



A SURVIVAL GUIDE TO

LIFE IN SOUTH AFRICA

THE TOUGH GUY'S **PART 2** HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MARTIAL ARTS FOR MORE THAN 35 YEARS. DURING THIS TIME I HAVE SPENT MORE THAN 15 YEARS IN THE SECURITY FIELD WORKING THE DOORS AT THE WILDEST NIGHTCLUBS IN JOHANNESBURG AND DURBAN, WORKING UNDERCOVER IN HILLBROW, THE CRIME MECCA OF SOUTH AFRICA, AND OPERATING IN A SPECIALISED ANTI-HIJACKING UNIT FOR MORE THAN TWO YEARS DEALING WITH THE KINGS OF SOUTH AFRICAN SCUM. MY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE HAVE CONVINCED ME OF ONE THING - CONFLICT IS TO BE AVOIDED WHEREVER POSSIBLE. READ ON TO FIND OUT HOW TOUGH GUYS SHOULD HANDLE CONFLICT.

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1. ESCAPE

By using one's awareness, one can escape most situations. For example, you're standing at your local bar having a drink and you can sense some guys giving you dirty looks and passing comments. The best thing to do is to get into your car and go to another pub. If a certain area is known for hijackings and violent crime, avoid the area. If you are living in an area that is known for home invasions, move to another area. If three guys in a dark alley confront you, don't try and duke it out with them even if you think you have all the training you need - escape, escape, escape!

2. CONTROL

When dealing with some punk looking for a fight, you can defuse the situation verbally by telling the guy you aren't looking for any trouble. Sometimes, however, that isn't enough and physical conflict is inevitable. Use the least amount of force possible to control a situation, especially if the person is under the influence of alcohol. They may have no idea of what they're doing. Use the wall or floor to control the attacker. In a mugging situation you may have to find a way to disarm the attacker or tie him up until the police arrive. If you can control him this will always be a better option than your last resort - destroy.

3. DESTROY

When all else fails and the confrontation has progressed to such a level where you or your family's lives are in danger, or they stand a chance of being seriously injured, then it is time to 'destroy'. This means taking the fight to your attacker and doing whatever is necessary to protect yourself and your family.

Johannesburg has one of the best urban freeway systems in the world, but you will hardly see a soft-top convertible. It has some of the most lavishly appointed malls and shopping centres anywhere, but each is patrolled by heavily-armed paramilitary security guards, with two side arms, body armor and a R5 assault rifle. It has one of the most tried and tested, effective and best-equipped police forces on the planet, from the ranks of which at least one, but often more, are killed in shoot-outs with criminals every month, not to mention the extraordinary number who fall victim to suicide or stress-related conflict killings. YET the majority of the force is corrupt due to them not getting paid adequately to deal with the violence and crime in one of the world's most violent, crime-ridden countries in the world.

Awareness, of course, is the key. Don't be stupid. Don't tempt fate. Don't think that because the South African east coast looks like southern California it is. Don't think that because Cape Town is so clean and ordered, so cultural and sophisticated that you won't have your iPhone stolen as you stroll downtown in the sensual twilight. Don't have a picnic on the side of the freeway or take an unscheduled diversion into the local townships for the sake of authentic local culture. All of these actions will probably get you into trouble!

South Africa is a fantastically well organised country and every travel contingency is provided for by one operator or another. From the Bazz Bus to the Blue Train, from wildlife safaris to whale watching and shark caging, there is nothing that can't be done both safely and professionally, and it is this that needs to be kept in mind at all times.

So lock up your cash, keep your electronics hidden and be aware of your surroundings.

However, South Africa is not all bad news and we have so many amazing things to be grateful for; the beaches, mountains, wildlife, wide-open spaces and culture to name just a few. So for those of you who have friends or relatives that have yet to visit our shores, encourage them to get on that plane and come here. It is the best country in the world, and they won't regret it! •