



Safer Life/Safer Community

Our Vision: Reduce fear, violence and suffering in society

Safer Life

What does it mean to live a “safer” life?

We live in a world full of danger and the threat of danger. Whoever we are or where ever we live, this danger is very real. When our lives or the lives of our family members intersect with that danger, it becomes a traumatic event affecting our lives in deep, meaningful and often lasting ways. Traumatic events are difficult and upsetting experiences that cannot be completely avoided. But can the likelihood of these events be reduced in our lives? Or, at least, can their effects be reduced?

Living a safer life requires us to interact, at some level, with the dangers we face. Being safer involves first understanding what dangers exist in our lives. Next, thinking about how we might avoid or overcome the danger provides relevant ideas. Based on these ideas, we develop ways to take some action in order to reduce the likelihood of encountering the danger. Finally, joining with others who need to learn similar actions build needed support. But first, we need to understand the fear, suffering and violence that we experience as a result of the dangers we face.

On Fear

Fear keeps us from living a safer life. Fear results from imaging or thinking about a future traumatic event. Fear restricts our actions or causes us to take actions we would not otherwise take. We also have very real physical responses, and harder to detect mental responses to fear. Fear contributes to sickness and disease causing even more traumatic events. Can we do anything about being afraid?

Fear exists first in our minds; the anticipation of traumatic events that *might* occur. If we can reduce the likelihood of these traumatic events through our plans, actions, and connections with others, then the anticipation will also be reduced. As we continue to build plans, actions and connections our confidence increases; and so the fear fades. And we live a safer life.



On Violence

Violence keeps us from living a safer life. Violence is an unwarranted use of force; a current traumatic event. Violence is the most insidious form of traumatic event because it is intentionally targeted against us. The blame for violence is always and only on the person being violent. The causes of the event may be varied and complex; the blame however is simple. But does that mean we are powerless against violence?



We do not choose the violence perpetrated against us, but we can choose how we respond. By understanding the danger of violence, we can see better the causes and so respond more effectively. Through these responses, we can come up with ideas of how to respond and build those into actions to mitigate the threats of violence. We can practice these actions with others; and so the threat of violence fades. And we live a safer life.

On Suffering

Suffering keeps us from living a safer life. Suffering occurs as a result of a past traumatic event. We suffer in real and sometimes lasting ways, both physically and mentally. No one deserves to suffer. It doesn't matter if we could have avoided the traumatic event. What happened, happened and now we are left with the remnants of that event. But, is our suffering an obligation of being involved with a traumatic event?



While suffering remains a real physical and mental by-product of a traumatic event, how we experience suffering is, to some degree, up to us. By understanding the suffering, we can generate ideas about how to impact that suffering. The ideas can lead to some action, maybe physical or mental therapy, which could lead to developing relationships with others; and so the suffering fades. And we live a safer life.

Safer Community

Can we build a safer community?

As we, as individuals, learn and practice how to reduce our fear, our suffering and our exposure to violence, we become empowered. As we can connect with others through these experiences this empowerment grows. As more and more empowered individuals create more and more connections to others, a community develops; a safer community.

