

DON'T LET IT HAPPEN IN THE FIRST PLACE - PART I

By LtCol AI

I'm frequently asked by people after hearing of some horrific incident "what should I do in such a situation?" As students who often attend our classes hear me say: "if possible, don't let it happen in the first place!" While this may sound like a curt answer, 99% of the time it is true, however because of the influence of television, movies and other pop culture mediums, people have come to believe that self defense has to be something which requires years of training in some esoteric art or that an individual needs to possess a high level of fitness and physical ability. Nonsense! Self defense is not hard (at least from a physical standpoint) if derived from the correct *mental* stand point. Usually when people seek out advice from so called "experts" the advice they get is as profound and useful as the old refrain my mom use to tell me about "not eating yellow snow."

In this newsletter I'm going to point out some obvious advice. For most of you this is not new so the intent is not to reinvent the wheel but to highlight this mind set of "not letting it happen in the first place" and then build on it in Part II. I will discuss what you really need to be thinking about from an awareness standpoint. As stated in a previous newsletter, in all that you do, understand that no one can do anything to you unless you on some level allow it to happen. So for example, whether a person is throwing a punch at you or attempting to grab you, for the most part in order for it to work it requires your cooperation. In other words you have to make yourself available to the attacker for him to make his stuff work. This is why awareness is so critical in your martial development.

Now in the event your awareness techniques fail (because anything can happen) you must have the ability to pre-empt a person's attack either by moving off line or by striking first. Ideally you want to do both at the same time as we discuss at length in our DVD's and book so I won't rehash it here. Think of it like this, if you let someone strike you in the throat with all of their might there's probably a good chance you're not going to make it. You intuitively know there's no good counter to a crushed windpipe. Who are we kidding? Well when someone attacks you, unless you're a mind reader, how do you know they are not trying to kill you? The point is you don't know, so you can't allow it to happen in the first place because once the attack starts you may never get back into the fight...unless they really don't want to kill you, a mercy you can't count on.

This is why Guided Chaos places so much focus on "Awareness" as well as developing "Natural, Adaptive" responses to a sudden attack. Techniques such as the "Fright Reaction" are the key to developing this ability and are the foundation to developing a realistic response to sudden attacks or as I like to refer to them, assassination attempts on your life.

The Forensic Reality of Violent Attacks

One thing that needs to be discussed before I continue is the understanding of the dynamics of a real street attack or what Grand Master Perkins refers to as the "Forensic Reality" of violent attacks. Many people erroneously think of street attacks as random acts of violence. Yet in study after study, not only do violent offenders admit that there is a method to their madness but even victims who survive will tell you that before the attack, "...they felt something was just not right ..." This is because an attack is a process that starts in the mind of both the attacker and, believe it or not, the victim as well. There really is a lot of truth to the saying that if you

don't want to end up a victim don't walk around acting like one. Any street attack is basically an assassination attempt on your life. However, because our minds have been conditioned to deny reality (even when all of the warning signs of trouble are there) we either walk right past it because we don't know what we are looking at or we talk ourselves out of believing what we are seeing. You must understand that more often than not, this stuff is right in our face-- we just don't see it! Again, some of it is because "you don't know what you don't know," but most of the time it's that we simply wish to deny it because our minds refuse to accept the reality before us. Let's face it murder, rape and torture etc... is scary stuff to contemplate. This is also compounded by the fact that through the influence of TV, movies and even the nightly news, we are conditioned to be victims.

I was recently at a briefing on profiling when the instructor made an interesting comment. By the time the average teenager graduates from high school they have received thousands of hours of formal instruction on violence from TV, movies and video games. In most cases the fight scenes, car chases and shootouts are highly unrealistic, while assaults are depicted as random acts of violence. The point is that just as you can recite your ABCs without thinking about it, your perception of violence is a completely conditioned response! Don't believe me? Think about this: You're watching some low budget "Slasher flick" on TV where a young girl, after being startled by the killer, starts to run. Just as she begins to run, she almost always does what? If the first image that popped into your head was her falling down... welcome to The Matrix.

Even the evening news (do to the fact that it is presumed to be factual) has a tremendous impact on the way people perceive crime. When was the last time you heard a positive story of a person successfully fending off an attacker? It happens more than people think but you almost never hear of it. What you usually hear of are the number of brutal deaths-- especially if the weapon involved is a handgun. As a result, many people have developed (as Grand Master Perkins would say) a "mystical fear" of guns where people perceive guns to be almost omnipotent. The point is just as popular culture programs you to become a victim you must unlearn this and begin to reprogram your brain to become a survivor!

There are literally hundreds of examples of this sort of thing that goes on in movies, TV and the news and believe it or not, over time, people are slowly influenced so that even their view of what real violence looks like becomes synonymous with what they see in the movies. As a result it creates a "Mental Template" or "Mental Prism" in their minds based on a reality of violence that doesn't exist in the known universe. This is important because our minds are always trying to match information and make associations based on our beliefs, training, education upbringing etc... even if the information in our minds is wrong, and those things that don't either match up or conform to "our" Mental Templates or Prisms get filtered or spit out the other end. This is exactly why a bad situation could be brewing right in front of us and because we have either not accepted the possibility that it could happen to us or because we refuse it is actually happening, we block it out or ignore it until it's too late. Think of some of the comments that folks made on 9/11 especially those who were eyewitness to the destruction of the Twin Towers, "I can't believe this is happening..." "It seemed like a movie..." "It just didn't seem real..." in every traumatic incident no matter where you are in the world or who you talk to, it is the same dynamic over and over. After we get over our initial shock, as we focus on the incident, we try to understand it in our own way through our own mental template. For example, in the photo below is a picture of a car crash. We've all seen this sort of thing before.



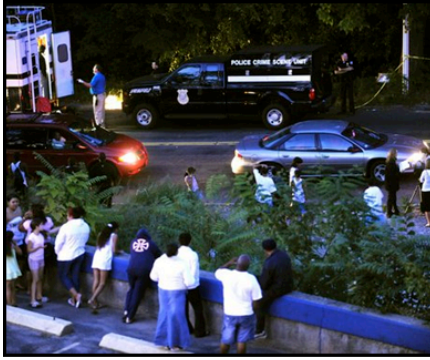
Vehicle Accident

The first thing that happens is that everyone “slows down” to rubber neck because they just have to look. You know it’s not polite but you do it anyway because you’re trying to process it all and when you’re driving at 70mph your brain just can’t process it fast enough. This is what we call “morbid curiosity.” As you are looking at the wreck, your mind is trying to comprehend how such a thing could happen and place everything into a context that you can understand within your experiences of seeing car wrecks [mental template]. You say to yourself; “maybe they were drunk? Talking on the phone? Etc...”

The next thing you say to yourself is, “holy cow”, “man that’s messed up”, “I’m glad it wasn’t me”, “oh well...”, “That s—t ain’t happening to me!” and then you drive off...

You say this to yourself as a coping mechanism otherwise you’ll never be able to move beyond it and it will stay with you. However, because we do this, we only see the accident and understand it “after the fact” and never get to understanding the root cause of the accident which may have prevented this in the first place or we hear about how it happened but don’t fully understand it so we forget it.

Here’s another example: below are two photos from homicide scenes, notice the people watching the action going on.



Homicide Scene

I guarantee that what is going on in their heads is the following:

“Holy cow”, “man that’s messed up”, “I’m glad it wasn’t me”, “oh well...”, “That s—t ain’t happening to me!”

They’ll talk about it later on and discuss it with some folks and engage in all sorts of speculation of the usual suspects, drugs, bad debt, cheating... but they really won’t fully comprehend all that they have seen. For all they know the killer could have been standing right next to them and they wouldn’t even have known it because their focus at that point was on their own internal dialog as they try to understand it. Also because they do not fully understand the forensic reality of violent attacks, more than likely they will not look into all of the dynamics that led up to the homicide so that lesson will be lost on them even though they are right there staring it in the face. It doesn’t get anymore real than this and yet this happens in all types of neighborhoods in every town and city all the time. The key is to understand these things in their proper context and most important of all “accept it” for what it is so that you can develop the necessary awareness so that you won’t be “next.”

Below are just a few scenarios that are frequently discussed in many self defense programs, however the advice given on what to do is usually incorrect; this is because the dynamic of how it all goes down is from the wrong understanding. There are literally thousands of possible situations that you could find yourself in and so what I am offering here is but a fraction of the multitude of examples of why you need to have your awareness up. The point of this is to get you to begin to focus outward on your environment and think differently about your surroundings and the process of how real violence happens and why you should not walk around with your head in the clouds.

As a caveat to all of this understand that in everything that you do, no matter what it is, anything you do can possibly get you killed, especially doing *nothing*. If they are armed and have the drop on you and just want your property then give it to them because it’s not worth your life, but if they try to move you from crime scene number one to crime scene number two, “game on!” You will only have a few seconds to decide whether to live or die and you must choose between risking getting killed on the spot vs. being taken, raped and tortured to death somewhere else. The choice is yours...

Okay here we go, we’ve all heard this scenario before but usually the solution that is offered is a recipe for disaster. You’re walking down the street minding your own business or looking for a store or whatever. As you turn the corner, to your surprise you see three nefarious looking

characters (Fig 1a), we'll call them "Mumbles," Blockhead" and "Slice". What they generally tell you to do in this situation is to cross the street Fig-1b.

Fig-1a

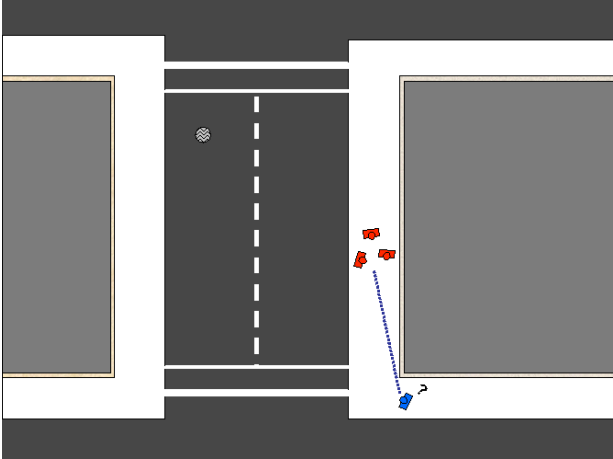
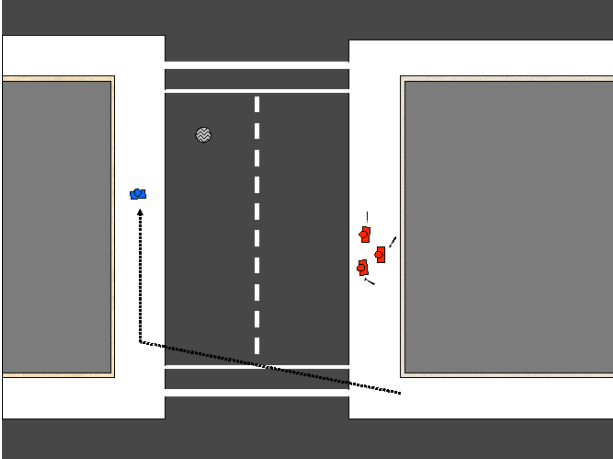


Fig-1b



However, as you can see below in Fig – 1c now that you have aroused their interest if they *really* wanted to get to you, they’ll just cross the street and beat you up on the other side. Remember: once sharks smell blood in the water, game on. The best answer is to not get into the situation in the first place by not going down there as shown in Fig- 1d. Sure you always run the risk of them coming after you anyway but why make it easy for them? The point being if you don’t create the opportunity to get attacked it makes it all the more difficult for them to do so and you are less likely to become a target [i.e., victim].

Fig-1c

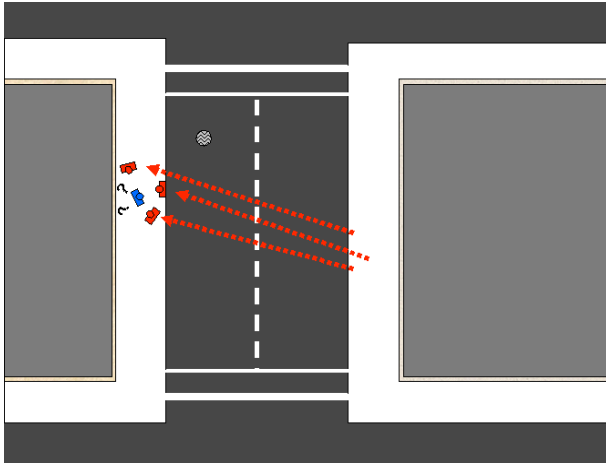
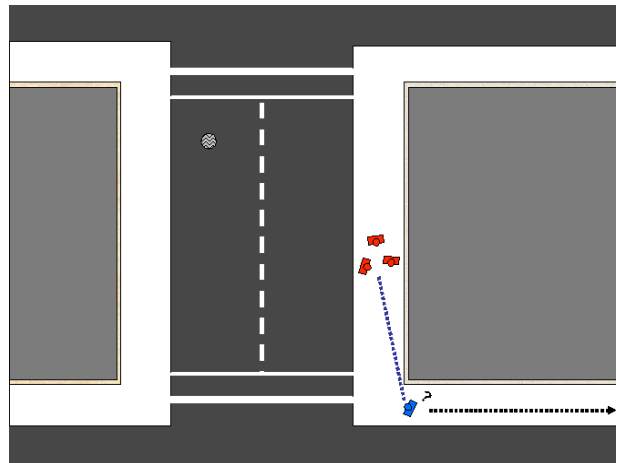


Fig-1d



Okay, same situation as is the previous example however now, as you turn the corner, instead of a few “knuckleheads” you now have a melee or as we like to say a little “Donny Brook” taking place (Fig-2a). Once again do you walk down the street through the middle of the group or do you go back the other way? The answer is found in Fig-2b. If you don’t create an opportunity to become a victim in the first place it makes it all the more difficult for them to attack you. Simple...

Fig-2a

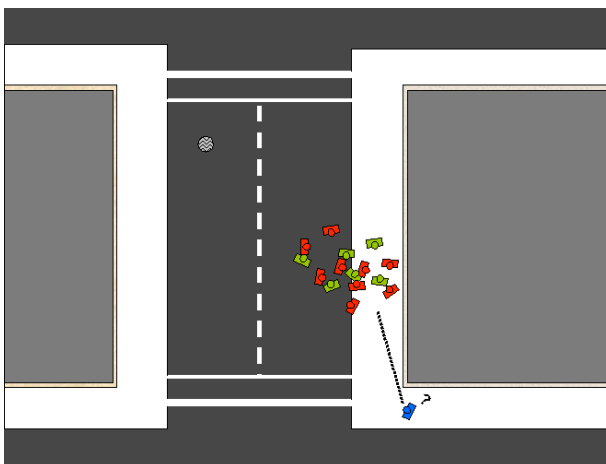
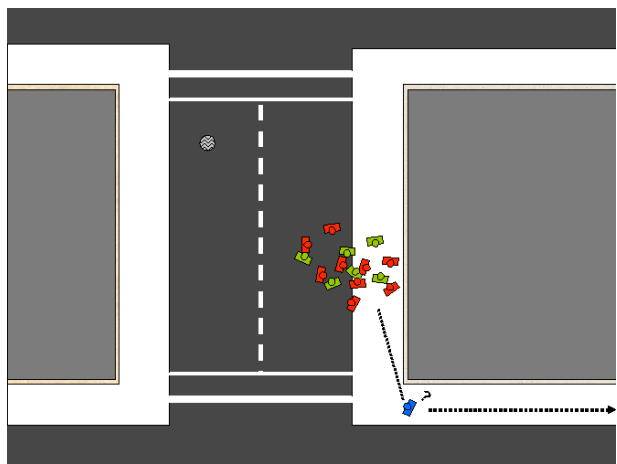
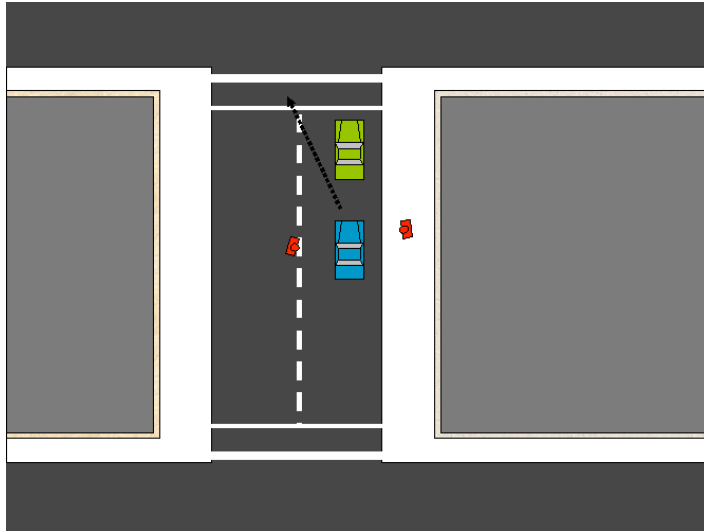


Fig-2b



In Fig – 3 below, this is the typical carjacking scenario, either one guy may attempt to “Jack you” or they may be working in tandem and may distract you while their buddy comes up on you with a weapon to help in the assault. The solution is simple: keep your awareness up and don’t allow yourself to get pinned in behind another car when stopped, if you even *think* the people moving toward your car are going to be a problem, just drive off. Remember as Sanford Strong says in his excellent book “*Strong on Defense*”, “Your safety first, their feelings second...” if they get in your way drive right through them: believe me, they’ll move out of the way because the bad guys don’t want to get hurt either.

Fig-3



In the figures below we see that a person is attempting to get into their car at the Mall. This sort of thing happens so often it would be funny if it weren't so tragic. As you can see, they are not paying attention to their surroundings and not acknowledging the person loitering in the parking lot like a predator looking for an opportunity to pounce. As they begin to open the door to get into the car, while their head is turned, the "loiterer" is now on top of them. In this situation you have to fight with everything you have because on some level they already have the drop on you. Using the door and the car as a brace, begin to kick with all of your might as hard as you can to either run them off or create an opportunity for you to escape. If they push their way into the car you need to go off like a bobcat on crystal meth. If you pussyfoot around in this situation the police are going to find you and your car in a ditch somewhere with your body in various stages of mutilation. Once again, a little awareness in this situation could have gone a long way even if all you could do was to bolt away from them. Similarly if you're walking to your car and you *do* see some unsavory characters hanging about, don't try to be brave and assertive and approach your vehicle anyway. Turn around, go back into the mall, and find a security guard to walk you to your vehicle. Following this simple advice could have prevented many heinous rapes, abductions and murders in the news.

Fig-4a

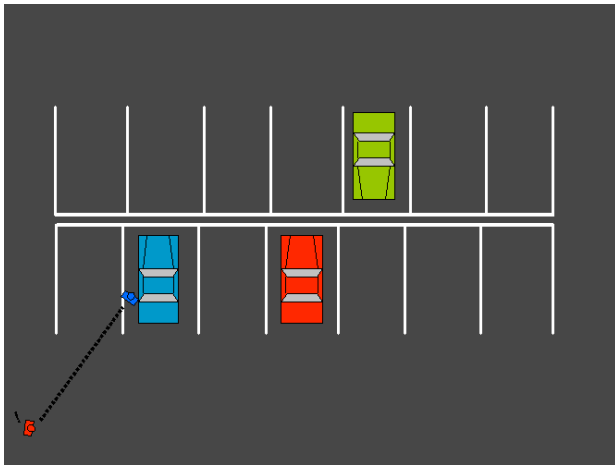
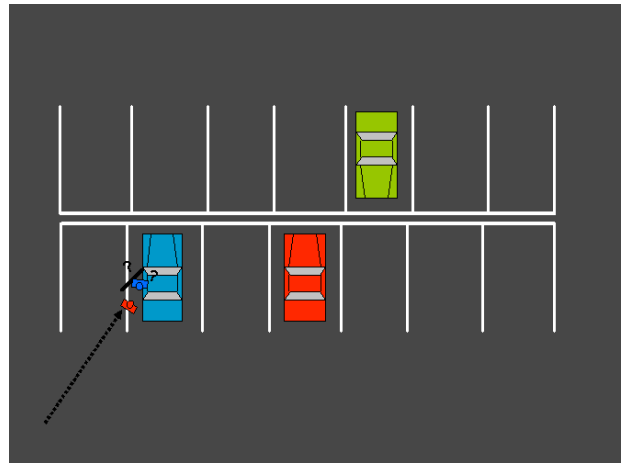


Fig-4b



In Fig – 5a & b we see a similar situation only this time the person below is trying to get into the trunk of their car again, because they're not paying attention to their surroundings and acknowledging the person loitering in the parking lot. As they walk to the back of the car, the attacker rushes in, accosting them with a gun or knife, limiting their ability to escape.

Fig-5a

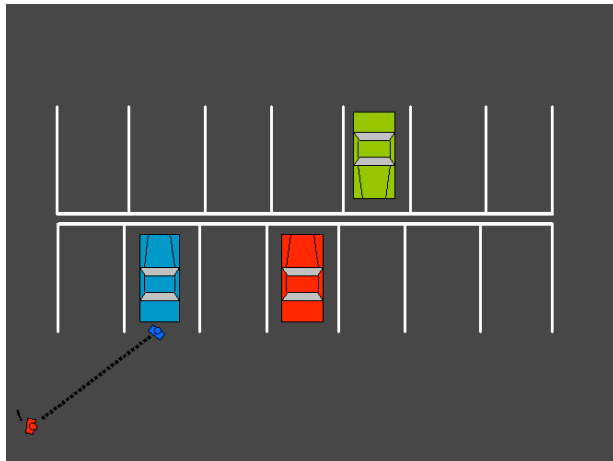


Fig-5b

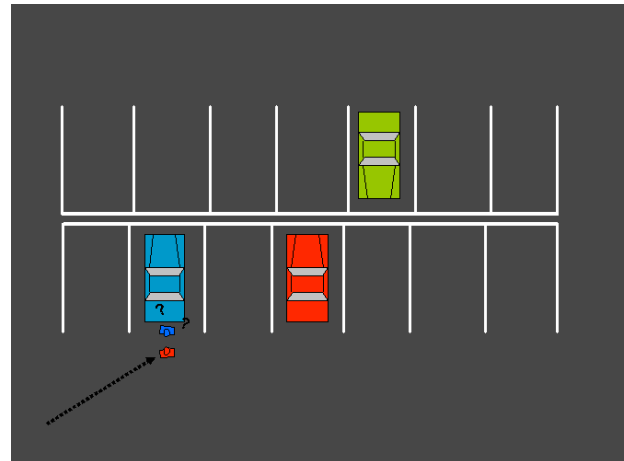


Fig – 5c & 5d provides a better look at this. As you can see, the victim has been backed against his vehicle. Since their awareness was not up, they have found themselves in one of the worst possible positions that you could find yourself in, staring down the barrel of a gun being “jacked”. Now you will notice in Fig – 5d the victim has been ordered to open the trunk and get in. In this situation they’re going to have to take a huge chance and make a life and death decision. If they get into the trunk and are moved from crime scene number one to crime scene number two they can kiss their life good bye. Remember the only reason for them to move you is because they have more in mind than just simple robbery and it always is worse for you and better for them. Besides, if they just wanted to kill you they would have already shot you. They are not moving you to go play “paddy cakes” somewhere-- this is where all of the rape and torture take place.

Fig-5c

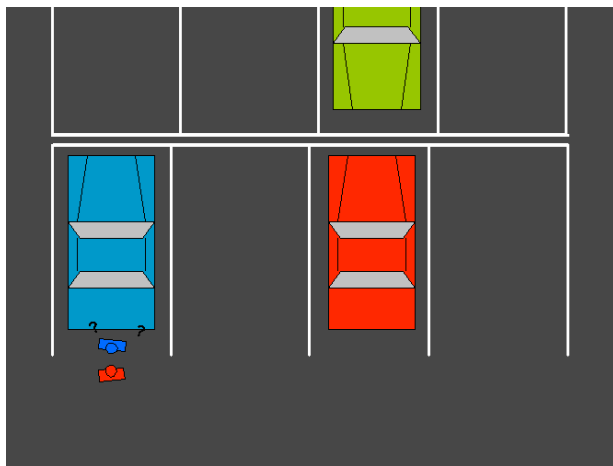
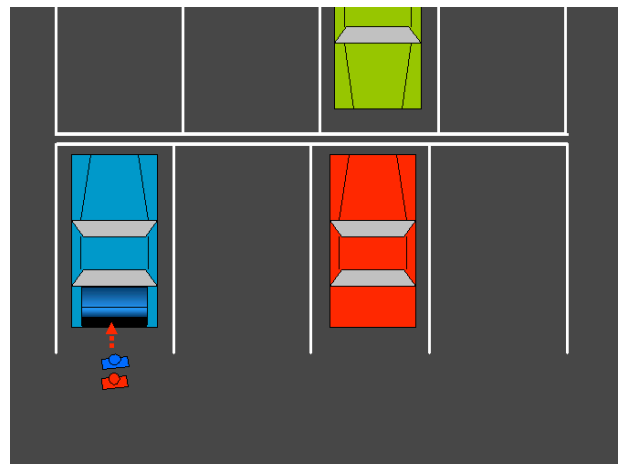


Fig-5d



As a side note, this same situation was discussed several years back on the show “*America's Most Wanted*”. When they use to have Sanford Strong on the show discussing such scenarios his advice was dead on, however since his departure from the show the advice now being given is the equivalent of pouring gas on a fire. Some of this stuff would be funny if the subject weren't so serious. They actually advised people to comply with the demands of their assailant and get in the trunk and, I quote, “once in the trunk see if you can't break out a light and wave in order to gain someone's attention etc, etc...”

I kid you not!

Who knows maybe you can pull “a McGuiver” and Jimmy the trunk open from the inside or something but I have to tell you: unless you're David Blaine you're taking a big chance.

Look at the car below and honestly ask yourself if you could escape from that trunk after possibly being pistol whipped or beaten? Here's the deal: if you get in that trunk, say good bye forever! DO NOT, DO NOT, DO NOT comply with their demands! Don't do it!

What you need to think about is shown in Fig 5f. Take a good look at Fig 5g, for those of you who have already figured it out, you are correct-- what you are looking at is probably the last thing you are going to see as your assailant / rapist/ torturer / murderer closes the trunk on you. If you are not restrained, run away screaming the *instant* you sense trouble or see gun or knife metal. *Don't even wait for them to say anything*. The odds of them shooting you in a public place are small and the odds of them actually hitting you are smaller. The odds of them actually scoring with a *crippling* shot are smaller still and the human body is extremely resilient when pumped full of adrenaline. As stated before, if you can't run, *fight now* or you won't make it. *How you fight* is what our Guided Chaos and Close Combat training is all about.

Fig-5e



Fig-5f

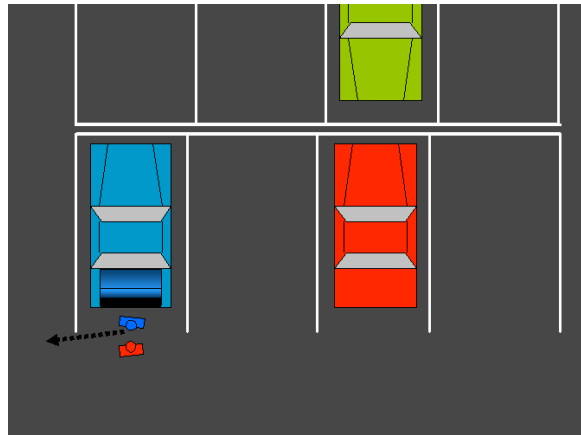


Fig-5g



Well that's it for Part I, I hope this helps...