

# Surviving an Active Shooter

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Denton Police Department

## ABOUT ME

- Former U.S. Marine
- Police officer 2000-2008, police sergeant 2008-present
- SWAT officer since 2004, current Asst. Commander
- State certified instructor since 2005
  - Hold instructor certifications in firearms, less lethal technologies, reality-based training, police defensive tactics, de-escalation, active shooter response

## PURPOSE

To prepare you for active assailant situations by:

1. Overcoming your civilized mind
2. Gaining the mindset to spot impending danger
3. Giving you a plan for when you're caught behind the lines of an active shooter situation.

Violence will happen,  
and no one can  
prevent violence from  
occurring in any public  
place you find  
yourself.

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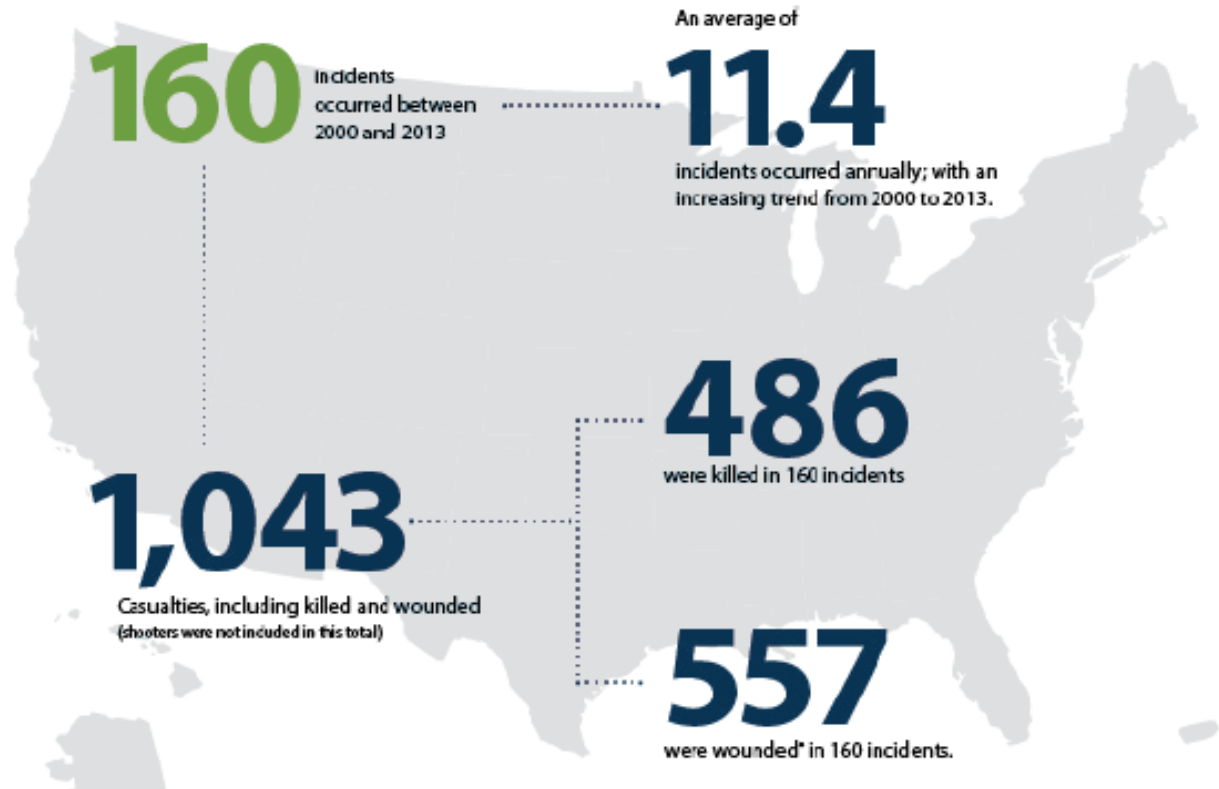


## Active assailant defined:

According to the FBI- an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a defined, populated area.

- Does not include terrorist or gang related events
- Can include multiple assailants, which is rare
- Does not require a gun, any weapon can be used
- Appears to be random, no pattern to victim selection
- Motive appears to be to harm people as opposed to robbery, hostage taking, etc.

Active  
Shooter  
Incidents  
2000-2013



# Breakdown of the Incidents Reviewed

## Location type-

45% commercial

25% educational, primary school through college

10% government facilities, including military bases

## Assailants-

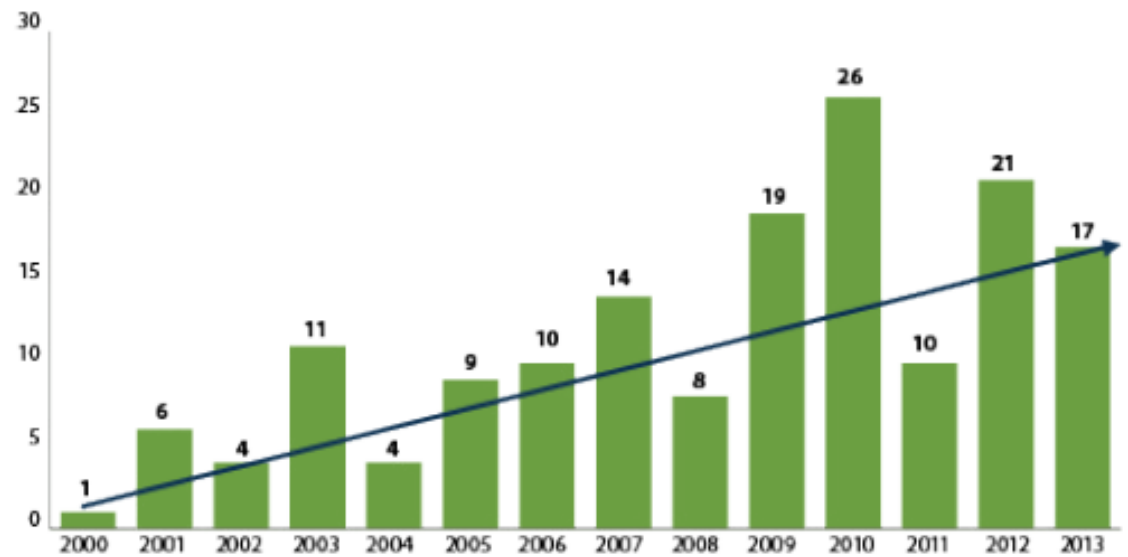
Vast majority are male

Most are acting alone, very few multiples

# Active Shooter Incidents from 2000-2013

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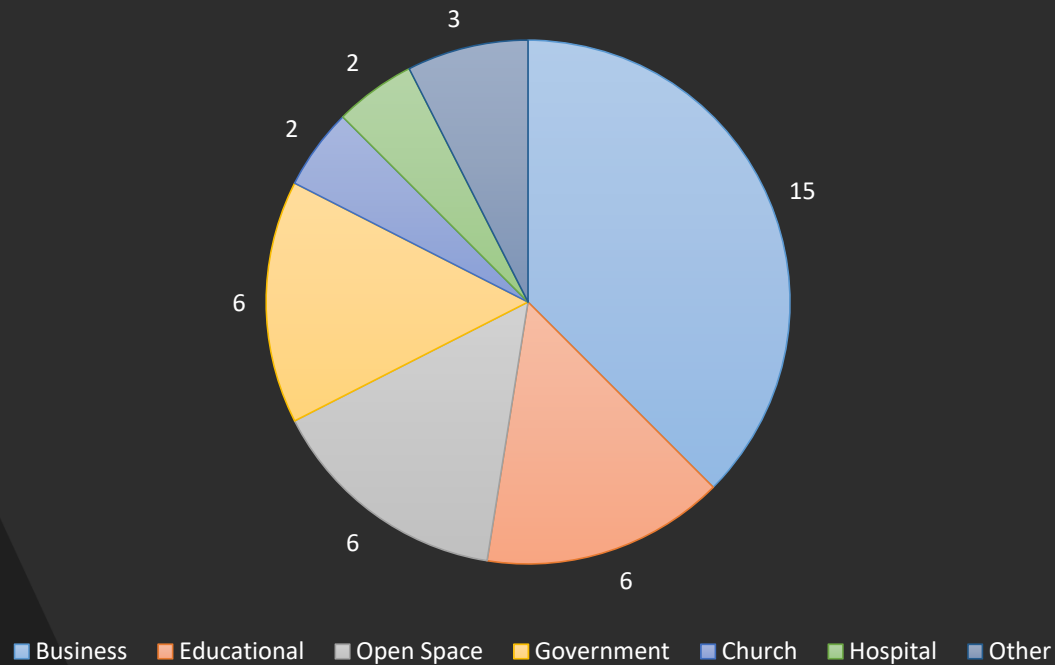
Incidents Annually





# 2014 & 2015 By The Numbers

20 incidents for each year, resulting in 92 killed and 139 injured

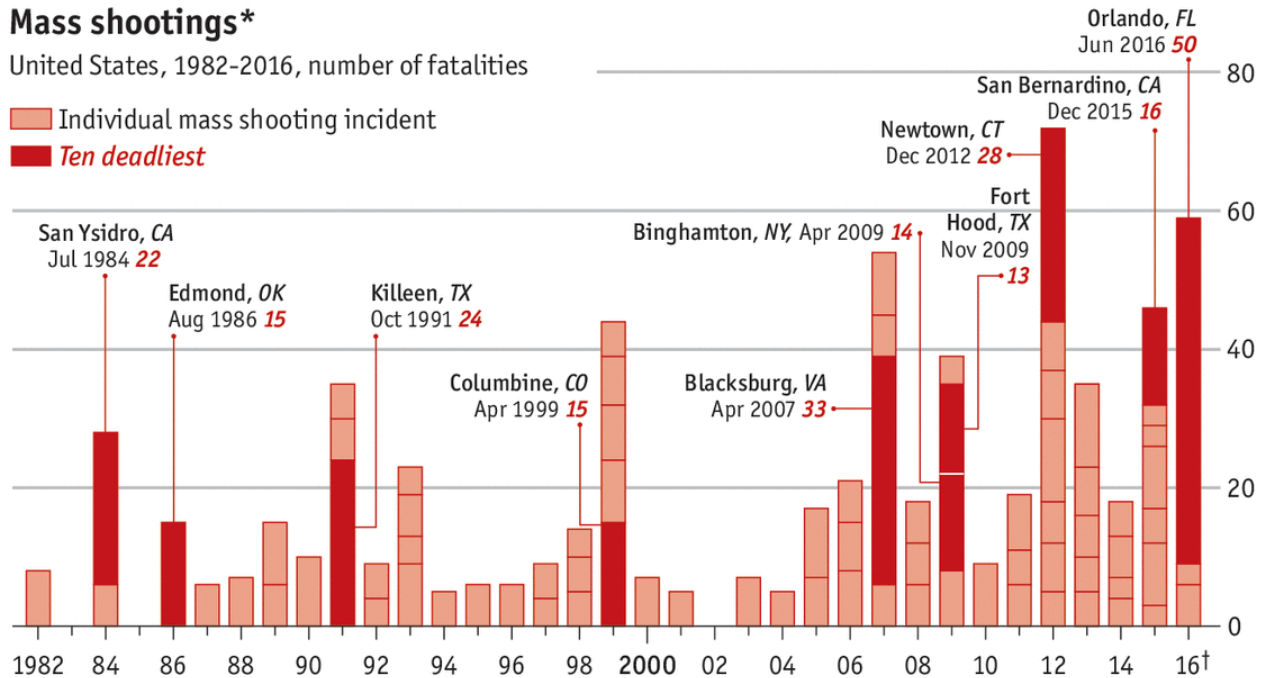


# 2016: A Rough Year

## Mass shootings\*

United States, 1982-2016, number of fatalities

- Individual mass shooting incident
- Ten deadliest*



Sources: *Mother Jones*; press reports

\*Shootings with three or more fatalities. Before January 2013, shootings with four or more fatalities. Not comprehensive †To June 13th

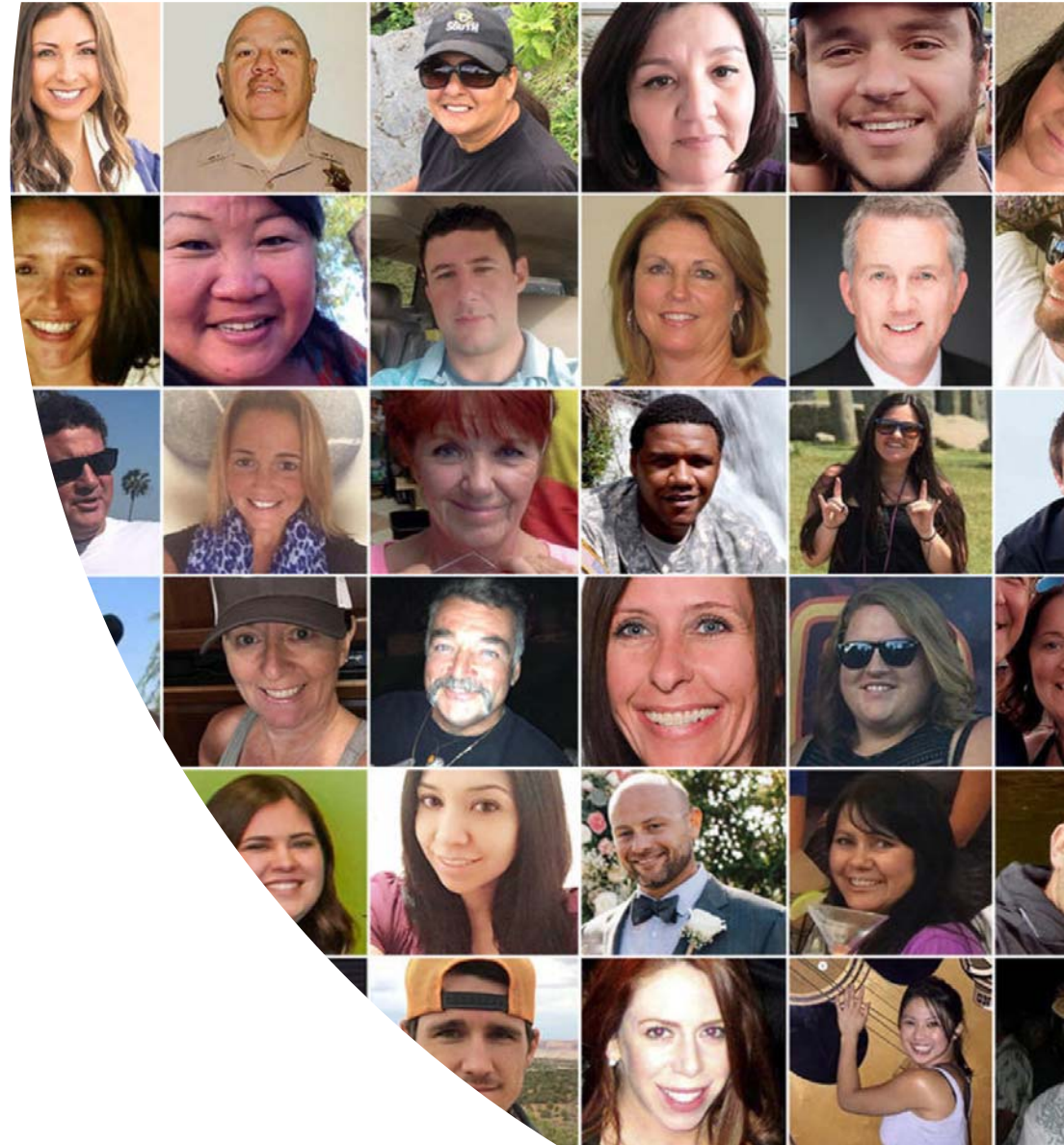
Economist.com

# 2017: A Rougher Year

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Las Vegas shooting-  
58 killed  
Over 500 injured

Deadliest shooting  
incident in U.S. history



# The police are coming to save us, right?!

- How long is an incident?
  - About 2/3 of incidents ended in less than five minutes.
  - About 1/3 of incidents ended in less than two minutes.

Average police response time for  
Priority 1 calls:

**7-10 MINUTES**





You must have a plan to survive...

 NBC NEWS



...because this might be the next person you see.



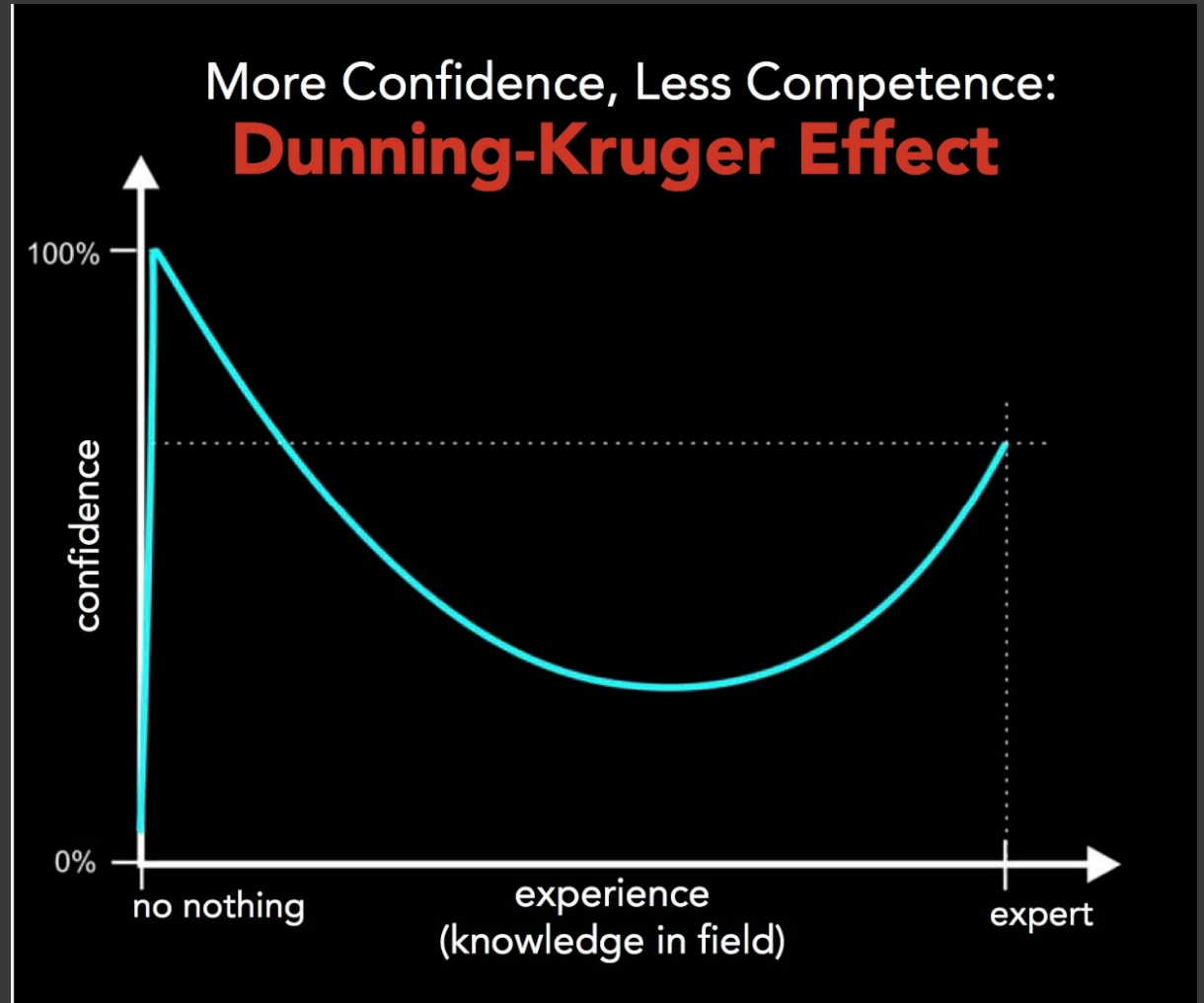
Objective 1:  
Overcoming Your  
Civilized Mind

# Reality Check





# The Dunning-Krueger Effect



# Recognize How Our Minds Work

We have the predisposition that things will be normal. Possible bad events are minimized because they seldom occur. We rationalize away warnings as something in daily life, interpreting danger signals as an optimistic possibility.

## **THE NORMALCY BIAS**

As a result, the response to a dangerous or unexpected situation is often nothing.

Estimated to affect 7 out of 10 people in disaster situations

# Should we panic?

Even if we do recognize something is wrong...

People tend to mimic what they see others doing. If people are acting as things are normal, others will be less likely to act.

## **BYSTANDER EFFECT**

If people are standing still, then others will stand still. If people run, others will.

Should we panic?

Taken together, these phenomenon can induce a state of

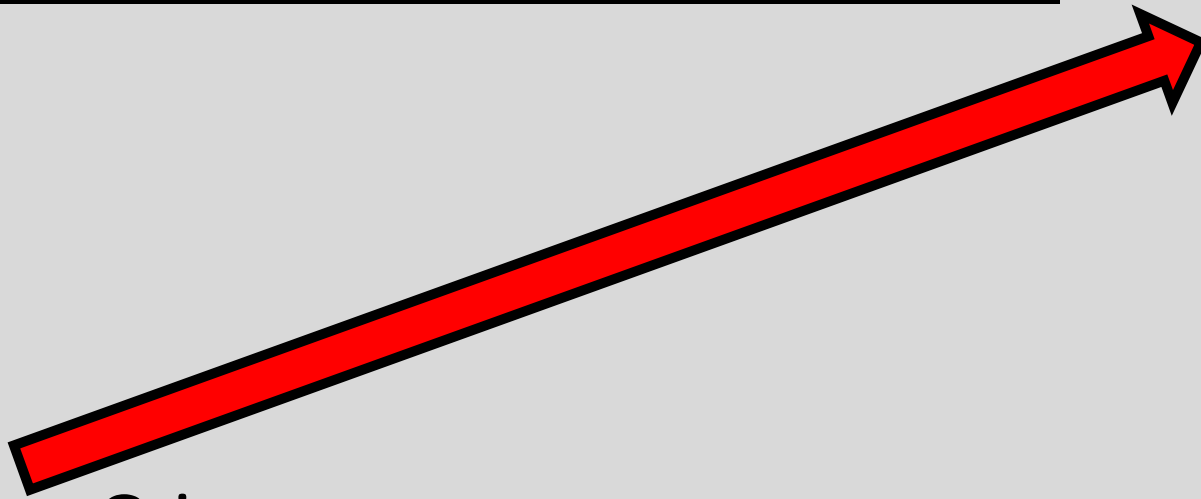
## **NEGATIVE PANIC**

We must recognize how our civilized mind is working against our ability to engage our survival instincts on order to overcome the hesitation that may cost valuable seconds.



## Objective 2: Spotting It Before It Starts

# Pathway to Violence

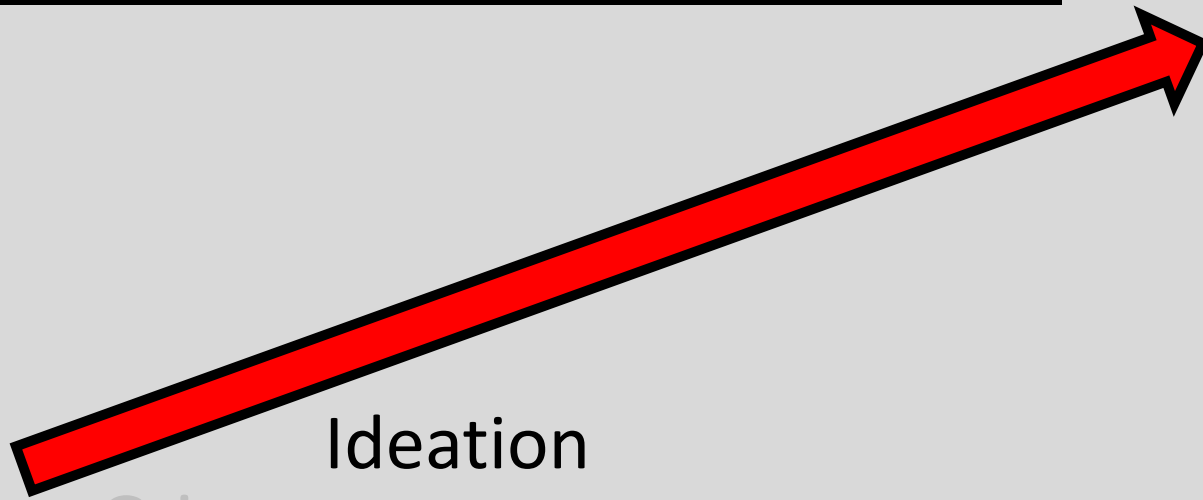


Grievance

Warning Behavior:

None. We all have grievances and work through them to acceptance or other resolution.

# Pathway to Violence



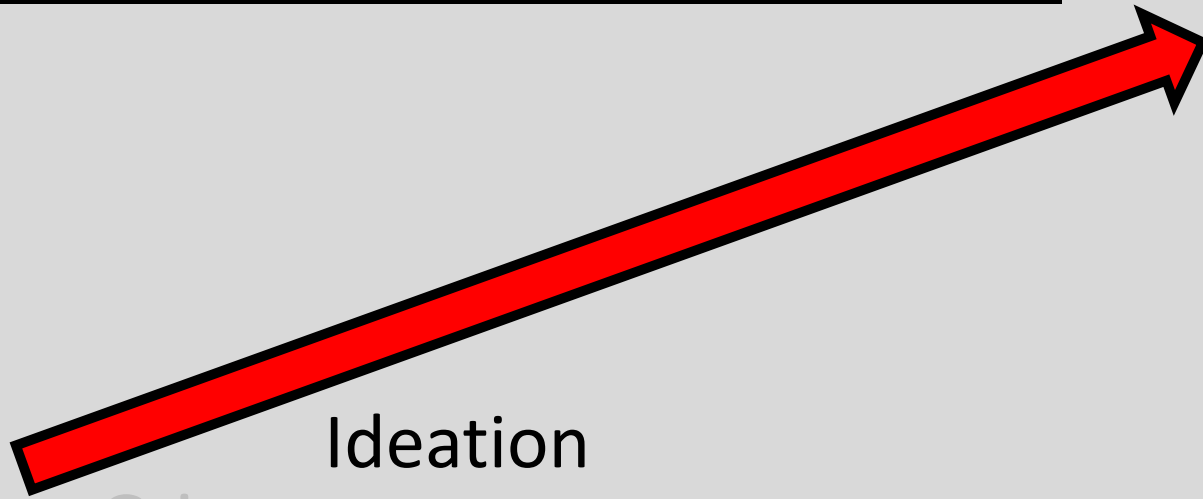
Ideation

Grievance

Warning Behavior:

Fixation indicating an increasing pathological preoccupation with the grievance.

# Pathway to Violence



Ideation

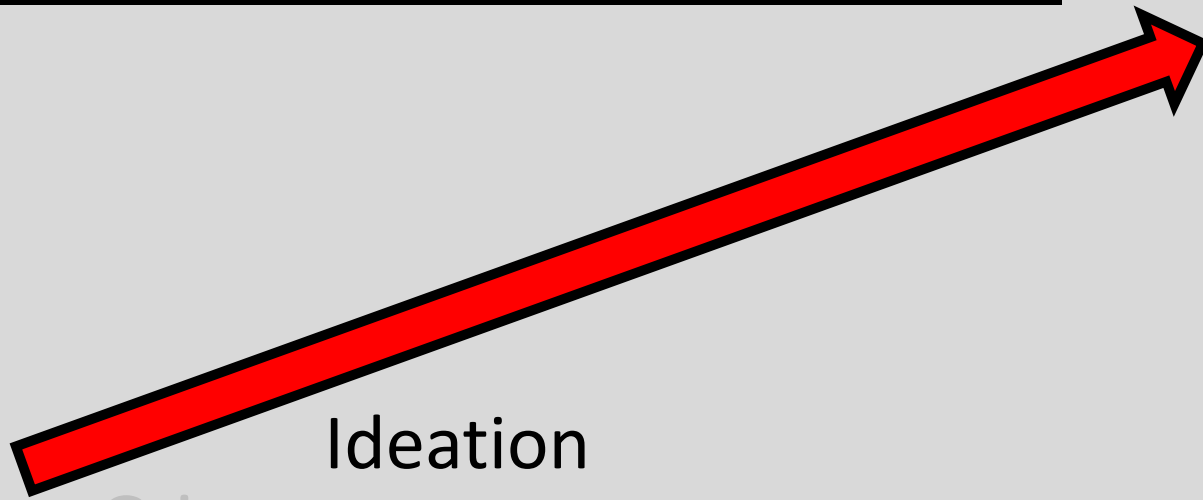
Grievance

Warning Behavior:

Identifying oneself as the agent to advance a cause or belief.



# Pathway to Violence



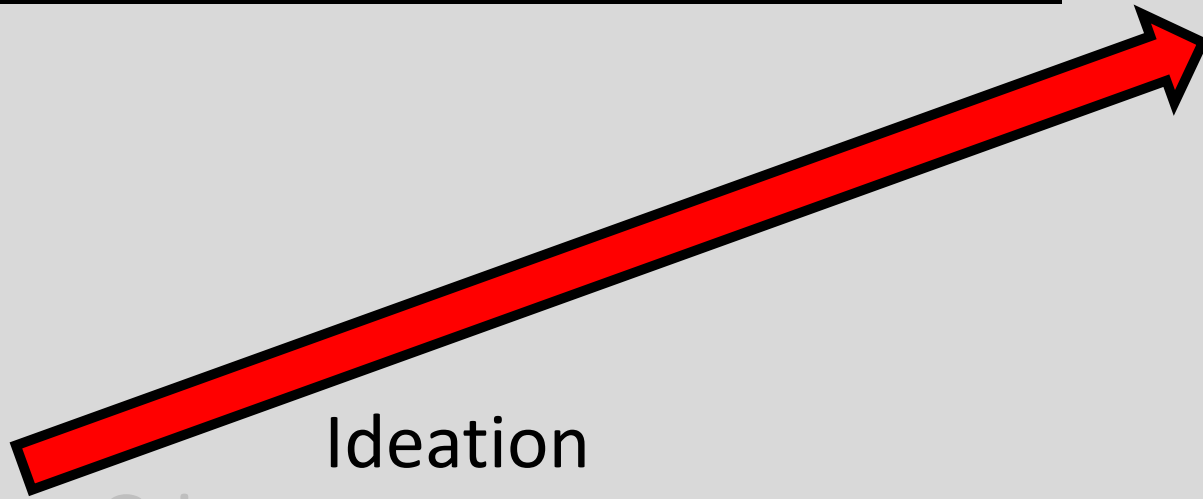
Ideation

Grievance

## Warning Behavior:

Behavior indicating a “warrior mindset” or identifying with a previous attacker.

# Pathway to Violence



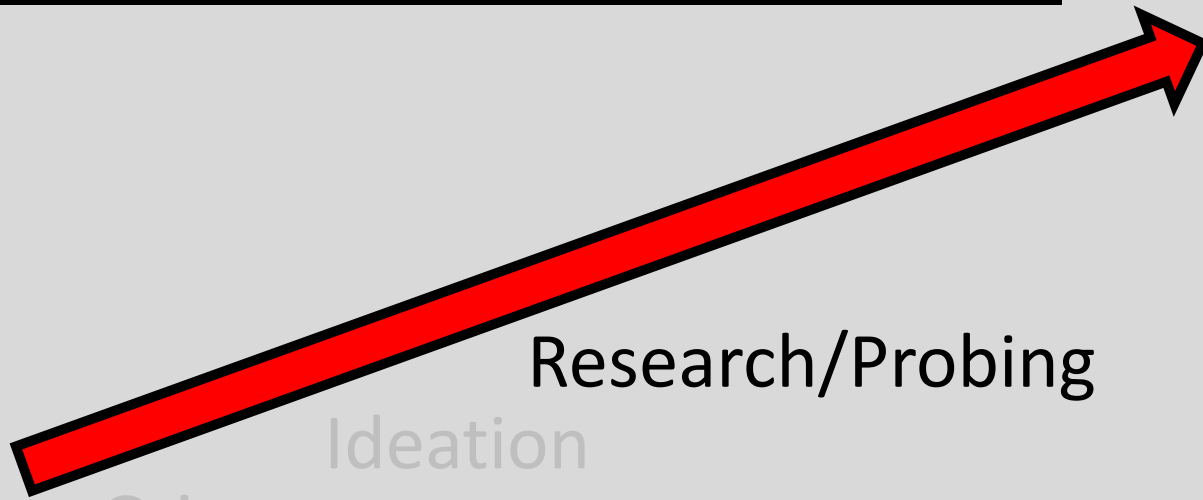
Ideation

Grievance

## Warning Behavior:

Increasing distress over grievance with words or deeds indicating a violent “action imperative.”

# Pathway to Violence



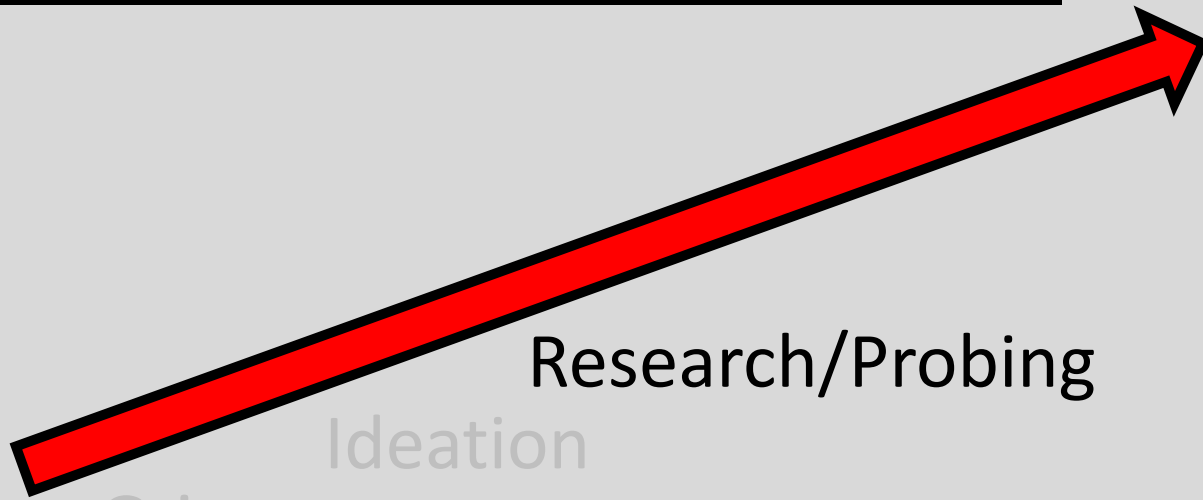
Grievance  
Ideation

Research/Probing

## Warning Behavior:

Novel aggression unrelated to the target that may be utilized to test the limits or responses.

# Pathway to Violence



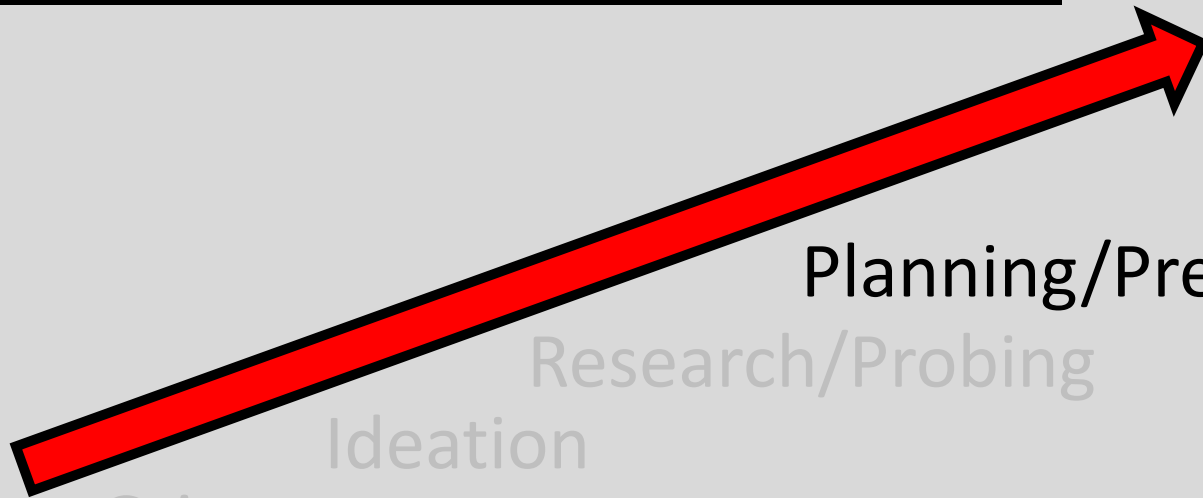
Grievance  
Ideation

Research/Probing

## Warning Behavior:

Behavior that is in line with research, planning, or preparation of an attack.

# Pathway to Violence



Grievance

Ideation

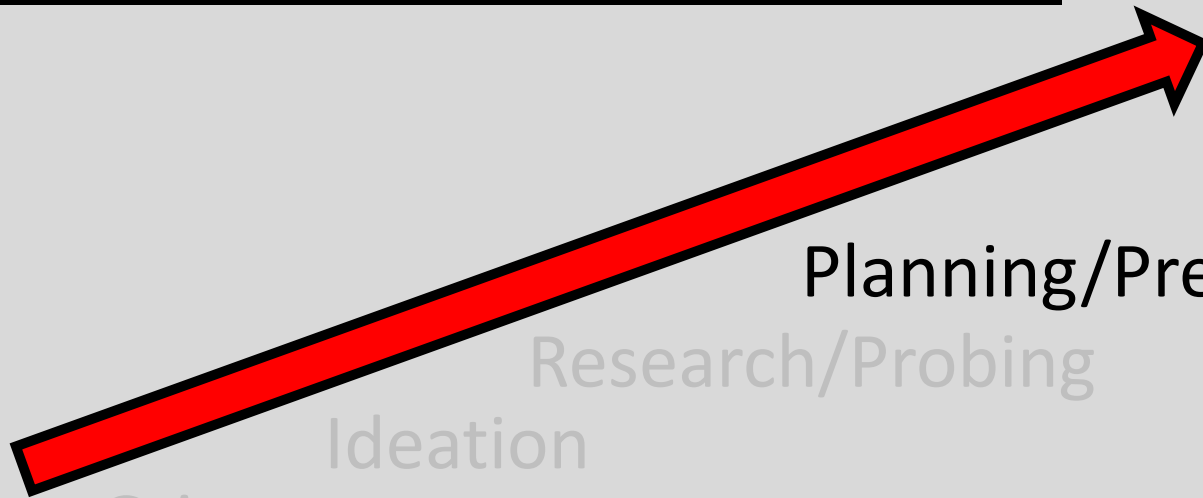
Research/Probing

Planning/Preparation

## Warning Behavior:

Leakage of verbal and nonverbal communication indicating the intent to do harm.

# Pathway to Violence



Grievance

Ideation

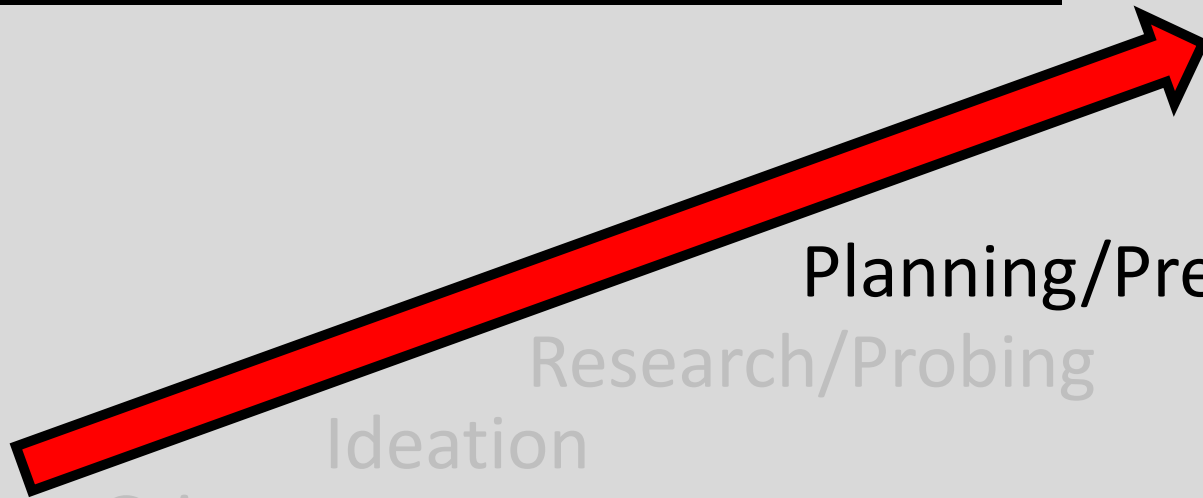
Research/Probing

Planning/Preparation

## Warning Behavior:

Increase in the frequency or variety of noted activities related to target, however innocuous.

# Pathway to Violence



Grievance

Ideation

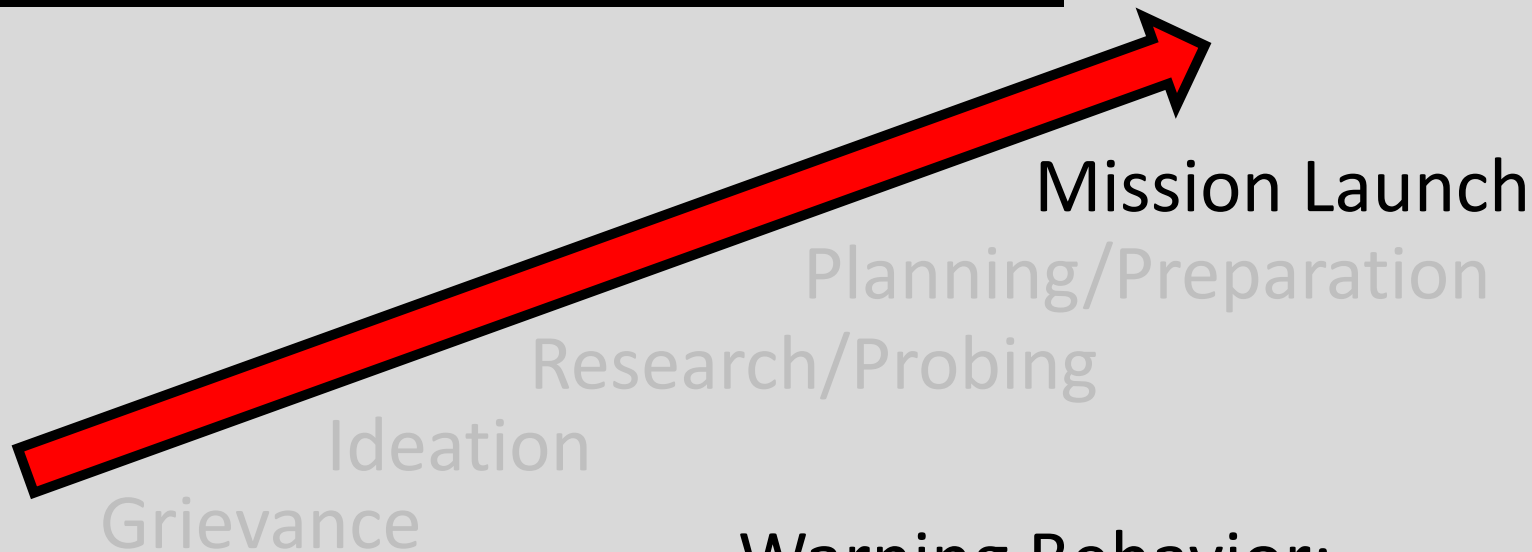
Research/Probing

Planning/Preparation

## Warning Behavior:

Communicating a threat, written or oral, that implicitly or explicitly states the intent to do harm.

# Pathway to Violence

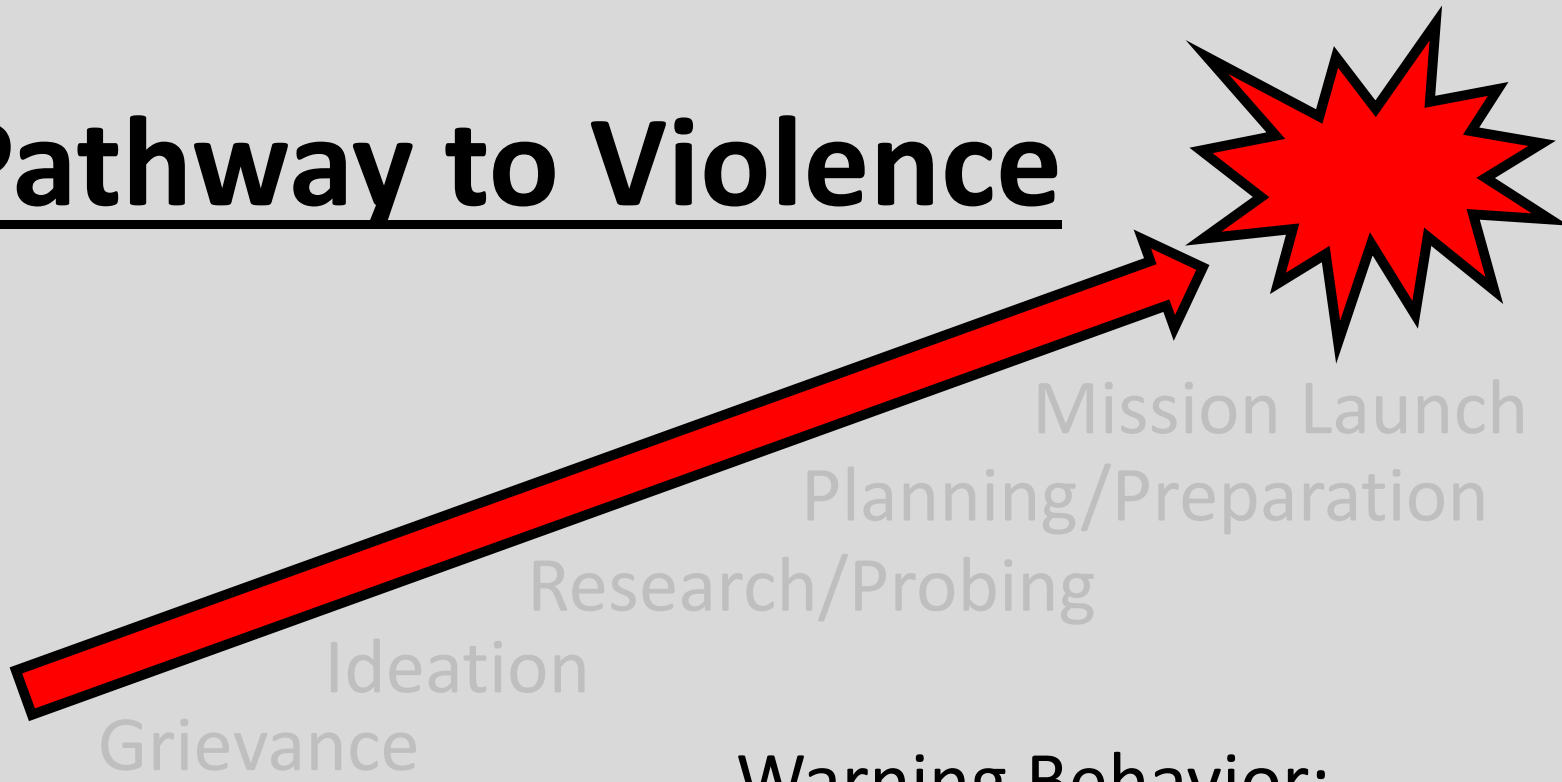


## Warning Behavior:

Any behavior associated with the implementation of the attack, usually first sign for outsiders.



# Pathway to Violence



Warning Behavior:

**THE ATTACK IS UNDERWAY!**

# Spotting it before it starts

You don't need hyper-awareness, just mindfulness of your surroundings.

Through experience, you are aware of what the baseline is.

Look for the anomalies, what does not fit the baseline?



Stages of  
Awareness

<b>White</b>	Unprepared and unready to take action.
<b>Yellow</b>	Prepared, alert & relaxed. Good situational awareness.
<b>Orange</b>	Alert to probable danger. Ready to take action.
<b>Red</b>	Action Mode. Focused on the emergency at hand.
<b>Black</b>	Panic. Breakdown of physical & mental performance.

# Universal Human Truths

1

People are creatures of habit

2

People are lazy

3

People telegraph intentions

4

People are predictable

5

People are generally clueless

# Leaky People Advertise Their Intentions- Profiling the Behavior

- Kinesics – conscious and subconscious body language
- Proxemics - how people move in relation to others
- Biometrics - automatic human responses to stress
- Linguistics - words chosen to convey ideas
- Geographics – how people move through the environment
- Iconography – symbols used to communicate beliefs

# Contextual Profiling



# BASELINE + ANOMALY = DECISION

The decisive action will be based on the analysis of the anomaly.

It can range from a mental note to all-out emergency.

Trust your gut, if it looks and feels wrong then it is worth pursuing.

The WORST thing you can do is nothing!

## SPOT THE ANOMALY QUIZ



It is very easy to stick out when you are trying to blend in.





## Objective 3: Have a Plan

When the event is occurring...

**RUN!**



# RUN!

Evacuate if there is an accessible path out, including windows. Leave whether others follow or not.

Do not waste time gathering belongings.

Communicate the threat to others on your way out.

DO NOT STOP for others who will not follow or cannot due to injury.

Call 9-1-1 when it is safe to do so and try to talk calmly. They will elicit the proper information they need, starting with location.

If you can't  
run....

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**HIDE!**



# HIDE!

Secure the area you are in if you can by locking doors or blocking them with furniture.

Hide out of view as much as possible.

Make as little noise as possible.

Call 9-1-1 if possible without exposing your hiding place, remain on the line even though you may not be able speak to the operator.

If you can no longer hide...

**FIGHT!**



# FIGHT!

Defend yourself as a last resort.

DO NOT count on an assailant's sense of mercy to save your life; it didn't work for anyone else so it won't work for you!

Utilize any weapon you have available, even improvised weapons.

Act as aggressively as possible against the assailant.

**COMMIT TO ESCAPING ALIVE!**

# Contact with Responding Officers





## What the police are going to do...

Officers may arrive singly or in small groups.

They may be in traditional police uniform, plain clothing, or some variation in between.

The primary objective of the police during an active incident will be to locate, isolate, and eliminate the threat.

The officers will not stop to render first aid or evacuate people until the threat is eliminated.

Rescue teams will follow the initial police response.

# If you encounter any officers...

Follow the officers instructions.

Show that your hands are empty and keep them visible.

Avoid screaming, yelling, or grabbing onto officers.

If you can, quickly provide any information you have like the direction of the assailant or physical description.

If you can, evacuate the direction the officers came from.

# Questions

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Illustrations by Ted Slampyak

