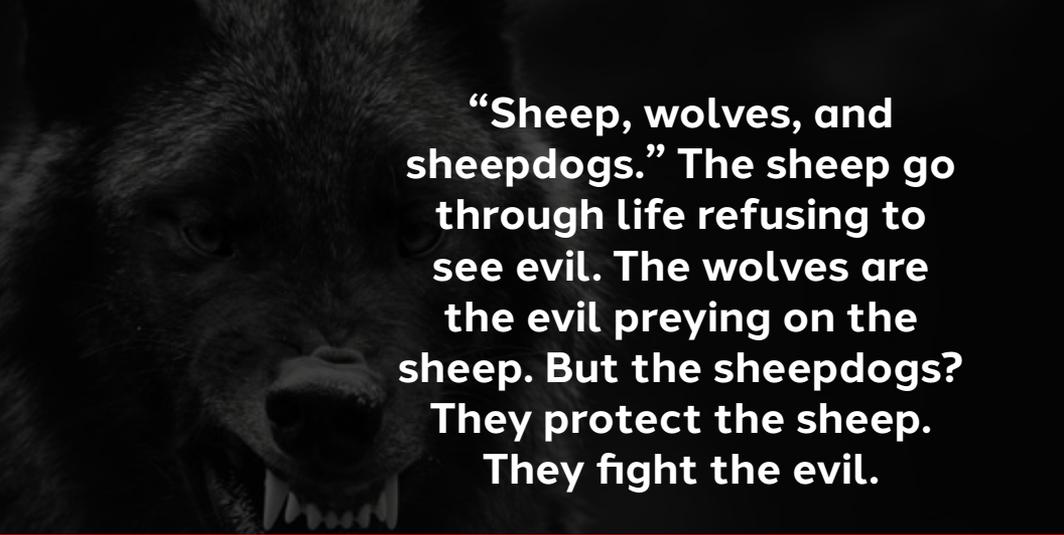




# SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

*by*  
Tim Owens



**“Sheep, wolves, and sheepdogs.” The sheep go through life refusing to see evil. The wolves are the evil preying on the sheep. But the sheepdogs? They protect the sheep. They fight the evil.**

Unfortunately, disasters happen all of the time. From mass shootings, to muggings, to home invasions, the news is filled with these terrible events every day. This article is not intended to be political or fear-mongering. We must recognize that humans have had a propensity for violence ever since Abel and Cain; it is up to us to determine how we accept that unfortunate truth. We can choose to live in fear, or we can choose to adapt and overcome. The most proactive way to remove oneself from being a potential victim is to improve situation awareness. This starts with actively observing your surroundings. If you are aware of what is happening around you, you are less likely to be caught off guard and more likely to be able to implement an escape or a defense in response to a threat.

The world we live in is a hectic, fast-paced environment. Technology is ever more present and while this may have benefits, it also causes many people to become unaware of what is happening around them. Most of us carry a smartphone now and use it frequently throughout the day, for various reasons. None of us know what the future holds from minute to minute. We must live in the present. Who knows when we may find ourselves in a life-threatening situation?

Merriam-Webster defines awareness as the quality or state of being aware: knowledge and understanding that something is happening or exists.

It is widely taught that people operate in one of five color-coded conditions daily. The colors are: White, Yellow, Orange, Red and Black.

*Condition*  
**WHITE**

Unaware and Unprepared – This condition is exhibited most by the population. Those in this condition are generally not aware of their immediate surroundings and are preoccupied by other events in their lives.

*Condition*  
**YELLOW**

Relaxed awareness – A person in this condition is aware of all that is going on around them. They are scanning for anyone or anything out of the ordinary. This condition can be maintained comfortably and indefinitely without undue nervous strain. This is not a state of paranoia. This condition can and should become second nature to you.

*Condition*  
**ORANGE**

Specific alert – This condition occurs when someone or something has aroused suspicion. A person in this condition is formulating plans and thinking of tactics, cover, lighting, options, escape routes, etc. This condition can be maintained for several hours when necessary.

*Condition*  
**RED**

Fighting mode – The defensive plan developed in condition orange is being implemented. The person in this condition is taking action and is in control of their assets and faculties. Conditioned response from training is kicking in. You will only perform to your lowest level of training.

*Condition*  
**BLACK**

Overload and panic – A person in this condition is unable to think or function rationally. The sense of being overwhelmed causes them to freeze. The possibility of this occurring can be greatly reduced through realistic scenario training and the development of the will to win to overcome and fight through the fear.

I teach this in my concealed weapons class and believe it is valuable information to understand. While the recent tragedies happened, it drives home the point of being aware of your surroundings. If you are aware of what is happening, you have the ability to formulate a plan and implement it. Whether it be to run and hide or better yet, if you have a concealed permit, stop the threat. Hopefully, those who are reading this article, operate in the yellow daily.

There will always be violence in the world. Are you prepared to mitigate any attempted violence towards you, your loved ones or innocent victims? I hope so.

If you want to improve your skills with any weapon you may have, contact me to arrange your training.

The only way to stop a bad guy with a gun, is a good guy with a gun!



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