

The Importance of Situational Awareness in a Collapsing World

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 COLLAPSE SURVIVAL SITE

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We have had glimpses of the post-apocalyptic world in 2023. Anyone who witnessed the train derailment in East Palestine Ohio and the subsequent clouds of black smoke billowing above the town knew what it looked like.

Let's hope some of the people who lived there were wise enough to either get out of dodge or strap on a gas mask to protect themselves. There will no doubt be downstream effects from breathing in that toxic air.

Maybe you caught a glimpse of areas in downtown LA that were so encrusted with homeless encampments that it too appeared like something out of the Walking Dead.

What about the civil unrest that has engulfed major cities across the nation? Do you know if there will be a "protest" in your area today? These groups are so bold that they tried to tear down the White House gates!

Truth is we are living through a creeping collapse and all around you the bad guys are taking notes. They are watching the police force dwindle and the population get fatter and more complacent. They see a herd of glowing faces staring into devices and it looks like opportunity.

It is time for you to get back to situational awareness. The threat profile has changed, crime is on the rise, and this is only just the beginning.

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Understanding your Environment

The first metric that you should use to improve your situational awareness is understanding where you are. Your environment should define how you act. Do you think the situational awareness on a mountain top in the Appalachians is the same as situational awareness in Michigan Park, Washington

DC.

You should understand your environment long before you arrive there. This will inform you on how to prepare.

Where are you on the Spectrum?

Walking the streets of a shady part of town affects your situational awareness but it should also inform your level of preparedness. Not only will you show up in the right frame of mind but maybe you pack up that get home bag since you are headed to a place where the people enjoy a good Peaceful Protest from time to time.

Not that spectrum. There is undoubtedly an awareness spectrum that we all operate on. Everyone from a guy with dreads who is talking to God with his head tilted back looking up at the sky, to the police officer who is parked across the street looking for problems, is on the spectrum of awareness.

Criminals are some of the most aware because they have an objective that requires paying attention to the people around them. They also have the added challenge of knowing where police, lights, and cameras are.

Victims are always on the DISTRACTED side of the spectrum. If you are the type of person who spends more time looking into your phone than at the world around you, well, you might be in that potential victim category.

The goal when increasing your situational awareness is to make your way to the other side of that spectrum. You also have to slide from distracted to alert without becoming a weirdo. Walking down the street and proclaiming to every man who passes by, "don't even think about it, bub," is going to create more problems for you than just staring into the cellphone. So, finding a reasonable balance is important. Don't turn into The Punisher.

Not to mention, no one is going to want to hang out with you. Unless they are filming you for social media content.

A sturdy first step to mount is putting the cellphone away in public. You shouldn't be reading news while walking, you should be enjoying this plane of existence. You shouldn't be using a cellphone to navigate on foot. With a little more preparation you would know where you were going with confidence.

So, where are you on the Awareness Spectrum? Be honest with yourself because you have to know your true starting point in order to improve.

Dress for the Assault you Want!

Of course this is a little sarcastic or sardonic, but the way you present in the flesh and bone world does have an effect on the way people perceive you. Situational awareness is not just about how you see the world and the potential threats throughout your day. It is also about what those who might pose a threat see when they look at you.

How do you show up day in and day out? How fast can you run in those Crocs? Are you a hunched over center mass with spindly arms that avoids eye contact? That is another way of describing what it is to be a target.

Bad guys love slow, weak, and quiet people.

Think about it. If you were going to nab someone or hold them up at gunpoint, or worse, wouldn't you want the job to be as easy as possible? You would look for someone who is gonna give you their valuables with as little resistance as possible. You want someone scared. You want someone who looks incapable of defending themselves.

Knowing that makes your job pretty easy, right? You should be in good shape and it should be evident. You should know it and

those looking at you should know it. It's an incredible deterrent! Given the choice between strong one and the frail one, which makes a better victim?

Of course, how you present yourself is not just about your fitness. The clothes you wear and your posture all play a role in this. Pajamas pants and flip flops are not an intimidating combo.

Isolation is Not Situational Awareness

It's common for people to use an old trope that is simply frustrating: "Avoid Crowds" Well, crowds can be a lot of fun and very rewarding. Crowds can remind us of just how diverse we are and how connected we are. You start by avoiding crowds and before long you are living in a Pod with your virtual reality headset on getting fed through a tube so you can spend more time in your AI created Matrix where you are King of the WORLD.

We have to exist amongst one another. We are a tribal and a communal species. That's why news of the latest Disease X spooks us so much. Have you not heard of Disease X? Well, since the majority of the population is pretty much over being afraid of COVID19 the ruling class decided to give us another hit from the fear pipe.

Sure, if safety is the number one goal in life then we could all live in bubbled wrapped rooms and never interact with anyone. Of course, things like bad decisions, bad food, and risky behavior are what make life worth living.

Life takes people. Isolation is not situational awareness.

Eye Contact has Become a Deterrent

Our strange dislocated way of life is having a serious effect on how we interact in the flesh and bone world. We avoid looking people in the face. We avoid things like eye contact. At our most anxious and distracted we like to just move through the world and pretend that no one else is around us.

When you have your head in the clouds, or the phone, you look like an opportunity to anyone who wishes to do harm. Also, should you find yourself in something like an active shooter situation then it will take a long time for you to realize what is actually happening.

Moments count in a situation like this.

Look, it's not about giving everyone a High Plains Drifter Eastwood style staredown. That said, it is all about letting people know you see them and you are aware of what's happening.

Environmental Scanning

What is going on around you right now? How many people are in your immediate area? Are you reading this in your office or in an airport? Most of us spend very little time detailing who and what is in our immediate area. We rarely scan our environment.

It would be nice to say that we see only the best in each other so no point in scanning for threats but it really just comes down to the fact that people are distracted. You see it everywhere.

Situational awareness and environmental scanning are hardly about just finding the bad guys. Sometimes things fall off of buildings and crush people. Sometimes buildings fall and crush people. An old man can have a heart attack while driving and

come plowing into a crowd. It's not always gonna be a terrorist or an active shooter.

Consistently taking in your environment will give you all the intel you need so you have time to recognize a threat and react to it.

Make it a Game

If you want to practice and teach situational awareness you can do it by playing a very simple game. The next time you are out and about, look over the throngs of humanity that surround you and ask yourself two questions.

1. Who is the least likely threat in the crowd?
2. Who is the most likely threat in the crowd?

This exercise is not about being right or wrong. Instead, it forces you to do a bit of environmental scanning and pay attention to the people around you. In every populated environment you will find the most least likely threat and the most likely threat.

Sometimes you can pick out actual behaviors that could show up in someone who is likely a threat. Signs of deception speak very loudly if you know what you are looking for.

- Avoiding Eye Contact
- Limited Interaction with Others
- Nervous Behaviors
- Inconsistent Facial Expressions
- Short or Partial Answers to Questions
- Tension in the Jaw or Shoulders and Posture

Truth is there are a lot of socially awkward people who can walk around exhibiting many of these behaviors, too. So, then

you start to piece together more of the puzzle by looking at the things they are carrying, how they are dressed, and the environment they are in.

On May 17th, 2021 at the Manchester Arena a monster named Salman Abedi and his brother Hashem gained access to foyer of the event and detonated a suicide bomb killing 22 and injuring over 1000 people! What did those men look like when they entered the Arena? How out of step were they with their environment?

Conclusion

You have to understand that the world you live in has changed. The threat level has changed. Maybe more importantly than any of that is that no one has got your SIX on a day to day basis. There is no one looking out for you while you scroll Instagram. If you are attacked it is likely that no one is going to help. Rather they will film you getting beaten or even killed.

Your situational awareness is always going to come down to discipline. Remember, you do not have to be the most prepared and the most aware person in the crowd, you just have to make sure you don't become the least aware.

Frequently Asked Questions

What role does communication play in maintaining situational awareness?

Communication can be essential when your parties are separated. Should you head off to one store and your friend to the other, being able to communicate signs of trouble will allow you both to get back together and then to safety.

Can situational awareness be measured or quantified?

The very best metric for measuring your situational awareness are the incidents that you avoid. Maybe the best example of this is driving. Those who are defensive drivers and are aware of those on the road around them often avoid seeing accidents happen rather than wind up being involved in accidents.

It's very similar to what will begin to happen the more aware you are in the flesh and blood world. You will see more interactions and more situations taking place around you and likely avoiding them altogether.

Are there any real-world examples where lack of situational awareness led to significant consequences?

Payton S Gendron, a monster of a human who shot up a supermarket in Buffalo and livestreamed it in 2022, filmed his first victim and this always stuck out as an example of how severe poor situational awareness can be.

Payton pulls his vehicle up at the front of the Tops Friendly market and stepped out of the vehicle brandishing his rifle. In the video there is a woman walking with her phone in her hand and is completely oblivious to the gun wielding lunatic.

She only realizes what is happening as the gun goes off and the first round hits her in the chest. In this case poor situational awareness cost this woman her life and it doesn't get much more severe than that!

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