush the arch of his foot. You may also kick back and down with the heel of your foot into his knee, try to smash or dislocate the knee cap.

Once is never enough !!!

If you've dealt a critical blow to your attacker, DO IT AGAIN! And AGAIN! Don't let him up, don't let him recover, don't let him come after you again. If you've managed to gouge one eye out or just poke it hard enough to stun your attacker, quickly go for the other eye. If

you've hit him in the neck and gotten him down, stomp or kick his neck and head with the heel of your foot as hard as you can. Swing the kubaton or something similar as hard and fast as you can at his head and neck.

Punches, kicks, weapons:

Hit with the smallest, hardest parts of your hands and feet. This is the first two knuckles of your fist, and the heel of your foot. Focus to drive a punch or kick past your target, use total commitment and follow through. Most of the energy of a punch or kick comes from high speed and follow through.

The Two Finger Spear:

With the first two fingers of your dominant hand, strike as fast as you can at your opponents eyes. Don't telegraph (or give away) your strike, just do it fast and straight. Don't raise your elbow, don't pull your fist back before striking, just fast and straight to the eyes. Focus on striking past your target, on driving your fingers all the way through.

The Thumb Gouge:

Similar to the two finger spear but done with the thumbs of each hand. Do this rapidly with both hands if possible. If done properly the thumbs should be completely within the eye socket.

The Claw:

can be done with just one free hand, the thumb is in the same position as the Thumb Gouge. Put the thumb into one eye and the fingers into the opposite eye.

Pepper spray

Pepper spray is effective when it gets into an attackers eyes and when an attacker inhales it into his lungs. It will temporarily blind him and shut down all but the most basic breathing. Don't spray up wind or you will only disable yourself when the wind blows it back into your eyes and lungs. Don't threaten a person with pepper spray, use it quickly and decisively without warning. Use it before the person is able to reach you. Use short bursts, don't use it up all at once. Aim straight for the eyes and face. DON'T pose with any weapon, use it before he even knows you have it. Don't try to hold an attacker off by

pointing pepper spray at them, just wait until he is in range and nail him. Your attacker will probably try to block your spray with a shield or just his hands, get around any shield he puts up and get the spray into his eyes.

Kubatons (or ball point pens)

More painful than a knife. Once again, don't ever pose with a weapon, strike before he knows you have it. Aim for the head, eyes, or just about anywhere – these really hurt! They are easy enough to carry on a key chain anywhere in the country; they are completely unregulated and are small enough that they are not classified as any kind of weapon. I've even carried them onto airplanes in my carryon luggage.

Know how attacks are likely to occur

Grabbed from behind – break the arch of his foot with your heel, reach back and gouge eyes with one hand, grab testicles with the other.

Grabbed by the neck or arms – go for the neck and the eyes. If you get him to bend over enough, kick him in the head or hit him with a Kubaton.

Stunned by being punched in the face – watch out for this, it is disabling enough for the attacker to gain the advantage. Stunning a victim with hard punches to the head is by far the most common attack. This is why many rape victims look so bad after an attack, an attacker knows that eventually you will surrender or be disabled if punched hard in the face enough.

Drugged – be cautious of any food or drink, even if you are in a public place or are using the buddy system. Taking food or drink from someone means that you are putting absolute faith and trust for your safety in that person's hands. Even a small gumball has a hollow space in the middle big enough for a full dose of the colorless, odorless date rape drug GHB.

Stun gun – similar effect to being drugged or punched hard, it will disable you for several minutes. Don't let an attacker get close enough to use this. Scream loudly and either run or use the pepper

spray.

Lethal weapons – most likely he is using it for intimidation, he has a specific goal in mind and killing you is contrary to that goal. You have to decide for yourself what to do in a situation like this.

Held from behind

Kick down at the arch of the foot and back toward the knee. This is one of the only positions where striking the knee is a good idea, otherwise you risk capture of your foot.

- Gouge the eyes
- Grab the testicles
- Use your elbows, remember his sides and under the arms are a better target than his front

Held from front

- Gouge the eyes
- Strike or crush the neck
- Grab the testicles
- Smash the feet

Held by the arm

- Same as being held from the front but also use breaking grip techniques

Don't make a bad situation worse

The only way you are going to succeed is by either getting away or by causing enough damage to seriously disable or possibly kill an attacker. Anything less than an all out response is just going to make your attacker angry enough to hurt you even more. You are the one who has to judge a situation and decide what course of action is most likely going to protect your life and your safety. If you aren't absolutely willing to destroy your attacker, to take an eye or a life, don't fight him.

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

Always let out a good piercing scream first thing. 80% of all women attacked never scream. A good solid scream is by far your best defense when facing an attack.

Think about your surroundings, how you are carrying yourself, who you are with. Don't look like an easy target.

Think about different ways to handle yourself in different types of attacks. Think about the moves you would use, about screaming loudly right away, about running away toward lighted areas. Read this handout and keep these things fresh in your mind. It does you no good at all to go through this class and read this handout if you don't ever think about these things again.

Know where your attacker is most vulnerable, the eyes, the neck, and the testicles. Exploit these weaknesses without mercy. You are not responsible for the damage that occurs as a result of someone bringing violence into your life.

Seek help after an attack. You will never come away from an attack without physical and emotional scars, it is important to report your attack to the police immediately.

11. YOUR GADGET HABIT

Ok, so it's time to stock up that dream utility belt and heavily modified sports car with tricks of the trade.

So ask yourself:

Where do you spend that economic stimulus check first?

Here are a few commonly acceptable purchases that may help you protect yourself, or aid in an investigation you might be conducting. PLEASE NOTE: For information regarding less-lethal, non-lethal, and self defense products, <http://www.less-lethal.org/web/home.aspx>

Regarding weapons, be sure to comply with all Federal and local laws governing the ownership and use of such items!!!

Depending on your local legislation, the possession, ownership, or sale of many items classified as weapons may constitute up to a felony charge on your behalf. Take every precaution in acting in accordance to the regulation of firearms, bladed weapons, and non-lethal deterrents for self defense; and when applicable, procure all proper licenses/permits.

This site below states several indepth state and city laws regarding the restriction or prohibition of certain products.

<http://www.stungunsupply.com/pages.php?pageid=4>

ARMA 100

<http://armausa.com/products.htm>

Highly effective, easy to use, the ARMA 100 provides the option for stopping threats from a safe distance without causing life threatening injury. Safer than electric shock devices it will help anyone protect themselves or their family whether out on the road, boating or at home. With the lanyard it is just like carrying around an umbrella. Just like when you are carrying your umbrella you feel secure that if a storm suddenly appears you will have protection so with the ARMA 100 you will have that protection ready when you need it.

Pepper spray

<http://www.pepper-spray-store.com/>

Pepper spray is made up of an active ingredient called OC (Oleoresin Capsicum) and other inert ingredients. They can be water or oil based. The best formula being oil based as oil based products do not have the problem of separation. Separation is where the final blend will not stay blended and the oil (OC) will separate from the water base. This is very similar to putting oil in water. The oil will want to rise to the top. All OC products that the Pepper Spray Store sells are non-toxic and non-flammable. The effects of the pepper spray last between 20 and 90 minutes, giving the user plenty of time to escape their terrifying situation. Pepper spray units can be fired multiple times and can have a range of 8 to 20 feet, depending on the particular model you purchase.

The newest defensive spray agent, Oleoresin Capsicum, is a derivative of hot cayenne peppers. OC is an inflammatory agent and unlike tear gas it is effective on those under the influence of drugs and alcohol. When the OC contacts the mucous membranes (eyes, nose, throat, and lungs), symptoms will appear instantly. The capillaries of the eyes will immediately dilate, causing temporary blindness. Inflammation of the breathing tube tissues will cause difficulty in breathing; however the victim will still be able to breathe.

Pepper spray will not deteriorate with age and will not cause lasting aftereffects, however the short-term effects are quite effective.

Baton

Stick fighting has been a common form of self defense for, well, ever. Modern technology has made the forms and functions of several effective styles popular as ever for less-than-lethal protection. Of those options, your choice is only limited budget and preference.

Shockable batons:

<http://www.stungunsupply.com/>

Fixed length:

escrima/tonfa for the martial arts

Expandible batons: Military/Law Enforcement grade such as ASP & PR-24

<http://www.batons.com/>

<http://www.batonddefense.com/>

More cool gadgets and products to be posted very soon! Standby to standby...

12. FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING

How To Take A Blood Pressure

Not everyone knows how to take a BP or can easily get frazzled when the situation arises and they need to take a vital sign for a medical emergency. Blood pressure is a good indicator of something serious in the event of a trauma or illness, such as internal bleeding. We often take them in a series to find a trend and gague what is going on with the body systems. You only get better with practice; I know I take at least a few per week when I'm at work. Taking a BP is easy and quickly completed, usually in only a minute or so when done correctly.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure (BP) is the force or pressure that carries blood to all parts of the body. A blood pressure reading is the pressure that blood puts on the walls of arteries. There are 2 parts to a blood pressure.

One is called systolic (sis-TALL-ik), and is the top or the first number in a blood pressure reading. The other number is called the diastolic (di-uh-STALL-ik) and is the bottom or second number in the reading. An example of a blood pressure reading is 120/80 (120 over 80). In this example, 120 is the systolic number and 80 is the diastolic number.

The systolic (top) number is the peak blood pressure when the heart is beating or squeezing out blood. The diastolic (bottom) number is the pressure when your heart is filling with blood or resting between beats.

High blood pressure is a systolic number of 140 or higher, or a diastolic number of 90 or higher (140/90). Normal blood pressure is a systolic number less than 130, and a diastolic number below 85 (120/80). High normal blood pressure is a systolic number between 130 to 139, or a diastolic number between 85-89. (135/85).

Why do you need to take your blood pressure?

You may need to have your blood pressure taken because you have high or low blood pressure.

Usually, there are no symptoms with high blood pressure . The only way to know if you have high blood pressure is to have it checked. High blood pressure can cause damage to your blood vessels (arteries). This damage may make it more likely for you to have a stroke, heart attack, or kidney disease.

Low blood pressure may cause you to feel dizzy or feel like you are going to faint (pass out). This may happen when you go from a sitting or lying position to a standing position. Your caregiver may want to have your blood pressure checked to find out if it is low.

Using a sphygmomanometer (sfig-mo-man-OM-i-ter) and a stethoscope (STETH-uh-skop): A sphygmomanometer is a device for measuring blood pressure (BP cuff). It includes an inflatable cuff, inflating bulb, and a gauge showing the blood pressure. The stethoscope has 2 earpieces, tubing, and a diaphragm (DI-uh-fram) (flat disk at the end). It is used for listening to sounds from the body. Carefully read the directions before using your blood pressure kit.

Each blood pressure kit may work in a different way.

The following steps may be helpful to take a blood pressure:

- Sit up or lie down with the arm stretched out. The arm should be level with the heart.
- Put the cuff about 1 inch (2.5 cm) above the elbow. Wrap the cuff snugly around the arm. The blood pressure reading may not be correct if the cuff is too loose.
- Put the earpieces in your ears.
- Using your middle (long) and index (pointer) fingers, gently feel for the pulse in the bend of the elbow, below the bicep muscle. This is the brachial (BRA-kee-ull) artery, running through the in (medial) side. You will feel the pulse beating when you find it. Do not use your thumb to feel for the pulse because your thumb has a pulse of its own.
- Put the diaphragm of the stethoscope over the brachial artery pulse. Listen for the heartbeat.
- Tighten the screw on the bulb and quickly squeeze and pump the bulb. This will cause the cuff to tighten.
- Keep squeezing the bulb until the scale on the gauge reads about 160. Or, until the gauge reads at least 10 points higher than when you last hear the heartbeat. If your patient is an elderly person who has a history of hypertension (high BP), I recommend starting higher, perhaps in the 200s. Last week I had a guy who was around 220/100.
- Slowly loosen the screw to let air escape from the cuff. Let the gauge fall about 5 points a second. Carefully look at the gauge and listen to the sounds. Remember the number on the gauge where you first heard the thumping sound.
- Continue to listen and read the gauge at the point where the sound stops.

The number of the first sound is the systolic (top number) pressure...fun fact: this is not the actual heartbeat- it is the squirting of the blood through the artery. The second number is the diastolic (bottom number) pressure.(this is the noise of the blood refilling the chambers of the heart before it pumps again.)

- Write down your BP, the date, the time, and which arm was used to take the BP. Let the air out of the cuff.

Helpful tips:

Do not take a blood pressure on an injured arm or an arm that has an IV or a shunt. A woman who has had a breast removed should have her BP taken on the opposite arm

Usually a blood pressure should be taken when a person is rested and relaxed. It should not be taken right after exercising or if the person is feeling stressed.

Ask the person to sit or lie down for about 2 minutes with the arm stretched out. The person should be relaxed.

If you can not feel the pulse, try using the stethoscope. Put the diaphragm of the stethoscope over the bend in the arm. Tighten the screw on the bulb. Squeeze the bulb of the cuff until you see the number 160 on the blood pressure gauge. Slowly loosen the screw on the bulb and listen for the pulse. You may need to move the diaphragm around a bit until you find the pulse. If you cannot hear the pulse, check the reading of the last blood pressure. Then, pump the cuff 10 to 20 points higher than that reading.

For more helpful info, <http://www.drugs.com/cg/how-to-take-a-blood-pressure.html>

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES: A word about CPR

Ok folks, I'd like to spend a few minutes on a basic rescue skill that can easily make the difference between life and death for your patient (forthwith referred to as "pt."). In this age of longevity and an endless array of conditions pt.'s may be receiving treatment for, the odds you will happen upon a medical emergency is not just likely, it is practically mathematical certainty.

In the event you are required to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) you are involved in a true medical emergency. Here are some steps to ensure you are providing the best care possible in this situation.

First of all, before anything else is attempted, contact emergency services immediately. Designate someone nearby with a cellular phone to dial 911 while you provide treatment.

1. SCENE SAFETY:

A. Is this scene safe?

Are you arriving on a car wreck or entering into a crime scene? Remain calm and take measure to protect yourself FIRST. IE: If you run into a busy 4 lane highway to assist a civilian and are thusly struck by an oncoming mail truck, you have just doubled the work of the Paramedics who are already en route. Do not make more work for them and therefore stretching their resources thinner, decreasing the odds you or your pt will make it out of this alive. Keep your wits about you and fight the urge to sprint blindly into an unknown and, more importantly, Unsafe environment.

B. BSI (body substance isolation)

This is the theory you must operate on that goes something like this: if it comes out of their body, it IS infectious. With the unpredictable and unknown medical history of the pt you have just encountered, you could easily come in contact with deadly disease that will certainly end your career as a public servant or ever living long enough to see your own grandchildren. Simple precautions like latex or vinyl gloves and a one-way rescuer mask are life savers for you and the pt. Not only are they highly compact and stowable in your utility belt, they are very cost effective. For examples, see: <http://www.usemc.com/SearchResults.asp?Cat=37&Click=4562&gclid=Clukhqjp4pACFQ9THgodQEChPA>

2. Re-learning your ABC's.

There are a few key findings you need to discover upon arrival.

A. Airway-is their airway open?

Do you see an obstruction? Children often choke on small objects, causing respiratory distress and as a result cardiac arrest. If you are able, attempt to tilt the head so that the tongue is not blocking the airway. This is the most simple but effective method to open an airway.

B. Breathing- are they breathing?

What is its quality, rate? Do you hear any unusual noises upon respirations?

C. Circulation- do you detect a pulse?

Is it fast/slow/strong/weak? Do you find any bleeding that might lead to shock? If you should discover massive, spurting bleeding, the pt has likely severed an artery and will bleed out very soon. Refer back to BSI and with a gloved hand, provide direct pressure on the site or clamp down on a pressure point to slow the flow to the wound.

3. After you have quickly made these assessments, move quickly into CPR.

NOTE: these steps are to be performed ONLY if the following indications are present.

They are UNCONSCIOUS, have NO pulse & they are NOT breathing.

* Using a one way mask, provide two (x2) ventilations (breaths) for about one or two seconds and watch for the chest to rise with the breath. If you do not see a rise, reposition their head, and check their airway for an obstruction. Try the ventilations again.

* Make a fist and grab it with the other hand, placing both over the center of the sternum (breastbone). The pt MUST be on a flat, firm surface or the thrusts will be ineffective in making the heart pump as you press inward. To provide adequate compressions, you should do 30 rapid thrusts about 2" downward. Then follow with 2 more rescue breaths, and continue alternating. 2 breaths/ 30 compressions.

For a good visual example, view this video from YouTube:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKpuDLpSgPM>

I was originally taught a slightly different method for the compression/breath ratio (at 15:2), but my understanding is that has changed for some fire-rescue protocol. The reason this has begun to change is the idea that performing more chest compressions will allow the patient's blood pressure to increase while you are circulating their blood, thus their cells will perfuse (cellular respiration) better. the whole point of CPR is to keep their tissues alive until advanced medical care can be given.

The theory behind all of this, of course, is to keep pumping oxygen through the bloodstream, which will help keep the brain, heart, and other vital organs alive long enough to get your pt to advanced medical care. FUN FACT: Your patient ought to be receiving at least

16-18% O₂ with the rescue breaths Assuming atmospheric conditions are neutral (average elevation), the earth's air has about 21% O₂. When we breathe, we only absorb approximately 5%, leaving a large remaining portion unused.

This blog is to be considered the most basic of overviews regarding CPR. There are several different protocols depending on various situations. The only thing common in every medical emergency is unpredictability. Also, there is no replacement for sanctioned and official training from a health-care provider or instructor. So in a pinch, this will work, but you are far more effective when you know what you are doing and why. By enrolling in at least a Red Cross CPR class, you will obtain some basic life saving skills & you won't need to re-certify for a year or two. If you find you enjoy that, I encourage you continue on to First Responder level, Emergency Medical Technician, and/or Paramedic. All of these provide a great educational benefit of understanding the methods and interventions you're providing.

Check out the Red Cross website to get info on certification:
<http://www.redcross.org/services/hss/courses/index.html?WT.srch=1&gclid=CMf8pZ364pACFQdEFQodLDBAWg>

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES: CONTROLLING BLEEDING

A quick foreward, remember what I have said about body substance isolation. When blood is involved, ALWAYS wear protective gloves. Moving on....

Regardless how severe, all bleeding can be controlled. If left uncontrolled, bleeding may lead to shock or even death. Most bleeding can be stopped before the ambulance arrives at the scene. While you're performing the steps for controlling bleeding, you should also be calling for an ambulance to respond. Bleeding control is only part of the equation. For tips on summoning an ambulance, check out Calling for Help.

The first step in controlling a bleeding wound is to plug the hole. Blood needs to clot in order to start the healing process and stop the bleeding. Just like ice won't form on the rapids of a river, blood will not coagulate when it's flowing.

The best way to stop it is to...stop it. Put pressure directly on the wound. If you have some type of gauze, use it. Gauze pads hold the blood on the wound and help the components of the blood to stick together, promoting clotting. If you don't have gauze, terrycloth towels work almost as well. If the gauze or towel soaks through with blood, add another layer. Never take off the gauze. Peeling blood soaked gauze off a wound removes vital clotting agents and encourages bleeding to resume.

Gravity makes blood flow down easier than it flows up. If you hold one hand above your head and the other at your side, the lower hand will be red while the higher one is pale. Step two to control bleeding uses this principle. Elevate the wound above the heart. By elevating the wound, you slow the flow of blood. As the blood slows, it becomes easier to stop it with direct pressure. Remember, it must be above the heart and you must keep direct pressure on it.

Pressure points are areas of the body where blood vessels run close to the surface. By pressing on these blood vessels, blood flow further away will be slowed, allowing direct pressure to stop bleeding. When using pressure points, make sure you are pressing on a point closer to the heart than the wound. Pressing on a blood vessel further from the heart than the wound will have no effect on the bleeding.

Common pressure points:

- Arm between shoulder and elbow - brachial artery (E)
- Groin area along bikini line - femoral artery (H, I)
- Behind the knee - popliteal artery (J)

Remember to keep the wound elevated above the heart and keep pressure directly on the wound.

When should you apply a tourniquet?

The simple answer: almost never.

Tourniquets severely restrict or occlude blood flow to the arm or leg to which they are applied. Using a tourniquet to stop bleeding has the potential to damage the entire arm or leg. Patients have been known to lose limbs from the use of tourniquets. Often, if a tourniquet doesn't cause a loss of function on the extremity which has it, then it probably wasn't applied correctly. Applying a tourniquet is a desperate move -

only for the direst emergencies where the choice between life and limb must be made.

For a step-by-step guide, see [How to Use a Tourniquet](#).

Using a tourniquet requires wrapping a cravat (non stretchy material like terry cloth or linen) around an extremity and tightening it with the use of a windlass stuck through the bandage (see photo). The tourniquet should be tightened until the wound stops bleeding. If there is any bleeding at the wound after placing a tourniquet, then the tourniquet must be tightened.

When a tourniquet is applied, it is important to note the time of application and write that time down somewhere handy. The best bet is to write the time on the patient's forehead with a water-proof marker.

Taken from:

<http://firstaid.about.com/od/bleedingcontrol/ss/bleedingsteps.htm>

First Responder: Part II

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES: "Club Drugs"

I was listening to my subscription to the Medic Cast, a podcast for emergency medical responders this week, the show topic being Club/party drugs. I think we've all come in contact with somebody hopped up or doped out on something homemade and illicit. These folks are often dangerously lethargic, but can also be unpredictable and volatile.

From personal experience, I highly recommend you subscribe to this feed for your own benefit. Each episode is less than an hour, and you get tons of information. Even if you have no medical training, the Paramedic hosting the show is very thorough and will point out numerous helpful tips you can implement in the future. Check out the hyperlink above.

For official and most up to date info, check out the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Below is the data they have posted, but I encourage you to read up on their page, as it is much more extensive than I have room here for....

MDMA (ecstasy), Rohypnol, GHB, and Ketamine are among the drugs used by teens and young adults who are part of a nightclub, bar, rave, or trance scene. Raves and trance events are generally night-long dances, often held in warehouses. Many who attend raves and trances do not use club drugs, but those who do may be attracted to their generally low cost, and to the intoxicating highs that are said to deepen the rave or trance experience. For the third and fourth quarters of 2003, hospital emergency department mentions were estimated at 2,221 for MDMA use, 990 for GHB, and 73 for ketamine.*

MDMA (Ecstasy)

MDMA (3-4 methylenedioxyamphetamine) is a synthetic, psychoactive drug chemically similar to the stimulant methamphetamine and the hallucinogen mescaline. Street names for MDMA include "ecstasy," "XTC," and "hug drug." In high doses, MDMA can interfere with the body's ability to regulate temperature. On rare but unpredictable occasions, this can lead to a sharp increase in body temperature (hyperthermia), resulting in liver, kidney, and cardiovascular system failure, and death. Because MDMA can interfere with its own metabolism (breakdown within the body), potentially harmful levels can be reached by repeated drug use within short intervals.

Research in animals links MDMA exposure to long-term damage to serotonin neurons. A study in nonhuman primates showed that exposure to MDMA for only 4 days caused damage of serotonin nerve terminals that was evident 6 to 7 years later. While similar neurotoxicity has not been definitively shown in humans, the wealth of animal research indicating MDMA's damaging properties suggests that MDMA is not a safe drug for human consumption.

According to the Monitoring the Future** (MTF) survey, NIDA's annual survey of drug use and associated attitudes among the Nation's 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-graders, 12th-graders reported significant declines in lifetime*** MDMA use and perceived availability of the drug in 2005. Perceived harmfulness in occasional MDMA use declined significantly among 8th-graders, from 65.1 percent in 2004 to 60.8 percent in 2005.

Another national survey, the National Survey on Drug Use and Health,**** reported 450,000 current ecstasy users in 2004, which is similar to the number reported in 2003. Past year ecstasy use declined from 3.7 percent in 2003 to 3.1 percent in 2004 among young adults aged 18 to 25. Approximately 607,000 Americans used ecstasy for the first time in 2004. The majority of these new users were 18 or older, and the average age was 19.5 years.

GHB, Ketamine, and Rohypnol

GHB and Rohypnol are predominantly central nervous system depressants. Because they are often colorless, tasteless, and odorless, they can be added to beverages and ingested unknowingly.

These drugs emerged several years ago as "date rape" drugs.***** Because of concern about their abuse, Congress passed the "Drug-Induced Rape Prevention and Punishment Act of 1996" in October 1996. This legislation increased Federal penalties for use of any controlled substance to aid in sexual assault.

GHB

Since about 1990, GHB (gamma hydroxybutyrate) has been used in the U.S. for its euphoric, sedative, and anabolic (body building) effects. It is a central nervous system depressant that was widely available over-the-counter in health food stores during the 1980s and until 1992. It was purchased largely by body builders to aid in fat reduction and muscle building. Street names include "liquid ecstasy," "soap," "easy lay," "vita-G," and "Georgia home boy."

Coma and seizures can occur following use of GHB. Combining use with other drugs such as alcohol can result in nausea and breathing difficulties. GHB may also produce withdrawal effects, including insomnia, anxiety, tremors, and sweating. GHB and two of its precursors, gamma butyrolactone (GBL) and 1,4 butanediol (BD), have been involved in poisonings, overdoses, date rapes, and deaths.

Ketamine

Ketamine is an anesthetic that has been approved for both human and animal use in medical settings since 1970; about 90 percent of

the ketamine legally sold is intended for veterinary use. It can be injected or snorted. Ketamine is also known as "special K" or "vitamin K."

Certain doses of ketamine can cause dream-like states and hallucinations. In high doses, ketamine can cause delirium, amnesia, impaired motor function, high blood pressure, depression, and potentially fatal respiratory problems.

Rohypnol

Rohypnol, a trade name for flunitrazepam, belongs to a class of drugs known as benzodiazepines. When mixed with alcohol, Rohypnol can incapacitate victims and prevent them from resisting sexual assault. It can produce "anterograde amnesia," which means individuals may not remember events they experienced while under the effects of the drug. Also, Rohypnol may be lethal when mixed with alcohol and/or other depressants.

Rohypnol is not approved for use in the United States, and its importation is banned. Illicit use of Rohypnol started appearing in the United States in the early 1990s, where it became known as "rophies," "roofies," "roach," and "rope."

Abuse of two other similar drugs appears to have replaced Rohypnol abuse in some regions of the country. These are clonazepam, marketed in the U.S. as Klonopin and in Mexico as Rivotril, and alprazolam, marketed as Xanax.

And for a visual reference, here's a Youtube cinematic / musical montage of the use and effects of the four main 'party drugs,' amphetamine, ecstasy, cocaine and LSD.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZr9LvrREH0>

And Just In Case.... if you (or somebody you know) needs help with an addiction...

Need a treatment referral?

Call 1-800-662-HELP or visit findtreatment.samhsa.gov

Your friendly neighborhood superhero: HAZMAT

Ever wonder what the diamond-shaped signs on tanker trucks are?

Or what the combination of numbers and colors signify?

Hazardous materials are shipped by every conventional method these days. Land, sea, air. For the purpose of this blog, I'm going to discuss the one you will primarily come across in normal day to day-on land (namely trucks or trains).

The Department of Transportation (DOT) has set up a system of classifying dangerous substances as well as the methods of reacting to their release into the environment. Your best available resource is the North American Emergency Response Guide. Newer editions come out every few years. If you can get a copy, do so. They're chocked full of data regarding what to do when accidental/intentional spills or emissions... including the health risks of thousands of chemical, isolation distances, first aid, and what can occur if on fire. Trust me when I say, if you actually knew half of what was being transported through your neighborhood it'd surprise the hell out of you.

UN/NA numbers (the four digit number) found on bulk placards refer to specific chemicals or groups of chemicals and are assigned by the United Nations and/or the United States Department of Transportation. An online USDOT 2004 Emergency Response Guidebook will help you find out what the four digit numbers you see on placards mean. Speaking of which, get a pair of binoculars to read the placards. By law, there should be one on every side, just in case. Read the 4 digit number, look up the corresponding page and follow the directions.

And when all else fails, follow The Rule of Thumb: Hold up your arm outstretched, thumb upward and cover the entire scene of the accident with it. If your thumb doesn't obscure the site, RUN LIKE HELL! YOU ARE TOO CLOSE!

Proximity to a hazardous material, the amount, length of exposure and the route it enters your body are all incredible risks to your health, with serious long-term ramifications. Maintain your distance. Hat Mat Technicians take HUNDREDS of hours of training in order to qualify for a team with a fire department or emergency services. Do the right thing and turn tail and get out of that situation post haste!

There are several classifications, each with their own subcategories, and they all go from most volatile to least.

1. Explosives
2. Compressed gasses
3. Flammable liquids
4. Flammable solids
5. Oxidizers
6. Poisons
7. Radioactive
8. Corrosive liquids
9. Misc

See this site here for all the subcategory classifications:
<http://environmentalchemistry.com/yogi/hazmat/placards/>

Random facts that no one should care about:

A trailer is not placarded unless it carries 1,001 lbs. of a product. However, trailers are required to be placard for carrying Inhalable Poisons (Class 2), dangerous when wet (class 4), certain oxidizers (like a 5.2) and all other Poisons in a certain subcategory (like a class 6.1). Also, most trailers will not have food mixed with poisons. Although the DOT requirement is that food is four feet away. Some trailers might load all of their Hazmat in the end of the trailer.

Most LTL carriers will not take explosives or radioactive material. Fireworks and some small explosives may also qualify as a class 4.1 so that will be shipped. All drivers are required by law to have the correct placards on their trailers. It is an out of pocket 20 to 50 grand if they do not. The company they work for will not pay for it.

Responding to motor vehicle collisions & accidents.

Ok, this is a huge topic. There's so much I can talk about with this subject covering everything from fire department point of view or emergency medical treatment. But since there's prolly only a few here on the boards trained in emergency response, I'm going to set this up with a First Responder angle.

First responders are usually ordinary citizens with basic first aid and emergency training, for example life guards or volunteer firefighters.

Their role is to provide a 1st link in the chain of events immediately following an incident.

Here's how it usually plays out:

1. emergency occurs
2. EMS activated
3. Services dispatched
4. First responders arrive, render care
5. Additional personnel (fire & EMS)
6. Transport to ER

I know I mentioned it before in other blogs, but nothing is more important than SAFETY! I cannot over-emphasize this point. Public safety workers get injured on the scene of an MVA (motor vehicle accident) or MVC (collision) depending on your regions' vernacular. Vehicles, especially newer ones, can have a ton of hazards. i.e.: air bags, hydraulic rods in hatches, or car bumpers. Emergency crews have been known to be struck by vehicles while working on the scene of an accident. As a matter of fact, my lieutenant was hit a year or so ago when responding to a call. She was thrown underneath the fire engine. Luckily she survived without permanent injury, but some are not so lucky, even those who are the most prepared. Personal protective gear is key.

Let's describe a scenario, and walk through it.

We'll also assume that, even at night, fire/law enforcement/ EMS respond usually in less than 10 minutes depending on distance and traffic.

You're at a corner coffee shop and you hear a crash.

1. Locate the scene, and make a quick assessment. Quickly locate:
 - hazards
 - number of patients

2. Designate someone to call for help

3. If you can, gain access to the vehicle occupants. You may need a variety of tools; seatbelt cutter, glass punch, etc. For inexpensive MVA rescue tools:

<http://www.galls.com/category2.html?>

assort=general_catalog&cat=2681

If your patient complains of neck pain, make sure they stay put; this is a strong indicator of spinal injury.

If there is significant danger such as fire, or the victim is in traffic and risk of being struck, remove as quickly as possible. We have extensive protocols regarding the extrication of a patient, HOWEVER, LIFE OVER LIMB. Almost every time you have a collision, the PT (patient) needs to be collared, back boarded, and assessed by trained emergency crews. But this goes out the window if the patient cannot remain in dangerous conditions.

4. If you are able to enter the vehicle, begin by approaching from a side the patient can see you. Don't come up from the rear because a sudden turn of their head could cause permanent damage if they have a spinal injury. Identify yourself & inform them you are there to assist. Insist that they stay seated in their chair. Maintain stability in their cervical spine (neck bones) and don't allow them to turn the head.

5. If you cannot gain access because the car is wedged, or pinned, try the handle. I know it sounds dumb, but professional firefighters will literally tear the door off with the Jaws of Life or break glass, without ever thinking of checking the door handle. If you have to, you can go through the trunk and then the backseat. Rear windows are large and accommodating. Bust them out and sit behind them while holding their head upright against the bucket seats' headrests.

Breaking Glass!!!

There are 2 types of glass involved in this situation.

LAMINATED: the windshield is made of layers with a laminated layer between. This is in the event of an accident; the glass remains mostly intact as a shattered sheet.

SAFETY GLASS: this will shatter into thousands of tiny crumbled cubes, instead of angular shards. Use a window punch like this one, sold in combination with a belt cutter:

Phantom Zero also sent me a link to a site with a bunch of cool pocket rescue tools.

<http://freeper.the-hobbit-hole.net/>

6. Most people will not want to sit still for you, especially as some random stranger, or even somebody in uniform. It's weird but you will occasionally get people in denial, or will flat out refuse treatment. You cannot force treatment on them. Not unless they are unconscious. (see my good Samaritan law blog)

7. if you have the time or ability, try and get vital signs.
-identify pulse, breath rate, signs of bleeding, (my post on bleeding)

8 if necessary provide care such as CPR (yet another of my blogs)

For scene safety, there's a few factors to consider. with downed power lines, the rule of thumb is to place yourself at least ONE WHOLE SPAN BETWEEN YOU AND THE LINE (in all directions). a span being equal to the distance between utility poles. unless you are a lineman, you can't be sure which the cable, phone or power line is once they're on the ground. even if the line is not on wet ground, the electricity can pass through the ground into you within a certain distance from contact. this is known as "ground gradient", and is certainly fatal.

Also something to consider, look for leaking fuel or the possibility of vapors if the vehicle in question is a tanker truck. This creates a whole other problem of hazmat emergency. see here for my blog on HAZMAT

Low laying areas can accumulate heavier than air flammable vapors like liquid propane gas. they will sink & follow the contour of the ground and WILL find an ignition source, unless dispersed by some sort of breeze. keep away any personal vehicles and, for God's sake, DO NOT LIGHT A FLARE. Always be on the upwind side. If you are responding in your own vehicle instead of on foot, same thing applies. Park far back, and engage your hazard lights, pointing your car away from the accident. The reason for this is in case your car is struck by another vehicle because the driver isn't paying attention, they will not plow your car on top of you.

Be safe out there guys
(OvO) Knight Owl

First Responder Part III

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES: OVER DOSE (OD)

In the wake of actor Heath Ledger's death earlier this year from a deadly combination of pharmaceuticals, I felt this could use some attention. Many people aren't aware of all the nasty reactions you can find when people start mixing various incompatible drugs. I own a copy of this text, but I don't recommend it unless you have a LOT of time on your hands.

Instead, I suggest you refer to the blog I posted regarding the pocket EMS handbook.

Where some other cultures more graciously understand and embrace the vacillation between well and not well, the ups and downs, Americans are encouraged to run for the pharmacy shelves after experiencing the slightest hint of discomfort.

It is in this climate that children grow into the teenagers that will reach for the easily accessible over the counter drug to dull the pain of life and give them a good feeling that they are unable to find in an un-bottled form.

It is hard to escape the painful irony that the very medications that were developed to solve problems are providing another more serious one, that of over the counter drug addiction. And the players on this particular stage are the teenagers who are particularly susceptible to a drug option that can be easily purchased without prescription and no pusher necessary.

Alarming mythologies surround this particular corner of the drug abuse world. There is the belief that because these medications grace the shelves in the family home and are FDA approved they are less dangerous than their street drug cousins. Taking a slug out of a cough syrup doesn't feel the same as shooting up.

Over the counter drugs come nicely packaged with pictures of

smiling children and proud parents on the boxes. It is easy enough for anyone to walk into their local grocery store and purchase any or all of the liquid, tablet or gel forms. For some children there is the ready supply at home.

Unconscious parents may unknowingly keep replenishing supplies of this substance that is both a safe and effective cough suppressant when used correctly and a dangerous dissociative anesthetic when it is not.

Just this morning, I was listening to a podcast for paramedics and emergency care providers, The Medicast. The author of the podcast mentioned towards the end that approximately 7100 accidental overdoses occur every year with children younger than 12 taking over the counter cold/flu-type medicines. Something to think about. Keep all your medications well out of the reach of children.

<http://www.mediccast.com/blog/>

(also available for rss feed on iTunes. Hey, Jaimie Davis- if you're reading this, then somebody actually followed the link to your show! Sorry, no wi-fi over here, haven't downloaded any new shows since August.)

The Role of First Responders in Preventing Suicide

Each year, more than 30,000 Americans take their own lives. Another 500,000 visit emergency rooms for self-inflicted injuries. Emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and firefighters are often called to respond to these deaths and injuries.

Suicides and suicide attempts take an emotional toll beyond those of unintentional injuries. Any sudden death is a shock to the family and friends of the deceased, as well as to bystanders and first responders. The shock to family and friends is compounded when the death or injury is self-inflicted, provoking disbelief, anger, and guilt. Those who have injured themselves during a suicide attempt can be confused and distraught, which can also be true of their friends and families. How first responders act in these situations can make a difference for the patient, as well as for the family and friends of a person who has died by suicide or tried to kill him- or herself. At the same time, responding to these incidents can also take a toll on the emotional health of EMTs and firefighters.

This short publication offers some information on helping those who have attempted suicide; responding to friends, families, and bystanders; and preventing suicide among EMTs and firefighters.

Helping Suicide Attempters

First responders spend much of their time responding to medical emergencies involving people who had no desire to be killed or injured. Having to use their time and resources on caring for people who intentionally inflict injuries on themselves may raise mixed emotions. It is important to understand that, in the words of a major report on suicide, "in the United States, over 90 percent of suicides are associated with mental illness, including alcohol and/or substance use disorders" (Goldsmith, Pellmar, Kleinman, & Bunney, 2002). It is important to treat those with intentionally self-inflicted injuries as compassionately as you would treat those who are injured unintentionally. In particular, it is essential that you do not blame them for their injuries.

Compassion will also help you elicit the information you need to treat a person injured in a suicide attempt. Many people who survive suicide attempts feel embarrassed and ashamed. Some may deny that their injuries were self-inflicted. Some will attempt to refuse treatment. Establishing a rapport with your patient will help you provide effective treatment at the scene and assist the patient and other health care providers in finding appropriate long-term treatment that may prevent another suicide attempt.

The principles of facilitative communication (Fortinash & Holoday-Worret, 2003) can be useful in establishing a rapport with a person with self-inflicted injuries (or a person whose injuries you suspect are self-inflicted):

Genuineness.

Sincerity on your part can evoke sincerity on the part of your patient.

Respect.

Respect the patient, regardless of your personal feelings about suicide. Establishing a sense of self-worth is an important step toward recovery for a person who has attempted suicide.

Empathy.

Empathic understanding is the ability to perceive the client's understanding of life as if it were your own.

Concreteness.

Your ability to say precisely what you mean, rather than rely on abstraction or metaphor, will help you question the patient to determine vital information, such as the availability of a means to carry out suicide, the intensity of the patient's wish to die, the specific nature of any suicide plan, and the presence of associated risk factors.

People who have harmed themselves may try to reach out to you- sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly. Warning signs that a patient may be at risk of suicide (even if the patient will not admit injuring him- or herself) include:

Talking about suicide or death

Giving direct verbal cues, such as "I wish I were dead" and "I'm going to end it all"

Giving less direct verbal cues, such as "What's the point of living?" or "Who cares if I'm dead, anyway?"

Expressing feelings that that life is meaningless or hopeless

These signs are especially critical if the patient has a history or current diagnosis of a psychiatric disorder, such as depression, alcohol or drug abuse, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia. Recent life events, including physical illness (especially if associated with pain) and emotional trauma (resulting from, for example, the loss of a job or a loved one), can also contribute to the risk of suicide (Jacobs, Brewer, & Klein-Benheim, 1999).

Decisions about whether a person with self-inflicted injuries should be transported to an emergency room must take into consideration the person's emotional state as well as his or her medical condition. One of the primary risk factors for attempting suicide is a previous attempt. Thus, you should assume that any patient who has

attempted suicide is at risk.

Never leave a person who has attempted suicide alone. You can help protect a patient by doing the following:

- Transporting the patient to an emergency room where he or she can be kept under observation and further evaluated.
- Helping the patient's family, friends, or caregivers develop a plan so that someone is with the patient at all times.
- Helping the patient's family, friends, or caregivers make sure that lethal means, especially firearms and medications, are not available to the patient.

Helping Suicide Survivors

If you respond to a situation in which a person has died by suicide in a home or workplace, you probably will be faced with distraught friends, relatives, and co-workers. Those who were close to or affected by a suicide are called "suicide survivors." Survivors may be overwhelmed with grief, anger, or disbelief. They may, for example, want to see the body because they cannot believe that their friend or loved one has died. You may need to gently explain why it is necessary to secure the area until, for example, the coroner arrives. Family members may resent strangers (even those who came to help) "taking over" their home following a suicide. They may be in psychological, or even physical, shock. They can respond with anger, which may be directed at you or others at the scene. They may also have a need to tell you about their relationship with the deceased.

You should prepare them for what is going to occur at the scene, such as the arrival of the coroner. Friends and family also need emotional support during the crisis caused by a suicide-sometimes more than you can, or should, provide. While you can offer some support, it is far more effective in the long run to help survivors mobilize their own support networks, including friends, relatives, and clergy. Offer to call family or friends for them. There are suicide survivor support groups throughout the United States. Let survivors know that such help is available and that you can help them find these groups. (Information on finding suicide survivor support groups in your community is included under Resources, below.)

You may find yourself being questioned by journalists at the site of

a suicide. It is extremely important to be sensitive to the family (and to investigations in process) after a suicide. It is also important not to contribute to news coverage of suicide, as research has shown that this can contribute to suicide attempts by other vulnerable people. The easiest response to media requests for information is to refer the media to the designated communication or press officer at the local police department, fire department, or hospital. If you do speak to the press, it is important that you don't glamorize suicide, defame or criticize the victim, or portray suicide as an inexplicable or senseless act about which nothing can be done. If at all possible, use press coverage of a suicide to convey the message that people who are considering hurting themselves should get help by talking to a friend, a family member, a mental health professional, or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-TALK (8255).

Helping Yourself and Your Fellow First Responders

Job stress is common for EMTs and paramedics, due to their irregular hours and constant need to treat patients in life-or-death situations (United States Department of Labor, 2004). This stress can result in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other problems that can affect first responders' emotional, professional, and personal lives (Alexander & Klein, 2001). The stress and emotional weight of the work takes a toll and needs to be addressed in order for first responders to maintain their professionalism and effectiveness. Responding to a suicide, in particular, can be stressful. It can be helpful to discuss these situations with colleagues and supervisors afterward.

A colleague who is considering harming him- or herself may try to reach out to you-sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly. You should be especially alert for imminent warning signs, for example:

- Talking about suicide or death
- Giving direct verbal cues such as "Maybe I'll just kill myself"
- Giving less direct verbal cues, such as "Soon you won't have to worry about me," and "People would be better off if I didn't exist"
- Isolating him- or herself from friends and family
- Indicating that they feel that life is meaningless or hopeless
- Giving away cherished possessions
- Exhibiting a sudden and unexplained improvement in mood after being depressed or withdrawn

Neglecting his or her appearance and hygiene

These signs are especially critical if this individual has attempted suicide in the past or has a history or current problem with depression, alcohol, or PTSD. Research indicates that a combination of alcohol use and PTSD produces a tenfold increase in the risk of suicide (Violanti, 2004).

The American Psychiatric Association outlines three categories of PTSD symptoms (American Psychiatric Association, 1999):

Intrusion.

Flashbacks or sudden and dramatic re-experiences of a traumatic episode.

Avoidance.

Shunning or evading personal bonds with family, friends, or colleagues.

Hyperarousal.

A constant feeling that danger is imminent; it can be characterized by irritability, nightmares, and insomnia.

If you believe that a colleague is thinking about suicide, you can ask that person directly, in private. If your colleague admits that he or she is thinking about suicide, or you have a serious concern that your colleague will harm him- or herself in spite of your colleague's denials, there are a number of steps you can take:

Express your concern to an appropriate person, such as a line supervisor or your agency's mental health professional or consultant. It is important that you seek support in your efforts. Ask your colleague to call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-TALK (8255).

Offer to help your colleague find, or accompany him or her to, a mental health professional who is better able to evaluate your colleague's risk and to recommend next steps.

Help your colleague's family and friends develop a plan so that someone is with your colleague at all times until the crisis is resolved.

Responding to a colleague in need may not be easy. You may feel like you are meddling or overstepping your role and intruding into your colleague's personal life. But coming to the assistance of a colleague in crisis can be as important as responding to a serious motor vehicle collision or fire.

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More updates coming soon!

13. RESOURCES

Suggested Reading Material: (Some for fun, the rest for training)

Arrest Proof Yourself, Dale Carson

Analyzing Criminal Behavior, Greg Cooper & Mike King

First Responder (Brady 8th Edition) J. David Bergeron, Gloria Bizjak,
Chris Le Baudour, Keith Wesley

RLSH focused media

The RLSH Project

<http://www.reallifesuperheroes.com/>

A series of movie-quality portraits and profile interviews by Hollywood photographer Peter Tangen.

Heroes in the Night

<http://www.heroesinthenight.blogspot.com/>

Blog and future novel by author and friend of the community, Tea Krulos.

I, Superhero

<http://www.theamazingwhitebread.com/index.html>

Mike McMullen aka The Amazing Whitebread travels to meet and patrol with RLSH to learn how to become one himself.

Superhero Me

<http://www.superheromemovie.com/>

Steve Sale takes a journey to shadow established RLSH and experts to see if he has what it takes to become a superhero in real life.

Citizen Heroes

<http://www.citizenheroesthemovie.com/>

Documentary focusing on Pacific Northwest RLSH. Directed by Matt Harrison.

Superheroes

<http://superheroesthemovie.com/>

Documentary featuring RSLH from all over the USA. Debuted at Slamdance Film Fest '11. Directed by Michael Barnett.

RLSH, The Movie

<http://www.rlshthemovie.com/>

Another documentary, directed by Adair Cole.

Recommended websites:

Heroes Network

<http://heroesnetwork.crimefightersnetwork.com/home>

Originally the most frequented site by RLSH, the HN was closed and subsequently rebuilt in favor of a more secure hosting site.

The RLSH

<http://www.reallifesuperheroes.org/>

The Real-Life Superheroes is a grassroots movement that performs civic service in many different areas. Our main mission is to inspire everyday citizens to take action and stand up for what they believe in.

Black Monday Society

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Black-Monday-Society/128650787182645>

Salt Lake City's RLSH resident team.

Earth Agents

<http://earthagents.official.ws/>

Stomping ground of Earth Agent Superman and where to find Robbie the Robot.

Capitol City Super Squad

<http://www.supersquad.org/>

Washington DC's own civically-minded team.

Great Lakes Alliance

<http://www.wix.com/glhg10/gla2010>

Midwest RLSH

Team Justice

<http://teamjusticeinc.webs.com/>

Florida RLSH non-profit team.

Hero Gear

<http://herogear.webstarts.com/index.html>

Faithful hero tailor and all around great guy, Jack Brinatti.

House of Fury

<http://revtomfury.blogspot.com/>

Tom Rebello's crazy antics and amazing creative talent run amok!

Skiffy Town Heroes

<http://skiffytownheroes.org/index.htm>

WWTBASH turned-social-activists who banded together to form this growing community organization, spearheaded by DC's Guardian!

Super Heroes Anonymous

<http://superheroesanonymous.com/>

Make plans to attend this year's biggest gathering of RLSH anywhere!

HOPE 2011

<http://superheroesanonymous.com/>

One of the largest planned team ups ever undertaken, to coincide with San Diego International Comic Convention

Superheroes Lives

<http://www.superheroeslives.com/indexreallife.htm>

Older, but useful index of RLSH and other costumed activists.

Wikipedia Entry for Real-Life Superheroes

http://www.reallifesuperheroes.org/wiki/?title=Main_Page

Learn about some of our humble beginnings as a community, back before Batman Begins made it hip to be a brooding vigilante.

Have a website I should add? Let me know.

14. HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, harboring, or receipt of people for the purposes of slavery, forced labor (including bonded labor or debt bondage) and servitude. The total annual revenue for trafficking in persons is estimated to be between \$5 billion and \$9 billion. The Council of Europe states that "people trafficking has reached epidemic proportions over the past decade, with a global annual market of about \$42.5 billion." Trafficking victims typically are recruited using coercion, deception, fraud, the abuse of

power, or outright abduction. Threats, violence, and economic leverage such as debt bondage can often make a victim consent to exploitation. Exploitation includes forcing people into prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. For children, exploitation may also include forced prostitution, illicit international adoption, trafficking for early marriage, or recruitment as child soldiers, beggars, for sports (such as child camel jockeys or football players), or for religious cults.

<http://www.humantrafficking.org/>

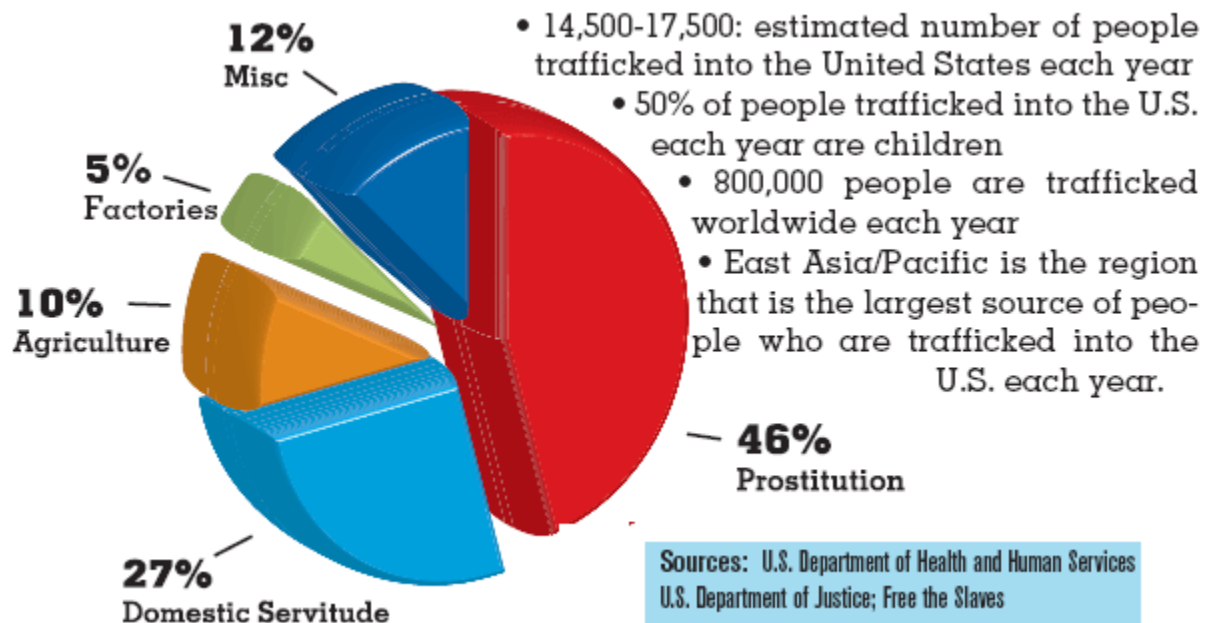
Here are 2 resources provided by the US Government to combat human trafficking.

This is the 2007 US Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report. It is 240 pages and I haven't read the full text. Page 51 details the efforts of the United States government in combatting this issue.

http://www.humantrafficking.org/uploads/publications/2007_TIP_Report.pdf

This is the Department of Justice video also laying out US government efforts to fight human trafficking.

http://www.usdoj.gov/whatwedo/whatwedo_ctip.html



A long while ago as one of my fellow RLSH was researching Human

Trafficking, She came across a rather unpleasant website where "Johns" (men who use prostitutes, some of whom may be human trafficking victims) go to post about their sexual exploits, where to find the best rates on hookers, and every once in awhile, if you're paying attention and know what to look for they will report cases that sound like human trafficking victims may be being used.

Here it is - It's not for the faint of heart:
<http://www.worldsexguide.com/guide/>

Just click on your part of the world, and there they will be, telling their stories about women they've 'encountered'.

Now keep in mind, a lot - maybe even most - of the prostitutes they talk about are out there doing this of their own accord. You just have to keep an eye out for instances where the Johns talk about:

- None of the women speaking a word of English (or whatever the native tongue of the country is).
- Women having strange bruises, scars, or are unusually timid.
- Catching anybody spying on them in the act.
- The women appear that they could be underage. Trafficking victims can be as young as 12, and there are even cases where kids as little as 6 or 7 have been stolen from home to be sexually exploited.

Also keep in mind that only 1 or 2 out of 10 people actually know what human trafficking IS.

Often people mistake it with simple illegal immigration. But it's important to know that human trafficking is when a man, woman, or child is abducted, deceived, or otherwise forced into leaving their homes/countries to work in an unfamiliar place with little or no pay. They are often physically and emotionally abused, raped, starved, or killed - these people are essentially slaves.

Here are some good sites to learn more about this horrible issue:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trafficking_in_human_beings

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/33109.htm>

<http://www.humantrafficking.com/>

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/>

Also, a series of sites I compiled for locating sexual offenders in your area:

<http://www.registeredoffenderslist.org/>

<http://www.klaaskids.org/pg-legmeg2.htm>

<http://www.sexualoffenders.com/>

<http://www.offreg.com/links.html>

<http://www.sexcriminals.com/regs/1029.html>

<http://www.mugshots.com/>

Lastly, a way to gather information regarding missing children.

<http://amberalerts.globalincidentmap.com/home.php>

And many don't know that it happens in America, too, in cities across the states. Especially in places like Durham NC, San Francisco or L.A. in CA, New York, New Jersey, Dallas TX, Seattle WA, Miami FL, and many more. If anybody wants any more information or has any more questions, let me know. My advice to start an investigation in these areas (or in any areas) is to first conduct a little research:

1. Where has human trafficking been reported in these places in the past few years?

For New Jersey and NYC, here are a few cases I found from the past few years:

<http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/Archive/2005/Apr/06-922355.html>

http://www.vera.org/project/project1_1.asp?section_id=7&project_id=85

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/16/nyregion/17ringcnd.html?&pagewanted=print>

<http://webdocs.nycouncil.info/attachments/74608.htm?CFID=1944767&CFTOKEN=53306200>

<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Sold+in+the+U.S.A.:+more+human+trafficking+cases+are+originating...-a0148319652>

2. Compile a list of the following in your area(s):

Massage Parlors, Modeling Agencies, Strip Clubs, Mail-Order Bride Agencies. Even some restaurants function as fronts for human trafficking. These are most often the "fronts" for human trafficking operations.

3. Know that depending on how close you get, you would be dealing

with (probably) a gang of well-armed thugs -
I don't want anything I say to lead to somebody getting killed. It is best to report cases of human trafficking that you witness/suspect to this number:

Report trafficking crimes or get help by calling the toll-free hotline:

1-888-428-7581 (voice and TTY).

4. Know the human trafficking laws in your state/country. Not all states or countries have the same laws. What's more, cops are often NOT prepared to PROPERLY help human trafficking victims. Sadly, sometimes they mistake them for "common prostitutes" and put them in jail, ignore them, or deport them back to their home countries where they are at risk of being attacked, killed, or just re-abducted by criminal gangs there.

Here is info about the NY anti-trafficking law that got passed just last year:

<http://www.ny.gov/governor/press/0606071.html>

5. Know where human trafficking victims can go for refuge and help. This article mentions services for victims in New York half way down the page:

<http://www.gothamgazette.com/article/crime/20071001/4/2304>

6. If you have time, consider learning a language or finding a translator:

Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Korean are all important ones to be able to understand victims.

Article contributed by Star7, NC real life superheroine, originally published on the Heroes Network. Many of the RLSH spread across the globe are taking the fight to the human traffickers, from San Fransico to Cambodia.

If you would like to make contact with them and learn more, click here and I will do my best to forward your information to them.

15. TESTIMONIALS

In light of certain events, the amount of traffic i've gotten through my

site (www.rlsh-manual.com) has spiked.

But thats not what i wanted to publish this note for. instead, i want you to read what strangers across the world have been saying about real life super heroes. may it inspire you, like it did for me.

...knight owl

Thursday, January 6, 2011 3:05 AM

Heard about your group on the news from a Houston based web-board! You guys are awesome! You have my full support down in Houston. There needs to be more people like you in this world.

Thank you

-Dan

Thursday, January 6, 2011 2:02 AM

I would just for 1. like to thank you (and yours) for what you do, both stateside and deployed. 2. Thank you for this invaluable website with a very good collection of information that can help everyone from good folks like yourself to someone who just wants to grow in knowledge.

I firmly believe that we cannot lie to ourselves and think we are safe. Because even the most careful of us are in danger. I believe every citizen should consider looking into at least introductory self-defense instruction as yes, officers of the law are great, but, as you are aware, quite often the difference of life and death is mere seconds versus waiting for help to arrive.

anyway, just wanted to say thanks, and send an encouraging note from a fellow person who thinks similarly!

- Ethan

Wednesday, January 5, 2011 9:51 PM

Wow...oh wow.. You guys ROCK! I am impressed. I am against political injustice. I look at the big picture and I have played my part with direct action. Taking care to never harm the individual person with my actions. But that was years ago and I don't take those risks anymore...cynicism burned its way into me... But I tried ...my way.. and now you and yours try.. and I salute you. I am glad I was not alone in my belief that one person can change the world for the better

if they just freaking try. Rock on man... rock on!

-Russell

Wednesday, January 5, 2011 5:19 PM

First of all, thank you for your military service. Thank you for being a hero all around. It is about time people stood up and did what it right. I am keeping you all in my prayers. I am a mother of 2 veterans, one of which is a wounded warrior from OIF. I am a former nurse, now disabled at the hands of an irate patient. However, I believe in standing up for what is right and have spoken up for those whom I have seen being mistreated. God Bless You! Just wanted to let you know I think what you are doing is great!

-Vanessa

Tuesday, January 4, 2011 10:23 PM

Hello. I've long been interested in Reals, and I found your site to be the best I've encountered yet. So, I put a link to it on my website in the hope that I can channel you some more readers. I am the cartoonist who draws and co-writes Johnny Saturn at <http://johnnysaturn.com/>, and several Reals in the past have given it favorable reviews. I'm not asking for anything back from you, like a link or anything, because this was a gift freely given. I have really good traffic, and I'm glad to help where I can.

-Scott

Tuesday, January 4, 2011 7:26 PM

Myself and 4 other of my friends have been thinking of doing exactly what you are doing. We would also want to make sure we would have GPS trackers, radio's as well as wireless video cameras for legal protection. Some of us have Costumes which it not as important, but we would like to know where the best place would be for armor. Such as Bullet proof vests and stab plates. And anything else you might recommend.

Thank you for your time and protection.

-Revealing Wonder

Monday, December 27, 2010 6:19 PM

I want in.

-Alex

Wednesday, December 22, 2010 4:58 AM

Cool site.

-Rob

Thursday, December 16, 2010 12:50 PM

What you guys are doing is great! We need more help and defenders of justice. God bless you!

-Autumn

Thursday, December 16, 2010 11:45 AM

Hi there I wish to leave my name anonymous at this moment in time but for the sake of this conversation I will use the name chaos. First thing first I have been going through this website with a fine tooth comb and think it's amazing you are all guys that make a difference to your community and its rare to see I have often thought about participating but with no guidance I have been reluctant I am well aware its more than a game off dress up and I have various skills and abilities. As u can most likely gather from my address I'm from the UK. I was wondering if u have a UK sanction or requirements to join for guidance sake if you require anymore information from me just ask look forward to any reply

-Chaos

Monday, December 13, 2010 12:18 PM

I recently came across your website and just want to say how impressed I am. This is unbelievable that you guys are willing to risk it all and protect the unwary public. Any affiliates in New Mexico?? We need some help over here!

-Russ

Thursday, December 9, 2010 1:46 PM

I am interested in how I can get started setting up a group in my hometown, and any advice. THANKS.

-J.J.

Thursday, December 9, 2010 12:22 AM

RLSH Brazilian who wants to be your friend. Please read!

Good morning, Knight Owl.

My name is Phantom and Platypus am Brazilian, I live in Brazil. The

project RLSH awakened in me the will to fight crime to help the homeless who are in my neighborhood. I'm patrolling the streets of where to live alone for now and know I'm making a difference with my actions. I know I'm helping these people to have hope and believe that they are not alone. For now I'm Entrages supplies, clothing and blankets for them and I like watching my neighborhood at night. I am sending you this email because I want to be your friend and share with you what I experience.

I also, that if you could give me advice on how I can act, assist me in my evolution as RLSH. The Brazilians do not have the same courage and good heart to be a super hero, like you are having. Actually this project and you, all you have done with that awaken something in me that he was asleep, something I have not believed. Immense strength to help those in need.

Today I can be sure that I was born to it, this is my life and I can change the course of things. Well, here I am hoping that you read my email, please reply to me and be my friend. I want to join you.

Grateful now, Phantom Platypus.

Monday, December 6, 2010 10:21 AM

Enter comments here! I am looking to start a group in the DC area. I would like some more information.

-Jorge

Saturday, December 4, 2010 1:51 PM

hi,my name is joseluis and im from maxico and I want to be part of the real superhero

I would like to know how to belong to this group and help my city to be a better place

i hope the answer bye

-joseluis

Wednesday, December 1, 2010 3:44 AM

how can I join the superheroes community here in Seattle?

- Clint

Monday, November 29, 2010 4:46 AM

By the way, I just want to say that I LOVE what you all are doing. Love, love, love. I just found out about you guys last night and I have been ridiculously love-stricken/happy ever since.

Way to go, guys!!!

-KT

Sunday, November 28, 2010 11:39 PM

Very interesting site and group. Keep fighting the good fight.

-Joel

Tuesday, November 23, 2010 7:00 PM

I have a few questions for you. Please respond when possible.

Thank you for your hard work and inspiring deeds.

To start, thank you for your response. I appreciate it very much. I feel I should let you know that I am not affiliated with any agency of news nor am I with any government division, and that the name I have given you is not real. It is a pseudonym I use in order to distance my personal identity from the online world. With that having been said, I apologize for any perceived deception.

When I was a child, Superhero's were the stuff of comic books and television. Seeing such fantastic powers like flight and force beams ignited my imagination. However the truth still remained they were just fantasies. No one could actually fly without mechanical assistance, and the only power gaze I'd ever seen for real was the one my mother gave me when I was in trouble. Then I grew up and in high school I found myself thinking of Superhero's on a more realistic level. I believed that a person could place on a mask and act in support for the betterment of their community. But still, things stood in the way. It wasn't until recently that I'd heard of actual masked men and women doing things no ordinary person would do (as anyone can, but most are afraid to.) I imagined they were a flash in the pan, though, with no continual activity in the future. I was still captivated by it. However, I then came across RLSH. I am now stunned and amazed. To see that there are still people willing to go the distance and show that truth, nobility, and kindness still exists without the need of recognition thrills me. But I still find myself crossed. This is why I have contacted you. I don't know if you are the one I should direct this to, but you are someone I believe who can help me. I have many

questions, but I will address the most urgent now. Hopefully time in contact with you will answer the rest.

My first question deals with the law and the rules they have in place. At what point is a masked superhero considered a "vigilante?" I understand the difference between doing good for your community versus taking the law into your own hands, but where is the line drawn? I don't believe in the use of firearms as a Superhero, but are you considered a vigilante for the use of pepper spray should you need to? Are defensive weapons a no-no? Or is the deciding factor boiled down to intent? If one goes to seek criminal activity, and stop it alone while wearing a mask and wielding weapons, do you fit the description of a vigilante? As an amendment to this, sometimes you come across a law that inhibits the use of anonymity in a Superheroic way. In my local area, for instance, a man dressed as Batman for fun and would go clubbing. He was arrested because of a law that states that you are not allowed to wear a mask in public without authorization (that of course being with the exception of the Halloween holiday.) I have found that there are several states with this law on the books. Now this man was doing it in jest with no reason of importance to do so. However the same law would apply to anyone who chooses to don a mask to help his or her community. This is only an example, but still one that represents the idea of a Superhero working inside the law.

--I apologize as that was two questions in one.

My next interest in RLSH As a whole. How exactly does a system of Superhero's stay connected? I've researched many areas that Superhero's exist, as well as Superhero groups that exist. Is there any system of overall communication and information? Or is RLSH more or a concept than an actual organized group?

--That's a pretty strait forward interest.

These are my main inquisitions. I believe in RLSH. Be it a concept or a way of life, I believe we need it. I find the world to be getting darker each day. Although our true heroes who fight for our basic freedom's, defend our local neighborhoods, and save lives day in and out are constantly hard at work, I believe it to be everybody's responsibility to

do what they can to help one another. It's a sad reality, but when a woman being attacked can get more help by yelling "fire" rather than "rape," it's a sign that something is horribly wrong. To be more specific, I once researched a social condition by which one person witnessing a crime will feel 100% responsibility to act against it. But one hundred people witnessing the same crime will feel only 1% responsibility as they all think the same thing: "Someone else here will handle this." This is why I believe.

I hope to keep in contact with you. I will do my part as much as I can.
Thank you.

-Jon

Monday, November 22, 2010 3:00 PM

How do i get in touch with a serious rish team? I have been doing this on teh streets for a while nowgoing from town to town but i want to be a part of somthing more.

-ShadowDevil

Saturday, November 20, 2010 2:31 PM

You are brilliantly organized. I just read your human trafficking page and I must say...wow. Most people say enough to get people upset about the issue. You actually give information on what to do about it. It's important to touch hearts, good sir, but equally important to touch minds. Thank you for that. Your work would mean much less without this. It's a shame your hands are tied by so much red tape. I think men like you should replace a good portion of the police.

- anonymous

Saturday, November 20, 2010 4:38 AM

Hi. My name is Devin. I am a Criminal Justice student in TN. I have started an organization with some of my fellow Criminal Justice Students called 'The Force.' We try to keep an eye on our college's campus and surrounding community. What do we need to do to become recognized by the RLSH community?

-Devin

Saturday, November 20, 2010 12:23 AM

I just want to say I really admire what you all are doing. I would like to offer some assistance and support if I may. I am assuming that

some or most of the members in the group have some self defense/martial arts/combat training. I teach martial arts/self defense as well and would love to share some with the group located here in Seattle if there is an interest- for no fee! We seem to have a lot in common. Look forward to hearing from ya. STAY SAFE OUT THERE!!!!!!!!!!

-Josh

Friday, November 19, 2010 7:53 PM

I have suggested this before. I have excessive knowledge in design and building tools and items. You can see some more artistic endeavors at www.borgsteamfactory.com

I have a number of non lethal weapon ideas such as palm mount temporary blinding devices, high voltage punch power increasers, (best thing I have been able to come up with because they increase the damage done when you punch someone by also applying an electric shock from the knuckles and the palms of the hands (for grappling)

and I have a pretty good source for materials used to make bullet proof armor like spectra and Kevlar. I have a contact too that I can reconnect with to get various thicknesses of lexan that is cheap due to it being off cuts from the aerospace industry.

If you think anyone would be interested in getting geared up have them contact me on the above web site's contact page (www.borgsteamfactory.com/contact.html) or with the email address I included.

-Borg Steam Factory

Friday, November 19, 2010 7:14 PM

Afghanistan combat veteran, combat medic and scout for MOS. Have most equipment including an extra vest (that one needs SAPI plates still) if anyone needs. I would like to see what you are up to and meet if I am needed. Thanks,

-D

Thursday, October 28, 2010 11:06 PM

Looking forward to joining your world to aid the community.

Maybe you can give me the tips I need and the proper contacts here in Nevada for me to join the Superhero World.

-NV S

Monday, June 1, 2009 9:13 PM

I just recently ran across this website and had no idea there were so many like me out there. I am very happy to see other people caring for their fellow earthians as much as i do. i want in. ive been doing this on my own for 7 yrs now and it would be great to be a part of a community devoted to the same thing i do.

-Pariah

Thursday, April 16, 2009 8:17 PM

This is a very awesome site! Thanks much for posting so much information and links. Everything in here is something I'd like to have in classes for the school. I'd also like strategy and tactics, awareness training, fitness training, and so much more. Have you ever heard of Milton H. Erickson? He was one of the revolutionary people involved in Hypnotherapy and Family Therapy. More importantly, he had great ideas and instincts for how to break people of bad habits and limiting ideas of their own capabilities. Check him out on Wikipedia.

-Jim

Tuesday, January 13, 2009 1:21 AM

God bless you (and your compadres), K.O. Please get back to the States stronger than ever. Thank you for the online Manual. You have inspired me to a new sense of duty.

-Jose

Saturday, January 10, 2009 5:05 AM

Greetings heroes...

1st of all I'd like to congratulate you having the courage and patience to do some good work on the cities! I'm glad that there are people like you out there fighting crime and protecting. I live in Greece and I got my team also..

Keep doing that job and prevail justice on the road... maybe we meet someday...it could be fun!

-Night Cruz

Tuesday, November 4, 2008 7:37 PM

I like the site Knight Owl, nice job.

-Zero

Sunday, October 26, 2008 4:06 PM

I really enjoyed your site. Thanks and keep up the Good work!

-Peter Pixie

16. THE AUTHOR

As an active member of the Real Life Super Hero community for over three years, I am a private citizen who believes in the power of change one person can make. As a civilian, I work in the public safety sector, as a fire fighter & emergency medical technician. Recently, I have returned from deployed overseas as a civilian firefighter working under a military subcontract. Now, I am a full time paramedic student. In my spare time, I research and conceptualize practical applications for my fellow active crime fighters and social activists worldwide. My number one priority is the safety and education of this community, so almost all of my blogs tend revolve around the protection of civilians as well as heroes, in both a legal and a physical/mental health sense.

We are not role-players and this is NOT pretend. This is REAL, and so are WE. We're not here for vigilante style justice, but to act as good Samaritans, catching both those who fall through the cracks, and defending against the scum who are fortunate enough not to have a law enforcement looking over their shoulder at that particular moment.

Please send me emails via the online contact form.

Be Well,
K.O.

17. CONTACT

Thanks for stopping by- be sure to leave some feedback!

Contact Information

Currently, I am attending paramedic school. And if you're a RLSH already I probably have your contact information anyway. But if you have any questions, concerns, additions, etc... feel free to drop me a line! Your message goes to my email instantly, and I check it

obsessively throughout the day. I may not get back to you immediately, but I make a concerted effort to read all the messages received. Looking forward to hearing from you.

NOTE: IF YOU ARE TRYING TO REACH PHOENIX JONES, (OR THE RAIN CITY MOVEMENT, THE HEROES NETWORK, OR THE RLSH.ORG, I AM NOT OFFICIALLY A SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF ANY OF THEM. WHILE THEY ARE MY ASSOCIATES, YOU NEED TO CONTACT THEM DIRECTLY.

ALSO, AT THIS TIME, I AM NOT ACCEPTING ANY INVITATIONS FOR REALITY TELEVISION OPPORTUNITIES. ALL ATTEMPTS TO REACH ME FOR SUCH WILL BE POLITELY DECLINED. If you are sending me an email, you MUST include an email. Go-daddy doesn't automatically include your email address when you fill in the contact form below .

THANK YOU FOR STOPPING BY!

<https://www.rlsh-manual.com/Contact.html>

First Name:

Last Name:

Address Street 1:

Address Street 2:

City:

Zip Code: (5 digits)

State:

Daytime Phone:

Evening Phone:

Email:

Comments: Enter comments here!