



WHY ME?

A robbery, an assault, or a sudden attack; many individuals response is “Why me?” or “Why is this happening to me?” Such responses might be helpful for staying out of trouble in the future but they do little to help solve the current situation. Why is this and how do we change it?

One needs to understand that our survival drive has been modified in civilized societies to allow us to have better interpersonal interactions. We are taught not to rock the boat or be impolite. For example, a female tourist was taken by a man from a Hawaiian hotel’s lobby to a nearby alleyway; raped and beaten. When asked why she didn’t yell, she said she didn’t want to cause a scene and the man said he wouldn’t hurt her if she went with him. At work we try to figure things out using our brain - solve problems - work around obstacles. Our brains have been reprogramed to respond in a non-violent way. The survival skills of the past have been repressed, which is a good thing in today’s society.

Adrenaline did many positive things for our ancestors - gave them more strength, let more light into their eyes and created more focus (mono-emotion). In the past, our untrained ancestors used this mono-emotion to emphasize their primal nature to survive. Today this mono-emotion locks us in to things that don’t help us solve the problem. We focus on self pity “Why me?” or denial “What present should I get for my child next Christmas?” as if they are the key to solving the problem. But what can we do to change this?

Consider Kelly Horn, a 36 year old Seattle runner who was attacked in a restroom while on her run. She used her self defense war cry “Not today, MotherF***er!” She escaped, but not before sustaining some scraps and all the while inflicting damage to her attacker’s face.

We use our brains, the most powerful survival tool on the planet, to develop a switch for those rare but dangerous times. A switch that kicks in our self defense techniques which includes the decision to run away.

One: Create a battle cry that motivates us. “Not today M__F__.” or “Attack the vital targets.” or whatever speaks to you. This will help flip the switch to engage the attacker fully.

Two: Refine how you approach problems and things you don’t like to do right away. Doing the dishes - attack them right after dinner. Alarm goes off - don’t hit the snooze button - get right up. Given a job - don’t procrastinate or complain - do it right away. Boss yells at you - see it as informative, be unattached to the yelling. Each problem that presents itself is an opportunity to train your mind to solve problems or pretend the don’t exist or wallow in self pity. How you train your mind in every day life is reflected in how you will handle life and death situations. These have been, since the era of the Samurai and for today’s military, training tools to prepare for sudden attacks. Solving the problem.

Three: read about & practice mindfulness.