



Repetitive disciplined practice makes for organized performance under fire.

Blackhawk Knox Shotgun Stock and forend knocks half the recoil out of a 12 gauge 870.



HONOR AS A WAY OF LIFE

[BY BRUCE N. EIMER, Ph.D.]

Many of us who are old enough remember times when life was much simpler and friendlier—no cell phones, iPhones, Blackberries, computers, email, internet, podcasts, YouTube, Twitter, Google, instant messaging, Microsoft, AOL, MTV, CNN, MSNBC, and so on—and minimum gun control!

Fast forward to the late 1990s during which the evolving complexity of modern society became turbocharged as the mainstream media, computers and the internet achieved domination over our lifestyle. The nature of our world changed as news began to travel at the speed of light, and we all began to suffer from information overload. Nowadays, given technology and the mainstream media's intrusion into our everyday lives, we must stay efficient at separating valid from invalid information.

Children and teens growing up in our techno-media driven society are fed use-

less or harmful information, while overstressed, disconnected and preoccupied parents frequently have little knowledge of what their children are "learning." The result is an anything-goes culture of mass media bombardment. Honor is no longer a way of life in large sectors of our society where it appears to be just a vestige of times gone by. Money, materialism, deception, lies, narcissism, sound bites, sensationalism and greed rule the mainstream media, governmental bureaucracies and corporate boardrooms while street crime, white collar crime, and political and corporate corruption are rampant. Those who profit from such a mor-

ally bankrupt society (the mainstream media, corrupt and opportunistic politicians, and criminals) naturally cringe at the idea of thoughtful, self-reliant people with guns. However, our nation's founders and those who throughout our history have defended us against tyranny, fall into the latter group. Today, Americans who believe in honor, traditional values, definitive moral standards, and a polite society, constitute the largest sector of legally armed citizens, concealed carry practitioners and advocates.

HONOR STILL LIVES

Fortunately, honor does still live! In fact, there are sectors of our society where honor remains a way of life. I recently had the opportunity to attend a week long writers' seminar at such a place—the Norfolk, Virginia corporate headquarters of Blackhawk Products Group. Blackhawk is a company that was



After playing paintball with Blackhawk Navy SEALs.



Blackhawk SERPA Level 2 Concealment Retention Holster for an HK P30 9mm comes with both an adjustable paddle for easy on and off, and an adjustable belt slide.



Blackhawk soft nylon inside the pant holsters fit a range of pistols such as this Smith & Wesson M&P 9mm Compact equipped with a Crimson Trace Laser Grip. Blackhawk's Crucible II Tactical Folder designed by Kelly McCann is a good concealed carry companion to this low profile and comfortable rig.

founded in 1993 by former U.S. Navy SEAL Mike Noell. A catastrophic equipment failure on a minefield in Iraq during Operation Desert Storm made Mike vow that if he got out alive, he would dedicate the rest of his life to making equipment that worked better. He made good on his pledge and the rest is living history. Following its humble beginning on Mike's sewing machine in his garage, Blackhawk has grown into a leading designer, manufacturer, and outfitter of gear for military, special operations, law enforcement, security, outdoors, and concealed carry. Blackhawk's motto is "Honor as a way of life" and it also happens to be the creed of our military heroes who put their lives on the line to fight for our freedom and our American way of life.

Blackhawk's company headquarters is a literal think tank of former or retired military, special operations, and law enforcement professionals who have "been there and done that." Their products are conceived and continually subjected to testing, evaluation, and modification based on real-world feedback. During my week at Blackhawk, I went to school with some of the top gun writers in the industry, tried out equipment, gear, and firearm accessories, tried on apparel, and got to shoot handguns, shotguns, and rifles. It truly doesn't get much better than that!

MODELING EXCELLENCE

As a gun writer, I saw excellence in action at Blackhawk. As a clinical psychologist, I have been studying the psychology

of excellence for a long time using a theoretical model called Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). NLP is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as "a model of interpersonal communication chiefly concerned with the relationship between successful patterns of behaviour and the subjective experiences (esp. patterns of thought) underlying them." Its co-founders, Richard Bandler and John Grinder, formulated the name NLP to signify that neurological processes (Neuro), language (Linguistic), and behavioral patterns learned through experience (Programming) are instrumental in the achievement of specific goals in life.

Over the past thirty years, NLP has evolved into a science of excellence.¹ It employs the technology of modeling to

understand how outstanding experts in different fields perform so exceptionally—people such as champion shooter and firearms instructor Todd Jarrett, or Navy SEALs such as Blackhawk founder and CEO Mike Noell. This is accomplished by analyzing and distilling the underlying concepts and skills that subject matter experts such as Todd use to do what they do so well, so that everyday people can be taught how to achieve or at least approximate similar outcomes.

Inspired by my week at Blackhawk, and my own fallibility and limitations, I formulated the H.O.N.O.R. model for striving for excellence. I sincerely believe that this model is applicable to every legally armed citizen and concealed carry practitioner irrespective of age. In this context, I define *excellence* as “possessing and using the highest level of necessary skills and qualities to surpass and outclass the competition.” When it comes to armed personal defense, mediocrity just won’t do.

THE H.O.N.O.R. MODEL

Honor is defined in the Oxford English

Dictionary as “personal integrity; allegiance to moral principles; and holding a clear sense of what is morally right.” Living honorably is a formula for success in many walks of life. For the legally armed citizen and for the professional warrior, as I see it, living honorably requires the cultivation of five essential habits. As a mnemonic, the first letters of each of these habits spell the word, H.O.N.O.R.

Honesty. Being honest means having integrity and being reliable, trustworthy, consistent, dependable, and incorruptible. This also lays the basis for loyalty. In the firearms industry, companies that are not honest do not last long. Honest companies that are loyal to their customers build customer loyalty. Just witness the comeback that a company such as Smith and Wesson can make as a result of providing reliable customer service, flexible lifetime warranties, and going the extra mile for their customers. Likewise, in the real world, people who are dishonest have to expend lots of energy covering up their lies. Massad Ayoob is known for saying that in the af-

termath of a defensive shooting, lies will in all likelihood condemn you to prison, and the truth can set you free (as long as you know when to talk and when to keep your mouth shut).

Observant. Being observant means staying alert, attentive, aware, perceptive, and mindful of what is going on around you. It enables you to be quick to notice and perceive things—a necessity for surviving on the street, in the jungle, in the corporate boardroom, or in the sandbox. The legally armed citizen, law enforcement officer, soldier, or operator who is not observant will be unable to bridge the reactionary gap if attacked.

No-nonsense. Being no-nonsense means being ready and willing to take whatever action is necessary. It demands decisiveness as opposed to dithering. You cannot afford to dither in indecision. If you are attacked, you must do something, preferably something explosive that startles your attacker. You cannot afford to freeze in deliberation. That is pretty sure to get you killed. Being no-nonsense also refers to having the ability to act purposefully and non-emotional-

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“The Gang is a brutally honest look at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and how they are out of control. The presentation is shocking yet very professional. The production team at JPFO did an admirable job of assembling a convincing story that shows just what happens with an unchecked government agency. I highly recommend “The Gang” to anyone who still cares about their personal freedoms.” — Tim Schmidt - Founder & Executive Director, United States Concealed Carry Association

“Evil needs secrecy and shadow to exist. “The Gang” drags this band of rogue criminals into the light; where we, The American People will judge their evil deeds.” — Larry Pratt - Executive Director, Gun Owners of America

ly. Whining about how unfortunate you are will not save your derriere whether your problem is in business, in finances, in your personal life, or in your face on the street or on the battlefield.

Organized. In order to survive a violent confrontation, in addition to being decisive, you must be efficient and methodical. You must be organized, prepared, and on target so that you can take your enemy apart. Being organized and prepared means being unconsciously competent to launch into effective action at a moment's notice. This means that you do not have to stop and think about how you are going to run your gun, or access your blade, or parry a strike, or run away. Being organized and prepared means you are well trained and have trained well.

It also requires that you have trained with, and have with you, the right equipment to get the job done. Do not settle for cheap and iffy emergency rescue and survival equipment on which to bet your life. Your life is worth more than that. Remember that, ultimately, you get what you pay for, and you pay

later for what you didn't pay earlier.

Restrained. This habit is very important. In the jungle, those who survive generally blend in. They generally don't stand out, but go unnoticed. You would probably be wise to go unnoticed and under the radar as well, especially if you are carrying a gun. This means that your clothes shouldn't mark you as someone who is carrying a GUN! They should be discreet and fit in with your environment. Also, your concealment holsters should not print through your clothing.

Equally important, your actions should be reserved and judicious. Avoid loud and injudicious people, and don't become one. Don't brag. Cultivate humility. Keep yourself in check and under control at all times, especially when you are carrying. Train yourself to think before you act. Use your knowledge to avoid problems before they develop. Train so that you do not need to use your training. Find ways to avoid confrontations, and if a confrontation is unavoidable, try to de-escalate it if at all possible. As wisely pointed out by Massad Ayoob, with the greater power that carrying a

deadly weapon bestows upon you, there is also a greater responsibility to meet a higher standard of care. Remember that discretion is the better part of valor. ★

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[Bruce N. Eimer, Ph.D., psychologist and NRA Certified Law Enforcement Firearms Instructor; trains law abiding citizens in the defensive use of firearms. His company, Personal Defense Solutions, also runs the classes required to obtain the Florida, Virginia, and Utah non-resident multi-state CCW permits. To learn more, visit: www.PersonalDefenseSolutions.net and www.DefensiveHandguns.com.]

1. NLP: The new technology of achievement. 1996. Edited by S. Andreas & C. Faulkner. New York: Harper Paperbacks.

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