

# SPY + SURVIVAL BRIEFING

LIFESAVING STRATEGIES FROM FORMER CIA AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

## YOUR HOME SECURITY CAMERA IS SPYING ON YOU

### What You Must Know About Ring Even If You Don't Own One

By Jason Hanson

*Former CIA Officer*

Property crime makes up about 80% of all crimes in the U.S., which is why home security cameras have become so popular. In fact, 43% of people have one at their home. When it comes to home security cameras, one of the market leaders is Ring. Ring was founded in 2012 and six years later the company was sold to Amazon for an eye-popping \$1 billion.

What you may not know is that Amazon has been handing over Ring video footage to police without the owner's consent, giving police access to front door cameras across the country. Amazon has agreements with over 2,000 police departments. The agreements between



Amazon and law enforcement allow officers to request Ring doorbell footage for entire neighborhoods.

Amazon has admitted that they share the footage with police without a warrant. But the company argues the decisions to share footage are made in emergencies.

The reality is, if you walk through your town or city, you are likely caught on video at some point. A recent study revealed that in one week the average person is captured on security video over 200 times.

Matthew Guariglia, a policy analyst at the Electronic Frontier Foundation said, “Ring impacts everybody’s privacy. Most immediately, it impacts the people who walk down the streets every day, where the cameras are pointing out.”

But it’s not just being seen on camera that you should worry about. Security cameras such as Ring capture a lot more than video or audio of customers. The people who own Ring devices and other brands are also giving up a lot of privacy.

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In fact, here are a few ways home security cameras are capturing more information than you realize. First, if you're a Ring customer they have your name, phone number, email, address, and payment information. Plus, they encourage you to connect your Ring account to Facebook and other social media websites. The company also obtains data about your Wi-Fi and signal strength.

Plus, many video doorbell companies know exactly what you look at if you pull up footage on your phone to check it. All of this information is compiled and your "profile" is created.

According to Ring, their video doorbell can collect video and audio from up

to 25 feet away. There is a good chance that someone walking by your front door on an evening stroll will have their conversation recorded. Imagine a couple going for a walk to have a serious conversation about personal details. There is a good chance their conversation might be recorded by a neighbor's doorbell without them even knowing.

Ring's privacy policy says it can keep videos and audio for up to 180 days after being recorded. In addition, even if the customer deletes the video the company may keep a copy of the recording.

Alarmingly, Ring's terms of service allow the company to use the information it collects 14 different ways.

Now, a few of the reasons are for improving the service, consumer research, and legal requirements. But the terms of service also say, *"We also may use the personal information we collect about you in other ways for which we provide specific notice at the time of collection and obtain your consent if required by applicable law."*

This is a broad statement and sounds like they can figure out ways to use your data for any reason. Anyone using Ring or similar devices is sharing a lot of private information with these companies. And the people who walk by these devices have no choice as to whether they want to be recorded or not.

At the end of the day, you are giving Ring permission to control the recordings that your device captures. This is why I recommend installing a home security camera system that isn't cloud-based.

Instead, find a system that can be stored on a local hard drive inside your home. This way you control the recordings and who sees it. This is why my security cameras are hard-wired into my home and not internet based.

Remember, anytime you use smart home technology, it's collecting data about you to use as the manufacturers see fit. You should oversee your personal information, not your home security system.

**"Ring's privacy policy says it can keep videos and audio for up to 180 days..."**

## SnugPak Jungle Sleeping Bag

During the stress of a bug out situation, you need good sleep. But you might not be able to take the big bulky sleeping bag that you would use on a family camping trip. That's why the SnugPak Jungle Sleeping Bag could be a great option to add to your gear. It's made with a special insulation called Travelsoft that can pack down as small as coconut and is about 6 x 7 inches when packed away.

When the sleeping bag is completely open it measures 87 x 31 inches. It weighs only 32oz. It can be opened into a blanket and you can zipper two Jungle Bags together to make a two-person sleeping bag.

One of the best features of the Jungle Bag is that it has mosquito netting. It can be zipped over the face portion of the sleeping bag, giving you complete protection from bugs. In addition, the bag is treated with an antibacterial and antimicrobial coating that helps prevent bacteria growth.

One drawback to the sleeping bag is that it's only rated for a low temperature of about 35 degrees. So, if you live in a cold climate, it wouldn't be the best bag in the winter. However, if you are looking for a small, lightweight sleeping bag then the SnugPak is an option to consider.

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435-572-4432

or e-mail [support@spybriefing.com](mailto:support@spybriefing.com)



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Spy Briefing President: Jason Hanson; Managing Editor: Robert Conroy; Graphic Design: Mena Sugg



# SHOULD WE END THE FED?

## How The Fed Impacts Your Wallet And Your Family's Future

By Forest Hamilton  
*Universal Coin & Bullion*

On December 23, 1913, the 63rd United States Congress passed the Federal Reserve Act with President Woodrow Wilson signing it into law. This Act birthed the Federal Reserve System, the central banking system of the United States government. Since the Federal Reserve's initial inception, Congress has made multiple changes to the Fed's duties, ballooning its authority and power with the goal of stabilizing the US financial system through a process of managing interest rates, money supply, and regulating American banks.

The Federal Reserve has five primary functions. One of the most impactful jobs of the Fed is setting the Federal Funds Rate (FFR), the target interest rate that commercial banks use when lending and borrowing money to each other overnight. The FFR has a tremendous impact on the United States economy as it directly affects short-term interest rates on credit cards along with car and home loans, while influencing our financial markets with the goal of setting a rate that will lead to economic growth.

The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC), creates the nation's monetary policy and manages our money supply. It establishes the Reserve Requirement or the set amount of money all its member banks must store in their vaults at the end of each day to prevent a run on the banks. The Federal Reserve is constantly monitoring financial institutions to analyze economic trends with the goal of minimizing the risk of financial disaster.

There are 12 regional Federal Reserve banks in the United States that help regulate the commercial banks located within their Federal Reserve districts. The Fed oversees and operates Fed-wire, which is the national electronic payment system that the US Treasury uses for selling government securities and other financial services. Also, the Fed is tasked with making sure that banks follow consumer protection laws.

The fact is, the Fed started down a hyper-inflationary path in 2008, as explained by Lev Menand, in a new book, "The Fed Unbound: Central Banking in a Time of Crisis." The author, an Associate Professor at Columbia Law School, says the Fed started to lose control of the areas it ought to manage, while trying to expand its role in areas it ought not to manage — like bailing out non-bank entities, including Wall Street investment banks and brokers.

The Fed was chartered to supervise banks. Who gave the Fed power to decide that Bear Stearns should live, Lehman should die, and AIG should live? That is the "unbound" nature the Fed took on in 2008.

Then, 12 years later, the Fed more than doubled its balance sheet in a few months. Only in the American Revolution, Civil War and World War II did the government come close to that level of inflation.

We are currently heading down a similar path of inflation to what we experienced in the 70's under President Carter and I don't believe that the Fed can do enough balance sheet, interest rate, or banking



manipulation to keep real inflation from continuing to grow for the foreseeable future.

I believe that it is clear that the Fed is not our friend. The Fed has proven that it cannot continue to exist if we are going to survive as a country. Congress should first repeal and abolish the Federal Reserve Act of 1913, deregulate commercial banks and set up a legal framework that supports a free banking system.

While a gold standard is not a perfect system, gold and silver have remained strong throughout history as the most commonly accepted medium of exchange. I believe this will continue for generations to come as people search for something solid to hold onto in the coming financial hurricane.

**[Publisher's Note:** For questions about buying gold and silver coins you can contact Forest Hamilton directly at [foresthamilton@universalcoin.com](mailto:foresthamilton@universalcoin.com) or call 409-926-7001. Please know, if you purchase any coins from Forest, we don't receive any compensation from him. We simply know he's one of the good guys in the business that can be trusted.]

**"Congress should first  
repeal and abolish the  
Federal Reserve Act of  
1913..."**

# THE DOWN AND DIRTY DOZEN

## 12 Outdoor Skills Everyone Should Know

By EJ Snyder

*Former Army Ranger and Extreme Survivalist*

I'm frequently asked what the critical skills and things to know are for heading out into the wilderness on a day hike or weekend overnight backpack, without having to be a survivalist. It's a great question, as not everyone has the time or money to take a full-blown survival or outdoor skills class. So, here are a "Down and Dirty Dozen" outdoor skills for anyone wanting to be prepared for adventure in the great outdoors.

First, being able to travel well is a skill unto itself. Preparation and proper and efficient packing are key. How to properly fit a pack to a person is vital. Knowing torso length (the measurement from the C7 vertebrae in the neck to the iliac crest) is critical to a proper fit. Make sure you are getting the right size pack before any purchase.

Backwoods navigation is next. Yes, GPS is great, and you should be knowledgeable in its use. But map reading and compass skills can help you identify where you are so that you know where you are going. Plus, it doesn't rely on batteries or geology affecting accuracy.

Blade smarts are a must. Axes and

knives are indispensable tools for the true outdoors person. Choosing a knife is a personal decision based in part on expected use and the personal preferences of the user. Axes should be chosen with the job in mind. A general rule is the further away from civilization, the bigger the ax. Whether using an ax or knife, these tools must be kept sharp and in good working order. The Sharpal sharpener is a good one to consider.

Using knots and lashings is another incredibly useful outdoor skill. You'll use them to put up tarps and tents, hang bear bags, tie up boats and canoes, lash shelters together and tie loads onto cars and trucks, and many other purposes.

Shelter and understanding how to protect and keep your core body temperature in check is critical. So, be sure you have good clothing choices to aid in this. Everything from head covering or hats, eye-wear, under layers, a waterproof jacket, gloves, and socks and foot-gear. Don't forget to have a wool blanket in your vehicle survival kit.

A good night's sleep is very important. There are many options for a sleeping shelter. A small travel tent, a lightweight sleeping bag, or some sort of blanket. I suggest always pack a small tarp, 100 feet of paracord, and a raincoat or emergency poncho (orange colored so it's easier for rescuers to spot you).

Knowing how to camp well is an indispensable skill. It includes knowing how

to choose a campsite and keep it clean, find wood, safely use fires and stoves, avoid wildlife, pitch a tent, and get a good night's sleep.

Fire-craft is the art of starting, building, and maintaining a fire. Fire site selection is critical. Water and wetness in general are the enemy of fire. Have your fire-starting materials ready along with your firewood. It does no good to get that spark and flame going with nothing else to throw on it. Ignition can be accomplished many ways, but I always suggest carrying a lighter. Have a backup of Swedish FireSteel.

You need to stay hydrated. So, carry a good stainless-steel single-walled water bottle with a top so that you can boil water right inside the container. Don't forget to also have a water filter with you such as the SurvFilter.

Personal hygiene and a basic first aid is another must. Small issues can become big problems fast. Blisters, chafing, rashes, insect bites, cuts and scrapes must be dealt with quickly, otherwise they can be debilitating.

You should have a basic knowledge of how to hunt, fish, trap, forage and process game. Use the hunting and trapping tools you're comfortable with and always abide by all safety rules and regulations.

Lastly, is the bonus skill of making your own gear by hand. Leather-working, blacksmithing, sewing, tanning deer hides or making a bow or an ax handle, are great skills to have.

Knowing these "Down And Dirty Dozen" skills are seriously handy in a crisis. They give you a list of things to consider, a starting point to learning skills, gear to buy, and overall help to get you ready for your outings. So, use them to survive on.





# APPLYING A COVERT OPERATIVE'S MINDSET TO EVERYDAY LIFE

## How To Play "6D Chess" For A Better Existence

By Michael D.

Former Clandestine Officer, CIA,  
DIA, NSA

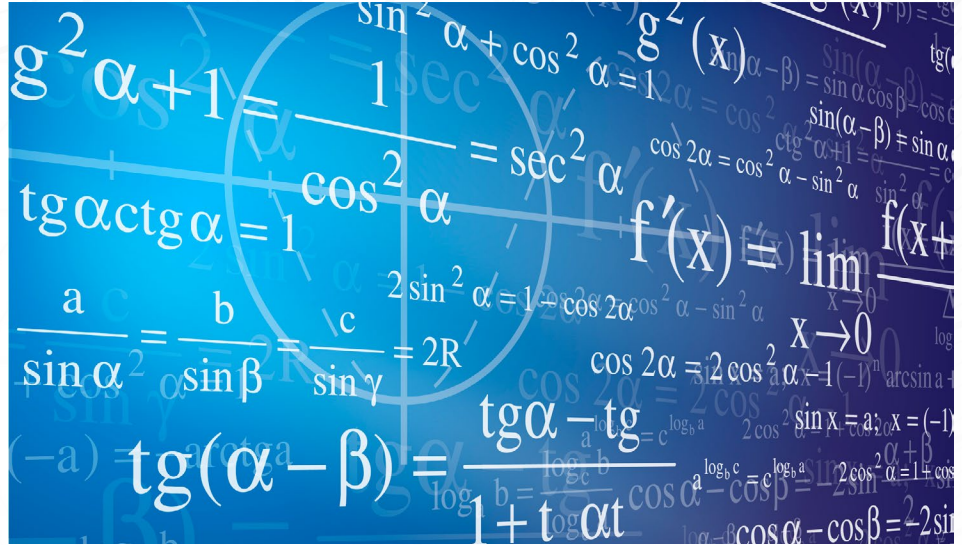
I was given a mission to develop a relationship with a foreign scientist who was a recognized leader in his niche of advanced combinatorics mathematics. He had an insight that was so revolutionary that it changed not only the fundamental applications of the field but created an esoteric venue for new, obscure, and rather bizarre uses of the science.

My first thought was that they wanted me to buddy up to him and try to get him to give us his divine-like inspirations, steal his work, convince him to defect, or perhaps very assertedly encourage him to find a new career. I discovered none of those were any part of the plan.

They wanted me to give him real-world problems that our finest minds had developed to see if he could solve them with his creative processes. What was amazing to me was the problems they wanted me to give him were actual, real-world, highly classified problems that consisted of great national security risks to us.

They could tell that I was more than just a bit apprehensive, so they took a great deal of time to explain to me their plan. The conundrum they had was that either these problems could be solved, which would desecrate our most secure systems currently under development, or his breakthrough mathematics were actually no match for what our guys and gals on the inside had developed. There was only one way to know for sure – ask the genius who works for the enemy if he could break our “codes.”

All I had to do was get this ultra-highly classified prototype out of the country, into a hostile country,



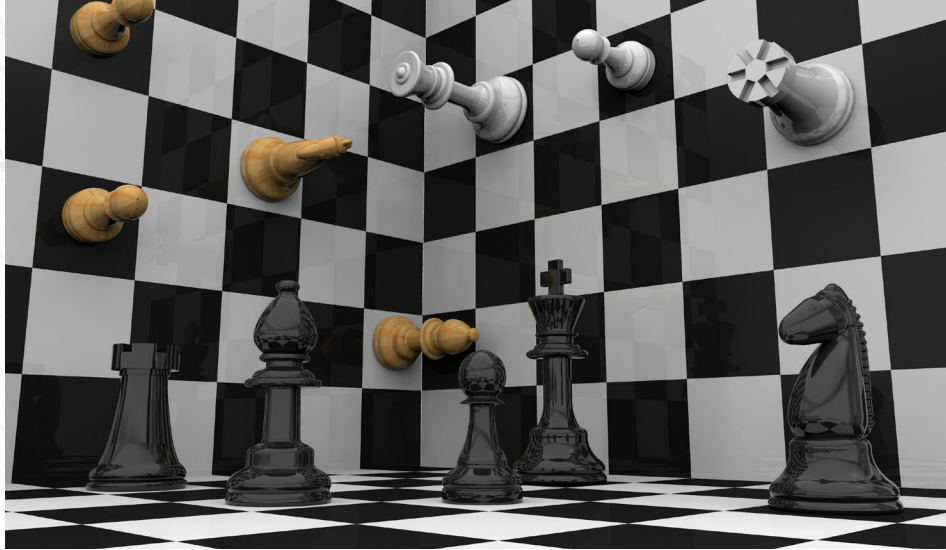
protect it from discovery by border and customs agents, find a way to intersect with this elite scientist, and ask him to secretly poke around and let me know if he could unravel the permutations of our new device without telling anyone - ever. Oh, and then get him to explain to me if he was successful, how he did it, and if he was not successful, why not. I would also need him to limit his verbiage to English that would be understandable by a guy with degrees in linguistics and international relations and one calculus class. The upside was that I would have almost two full weeks to accomplish this task.

For me, getting in and out of hostile countries was not the challenge. I was well trained and had enough experience that I was not a bit hesitant about that aspect of the mission. I was not concerned about my chances of a successful and fruitful encounter with the mathematician because I had every confidence in the targeting team's skills and mission plan for the intersection. I had developed pretty good skills of rapport building and the Agency mathematicians had briefed me very thoroughly.

The “cover shop” had built me a very good deep cover as a lawyer for a famous private equity cyber security firm. My cover for action was that my employers would pay him whatever he asked to test their very expensive system before they put it on the market or sold it to a government.

I was still trying to understand how they expected this to not explode in our faces. How could they be so sure that this guy would not lie to us? If he said he was unable to break it, but he could actually break it, would we be screwed for giving it to him? If he said he could break it, but he could not, then we would be screwed because we would forsake an unbreakable system? And since this guy was obviously smarter than me in this field, how could they rely on any report that I could bring back?

They asked me if I had ever played three-dimensional (3D) chess. I told them that while I had never played 3D Chess, I was aware that Gene Roddenberry invented it for his TV series Star Trek. They muffled their snickers while telling me that people have been playing 3D Chess since at least the 19th century. I gently hung my head and



said, “Oh”, in another instance of resigned defeat. Anyway, the point they were making was that they were playing a form of six-dimensional (6D) chess (obviously a reference to it being more advanced than 3D Chess — even a guy with soft degrees could catch on to that one.) Their plan was not to out-smart him but to out-maneuver him using his pride as leverage.

They were gambling that he would become so enamored with the problems they had developed, that solving or not solving the problems would be less important to him than trying to understand the device. Their goal was to get him so intrigued with the new concepts and brilliant mathematics inculcated into the device and its permutations that it would distract him from what they knew he was working on — a device that they feared might be more powerful, faster, and reliable than what they had developed. However, they felt sure that it would take him a very long time to untangle the mathematics and reverse engineer the system before he discovered anything of real use to him.

Their goal was to get him to answer my questions using information about his mathematics as a contrasting approach to our device. While it was a real device, getting him to analyze it was a red herring designed to get him to unwittingly reveal some portions of his own design out of sheer pride in his genius. Our mathematicians could

parlay that little bit of intelligence into schemes to hopefully both defeat his approach and improve ours.

I explained that I would have no way of knowing or understanding what he was telling me. But that was also part of their great espionage plan. I would have to convince him to write out his results so that I, a simple attorney for a high-tech firm with no understanding of advanced mathematics, could report my findings to the designers of the device at the firm I represented. They felt confident that he would want to prove his intellect and the most effective way to refute our design was to allude to what he had done as an example of a far superior device – designed by a far superior and advanced mind.

It worked. For a substantial sum of money, I came home with his handwritten (no one wanted to have any electronic record of this in his country) report on how he used his tools to break our little black box. That was enough information for our guys to re-engineer the device and make it invulnerable to his magic.

The higher the value of the targeted intelligence, the more complex, convoluted, and contrived the collection techniques must be. It's not too difficult to grab an enemy agent and choke him until he tells you where his teammates are set up. Such tactics are rudimentary and usually produce only short-term, relatively low-value intel-

ligence. Developing a way to get a hostile power to reveal their most sacrosanct national secrets requires many very smart minds and a level of creativity that is extremely rare. Sometimes you play tic-tac-toe and sometimes you play 6D chess.

It's easy, even comfortable, doing the same things repeatedly. If you want to enjoy life a bit more, find challenges that stretch your creativity, intellect, and courage. It is a very hard thing to do, and it is intrinsically risky. I encourage you to find an opponent or challenge in your career field or your life and give it a go at 6D chess. Be all that you can be, do all that you can do, go everywhere you can go, and avoid the deep, sad regrets of not having tried the great challenges.



## **SAVINT** **YOUR MONTHLY** **SAVINGS INTELLIGENCE**

I love pocket knives and own dozens of them. But one of the downsides is the time it takes to flip open the knife in order to use it. That's where the Berserker Blade comes in. It's a specially designed fixed-blade knife that is small enough to clip to your pants pocket. In other words, you don't have to spend any time flipping it open if you need it in a crisis. Plus, it's unique shape makes it devastatingly effective for use in self-defense. For pictures and videos that explain this amazing knife in full, visit [www.BerserkerBlade.com](http://www.BerserkerBlade.com).



# DEATH AT 2,500 METERS

## Risks And Symptoms Of High-Altitude Sickness

By Dr. Omar Hamada  
*Special Operations Physician*

It was May 2014 and I got a call from my attorney's secretary that worried me. I knew my attorney was on Mount Everest, so why was her secretary calling me at work? She was a remarkable athlete and had been planning and training for a couple of years and was so excited to finally go.

"Hey Doc, SG is stuck on Everest and has mountain sickness. We don't know what to do. She asked me to call you. Can you help?"

Having helped send and manage Special Forces teams all over the world for 10 years as a Special Forces Battalion Flight Surgeon and Diving Medical Officer, I was used to dealing with issues half a world away in real time – and had the contacts to intervene nearly anywhere in the world at a moment's notice. So, when I heard my friend and attorney was in trouble on Everest, I went into action.

We got her down off the mountain to her hotel room in Kathmandu. She was weak, sick, nauseated, and vomiting with one Zofran pill left. I didn't fully trust the medical care there so I was trying to figure out the best way to get her home. But she was too sick for a long international flight back to the US at 39,000 ft. We finally got her to

Kuala Lumpur, got her stabilized, and then got her home.

What she suffered was what we call HAPE — or high-altitude pulmonary edema. It's one of the conditions we worry about when people ascend to high altitudes quickly. It has the potential to be deadly, but when managed properly and quickly, is most always survivable.

As more people are attracted to higher elevations and mountainous adventure treks, we see these types of symptoms and illnesses more. Interestingly, we also see more injuries from exposure — both heat and cold injuries. High altitude illnesses and injuries are caused by lower levels of oxygen in the air as we ascend, as well as the lower atmospheric pressures responsible for internal vascular leakage into our lungs, gut, and brain.

It's a continuum that runs from the less serious High-Altitude Sickness (HAS), to HAPE, and on to the most serious and potentially fatal — HACE — or High-Altitude Cerebral Edema.

With HAS and HAPE, you usually feel like you have a hangover and are nauseous and dizzy. You typically have a headache, shortness of breath, insomnia, and possibly muscle aches. As it progresses, fluid enters your lungs from your vascular system and you begin having

more trouble breathing. As you get sicker and weaker, your oxygen levels drop. Though HAPE is still mostly reversible, most people who die of altitude illness die from HAPE. Finally, some get HACE as the brain swells and they lose consciousness. HACE is the most serious as it is difficult to reverse and is extremely deadly.

Risk for altitude illnesses starts at approximately 2,500 meters elevation. Men are at increased risk, as are those who are deconditioned and have chronic disease. However, there are ways to minimize risk, and ways to treat HAS. The best way to decrease your risk is to train and acclimate slowly. Your body will adapt to higher elevations if you give it time. That's why people "hang out" at lower elevations to acclimate before ascending to higher levels.

There are also medications you can use to decrease your risk and symptomatology. Oxygen is the most obvious. Acetazolamide or Diamox is a medication that helps decrease the effects of sudden altitude changes by working at the kidney level to acidify the blood in order to increase the base rate of breathing. Steroids like dexamethasone or Decadron are also helpful to keep swelling in the lungs and brain at bay. Of course, the best treatment is rapid descent.

If you are planning to do some high-altitude trekking, talk to your doctor, train hard, acclimate, hydrate, consider taking Diamox, take Decadron and O2 along, and plan evacuation routes and strategies in the event you get into trouble. High altitude mountaineering is breath-taking, challenging, and rewarding, but make sure your planning takes all this into consideration so your excursion doesn't end in frustration and disappointment.



# HOW TO SURVIVE THE MOST DEADLY SCENARIOS

## A Gun Wielding Thug Has You Trapped In Your Car, Now What?

By Matt Numrich

*Head Instructor Of Spy Black Belt*

Due to carjackings spiking across the nation, I want to discuss gun disarms from inside of the car. This presents more of a close quarter situation, where positions are more isolated and limited. But you can't simply drive off after a disarm or distraction move since the person is in the car.

To survive, you must completely take the attacker out of commission with a flurry of devastating shots. This is an important fact for your mindset. You must steel yourself and continually attack until the threat is neutralized.

Now, there are two main positions we'll cover here, each with their own challenges. The first is the assailant sitting next to you in the passenger's seat, pointing a gun at you. Your hand placement is important because clearing the weapon's line of fire from your body is your primary first move. I've created a video demonstrating the move I outline below, which you can view at this link: <https://youtu.be/2j7ygFnT6S0>

"Clearing" in this instance means to push the barrel of the gun to the dashboard, making sure you don't expose any part of your body to

the muzzle of the gun and risk getting shot. Next, use your other hand to inflict maximum damage to their face with multiple punches or palm strikes. Then use your free hand to reach under the gun and torque it away from the opponent.

Because both of our hands are now on the weapon, as we take it away we can use it to strike our opponent's face. Remember, brutal strikes are key to making this work. Because even if we are successful in taking away the gun, if they're not damaged or reeling, they could counterattack us in this close quarter scenario.

The second position is more dangerous and difficult. The assailant is sitting behind you in the back seat, pointing the gun at your head. Again, I've created a video demonstrating this move, which you can view here: <https://youtu.be/zTdweF1D2Ak>

In this instance, the closer they are, the better for us, because we can get hands on the gun and neutralize it. Fortunately, most criminals are stupid and use a closer range whether it be to intimidate, grab our belongings or attempt to abuse us physically. Many attackers will try to intimidate by holding the gun as close to our heads as possible either at the rear or side of our head.

But contact is wanted in this case, because knowing where the weapon is via your



tactile sense is one more piece of information that will help you disarm this criminal. So, the closer the better. Now, putting our hands up moves our hands closer to the weapon. Clearing is still key, as we move our head and have our hand closest to the weapon remove the line of fire from our head. Once that is accomplished, using a quick rotation of the gun puts the gun, and their hand that is holding it, in an awkward position.

From there, we use our other hand to assist us in pushing the gun forward, then pulling it away from their grasp. This is where their position and even the seat which divides you lends a hand to us, as it is a barrier preventing them from lunging forward and keeping their gun. Unfortunately, inflicting any type of pain given the positioning is unlikely, so exiting the car is the main choice of action.

There is no doubt that both positions are difficult and sound mechanics are needed for both scenarios. Practice these situations (always use a dummy gun when training) and etch the techniques into your muscle memory. This way, if (heaven forbid) you ever need to use them, you'll be able to react and survive.

