

THE IMMEDIATE GOAL WHEN DEFENDING AGAINST A GUN GRAB IS TO DISABLE THE OFFENDING HANDS AND DISRUPT THE ATTACKER'S PLAN.



THE SHARP SENIOR CITIZEN

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

If you are a senior citizen, staying sharp refers to more than just looking good.

It means cultivating a healthy mind and body that will help you remain aware of your surroundings, prepared and ready for any eventuality. Bad guys select their victims based upon their assessment of signs of weakness, frailty, timidity and fear. If you look confident, observant, oriented, decisive and active, bad guys will probably not want to mess with you. Maintaining confidence, staying sharp and observant, being decisive, and staying active do require commitment and effort, but it is worth it. Routine physical exercise keeps your body strong and energetic, makes you feel good, helps you think clearly, and slows the aging process. Routine mental exercise keeps your mind sharp so

you can sustain continued attention and task focus. It also prevents aging-related memory loss. In addition, taking care of yourself emotionally helps keep your mind clear and free from worry.

PREPARED AND READY TO DEFEND

If you are an armed senior citizen, you need to be especially alert to attempts to relieve you of the firearm(s) you are carrying, and for that matter, anything else of value. Staying sharp means you are prepared and ready to defend against such threats. The action of thwarting an attempt to disarm you (a whole course or book in itself), is referred to as *weapon retention*. One of the simplest and

most effective methods of handgun retention is to cut off the hand or arm that is trying to disarm you. There are various techniques for doing so, and again, the details are way beyond the scope of this article. However, the tool that is needed for the job is a sharp, reliable blade; that is, a quality folding or fixed blade knife that can be carried on the side opposite your handgun. A rapidly deployable blade, or two, reserved solely for social purposes, constitutes essential equipment for the legally armed citizen, senior or otherwise.

The immediate goal when defending against a gun grab is to disable the offending hands and disrupt the attacker's plan. A well targeted, timely slash with a sharp blade that cuts the tendons which control movement of the attacker's hands and fingers will do the trick. You may also need to trap the offender's

above: Trap the attacker's arm and access your blade. Disable the attacker's arm. Disable the attacker.

right: TOPS Felony Stop Fixed Blade with Kydex clip-on IWB Sheath.

Blackhawk Pointman and B30 Assisted Opening folders, Kershaw Junkyard Dog and ZT Military Folders.

Blackhawk XSF Punch Dagger and Micro Neck Knives.



above: Cut resistant gloves by Blackhawk.



left: To defend a right-side handgun and allow its use, the primary blade should be carried on the left side. When the knife is sheathed on the incorrect side, it becomes difficult to access the firearm while defending the draw.

hands before, during and after making your cuts. Recognize that a slap or a parry may not be the thing to do if the attacker already has his hands on your handgun, as this could propel his inertia in getting your gun out of your holster.

THE SIG PRINCIPLE SAYS SIMPLE IS GOOD

Under combat stress, simple martial blade techniques are easier to perform than complicated ones. Simple techniques are also easier to learn and practice, especially for us old geezers. Fortunately, good training is available. The Sayoc International Group under the leadership of Grand Tuhon Chris Sayoc and Master Trainer Tuhon Tom Kier, offers seminars and training DVDs on the Filipino based Sayoc Kali martial arts system of blade, stick, and empty hand fighting methods. Blade seminars

for beginners of all ages and either sex will also be offered though Personal Defense Solutions, so readers are invited to watch for future course offerings at www.PersonalDefenseSolutions.net.

ACTION IS FASTER THAN REACTION

You cannot be fast enough to catch up if you have to react to a bad guy's vicious attack. Therefore, you must not only be aware and anticipate when an attack is imminent, but you must also be the "feeder" and not the "receiver." The feeder or actor lives to see another day and the receiver or reactor dies. So, you must learn how to be the feeder in any violent confrontation. Recognize that the Violent Criminal Actor (VCA) expects to be the feeder. You must disrupt his nefarious plan and reverse the tables on him by turning him into the receiver.

This is done by transforming instantly, explosively and aggressively into the feeder and disabling the bad guy's body and mind in an aggressive, offensive counter-attack.

BE THE FEEDER

You must never underestimate your attacker. Assume that your attacker has combatives training and knows how to disable, maim and kill. To prevail if you are assaulted, your mindset must be offensive and not defensive. The best defense is a good offense. Recognize that defenders are receivers and receivers die. Be the feeder. There is no time to dither in disbelief. You must take care of the problem that you are going to die unless you act decisively and aggressively. You must end the fight fast. A physical attack on your person calls for an all out, full court press against your attacker or at-

tackers that overwhelms them. You must press your attacker to the ground or the wall. To be the feeder, you need to have deployable weapons on you. You should have at least one reliable handgun and a blade or two. At least one blade should be carried so it can be quickly deployed by your "other strong hand" to cut off the arm and hand that is trying to take your gun and kill you.

A simple reverse grip on your blade and upward slash into your attacker's arm, followed by a powerful stab to the assailant's neck will typically do the job. You can practice this drill, illustrated here, with a training blade and dummy handgun at least 1000 times so it installs into your subconscious as a motor memory.

BLADE CHOICE AND CARRY CONSIDERATIONS

I prefer plain edge rather than serrated or partially serrated blades as the former are easier to sharpen and maintain. For stabbing, spear point and drop point blades such as the Crucible II folder and Crucible FX2 fixed blade by Blackhawk

Products Group are more efficient than are tanto style blades. I also prefer designs with convex belly out edges for slashing such as the Crucible II folder. However, straight edge and concave curved karambits and hawkbill shaped blades such as the Garra II folder will also serve just fine.

If you choose to carry a blade or two for personal defense (the wise choice), I hope you will think about how you are going to deploy it if you need it in a hurry. There are multiple options. Most people in the know carry folding knives because they are convenient to stow. However, folders are not always easy to deploy in a hurry and they are typically not as sturdy as fixed blades. Fixed blades are typically sturdier and quicker to deploy, but less convenient and comfortable to carry unless they come with concealable sheathing systems that offer adjustable or multiple carry positions.

When you choose a folder for defensive carry, you want to choose a sturdy one that opens smoothly and reliably, is razor sharp, and holds its edge. The blade should feel good in your hand.

The knife should also permit multiple carry positions because how you carry it should be a function of what other weapons you are packing and your attire. Therefore, in a folder, it is desirable for the pocket carry clip to be movable so that you can carry the folder in your left or right pockets, blade tip either up or down. All of Blackhawk's folders offer this feature, as do many of the folders made by Kershaw Knives and Columbia River Knife and Tool.

Kershaw pioneered and perfected their SpeedSafe assisted opening system for their folders that assists the user to smoothly open the knife with a manual push on the blade's thumb stud or pull back on the blade protrusion or flipper. CRKT folders also offer the brilliant AutoLAWKS automatic safety, which automatically engages when the blade is opened, locking the blade in the open position. This reinforces the primary blade locking mechanism such as the liner lock, in that both locks must be manually disengaged to close the knife.

Whatever your age, if you are serious about personal defense you should have

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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

multiple carry options for your blades. Blackhawk makes a molded Kydex sheath system for their pictured fixed blade offerings which allows the user to choose multiple carry positions for the fixed blade. These include inside the waist band carry, outside the belt carry, paddle carry, left or right side carry, and multiple carry angles. You can also purchase a second accessory sheath for your fixed blade and set it up for a different mode of carry. This gives you ultimate flexibility.

Last but not least, neck knives can be always on you and serve as a very viable last ditch backup. An everyday carry neck knife should be a sharp, fixed blade that is lightweight, unobtrusive and comfortable to wear, ergonomic to hold, sizable enough to get a good grip on, and paired with a good Kydex sheath.

CONCLUSIONS

Refuse to be a victim. The next to last thing a violent criminal predator expects is an *armed senior citizen* who is ready and willing. The last thing he expects is a senior citizen carrying a sharp

blade. Be prepared and ready to surprise him! Mr. Murphy is always alive and well. You probably didn't get this far in life without knowing this. So, recognize that one gun is none, two guns are one, one blade is none, two blades are one, and therefore, it is wise to carry a backup blade and a backup gun on the opposite side of your primary carry gun. It is also smart to carry a backup blade (e.g., a quality folder) on the opposite side of your primary carry blade (i.e., carried on your primary gun side). Keep your carry blades sharp and your carry guns clean. Always be prepared and ready. Be a sharp senior citizen and walk with confidence. ★

[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.]

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