



What is a Threat?

What We Do: Help people learn to protect themselves from threats.

What makes you afraid?

At Self-Protection.org we help people learn to protect themselves from threats. So, what is a threat?

Threats exist whether we can observe them or not, whether we can measure them or not, whether we can predict them or not. Threats exist independent of the individual and therefore are not the fault of individual. Threats are made up of events created by causes and effects. Understanding these causes and effects is a first step in providing the individual a basis to learn self-protection. How? By studying the personal vulnerabilities (causes of effects) and taking action to reduce those vulnerabilities. By reducing the threat to smaller, more perceivable, and actionable parts, the entire threat comes into clearer view.

But, what are these threats? What do threats look like and how do they behave?

Types of Threats

At this point, something needs to be understood about not buying into the culture of fear permeating our society. Perceiving, understanding and taking action against threats does not require you to be afraid. In fact, as the understanding of a threat increases, the fear associated with that threat dissipates.

The wide ranging threats include:

Natural – Tornados, Hurricanes, Earth Quakes, Floods, Fire

Health Issues – Sickness, Disease

Accidents – Falls, Cars

Non-human - Dogs, Bears, Spiders, Snakes

Human – Criminals, Abusers, Bullies

One fact to consider; threats remain only in your imagination until they intersect with you. So, understanding the threat is important. But understanding where these threats could intersect with us and then learning what actions could disrupt those points of intersection are the critical questions that need to be considered.

Natural Threats

Threats exist all around us – including **natural** events like the weather. A tornado is a type of weather (threat) event defined as a violently rotating column of air in contact with the ground which develops from a thunderstorm. Tornadoes do not just happen; rather tornadoes are *caused by* thunderstorms. The event of a thunderstorm requires certain conditions (causes) in the atmosphere including:

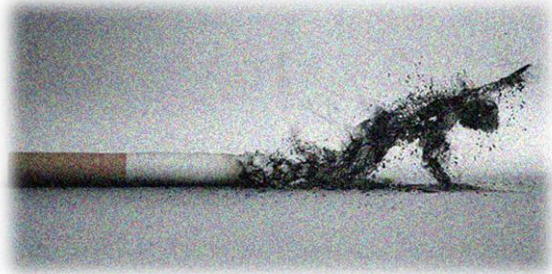


- 1) Moisture in the form of cloud and rain.
- 2) Unstable air that is warm and can rise rapidly.
- 3) And finally that air needs to lift from fronts, sea breezes or mountains.

When these conditions are not present, no thunderstorm occurs therefore no tornado occurs. When these conditions are present, humid air rises high into the sky - an updraft. The updraft begins to rotate producing high winds. The effect of the rotating updraft in the thunderstorm results in a tornado, the high wind causes flying debris; which is the real threat to us. With the cause/effect model of a tornado in mind, apply the systems view to something more personal – your health.

Health Threats

Health related threats arguably cause more suffering than any other type of threat in our modern, “advanced” society; which seems ironic since we spend so much on healthcare. Where does the disconnect exist? Maybe we are missing the cause/effect relationship involved in health threats and what simple actions we could take to affect these threats. One common example relates to smoking. We know that



smoking causes lung cancer among other health related issues. And the action to take to not be threatened by smoking? Simply stop smoking. Most health related threats are not so simple, but the causes and effects are there, and many times so are the simple actions. Accidents too have understandable causes and effects.

Accidents

Accidents occur when individuals do not perceive, understand, or prepare for, the cause and effect relationship within the events that become accidents. For example, some statistics show that falling is the number two cause of accidental death – number one being car accidents. If the individual knew how to



fall without injury, that event, the injury or death, would be less likely to occur. Learning how to fall properly is the action taken to remove one cause, of the many causes of injury during a fall, from the cause and effect system. Another threat similar to accidents can be found in nature.

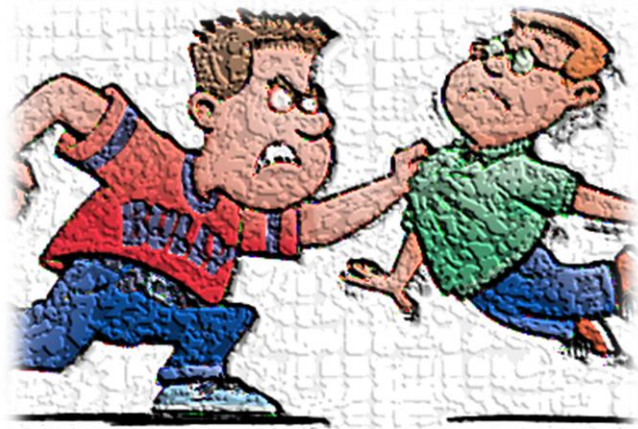
Non-Human Threats

Non-human threats cause a great deal of fear in our culture, but often this fear relates to a lack of understanding as opposed to a real threat. Rarely do animals seek out humans to attack. Most often we come into unintentional contact with animals and they “attack” in response. Knowing this we can take simple action to avoid the contact – know the poisonous snakes and spiders and watch for them, understand bear behavior when you are in their territory, and know how to react when confronted by a dog. All of these facts can be learned and so the dangerous contact can be avoided. But how do we handle the threats that do seek us out?



Human Threats

Random crime screams of a misleading notion; victims many times are chosen. **Human** threats, criminals, abusers and bullies, have a strategy and a profile of victims. Victims unknowingly play right into that strategy and profile by not perceiving, understanding or preparing for the causes and effects surrounding them. For example, a woman walking alone down a deserted street at night, not aware of her surroundings, and carrying her purse with one hand fits the profile of a purse snatching victim perfectly. The examples could get as complex as any crime



ever committed, but the cause and effect relationships are always there whether we choose to recognize them or not. Once recognized, simple actions can build a set of response for individuals. But please realize the recognition of causes and effects, and learning simple responses in no way makes the victim responsible for the crime.

Become Empowered

All these threats – Natural, Health, Accidents, Non-human and Human - are known yet unknown, predictable yet unpredictable. The threats become the great mystery, but predictable within certain boundaries. We can see and understand the cause and effect relationships that become threats. Then, we can take simple actions to respond to threats. And so, the individual moves toward a more empowered life.