



## AWARENESS ON THE STREET

♥ Be assertive in your walk, using a firm, steady pace. A passive or fearful walk gives an image of vulnerability and sets you up as the easy target the assailant needs.

♥ Plan your route in advance. Walk in well traveled areas. Avoid bushes, alleys, vacant lots, entryways and short cuts through deserted places. Vary your route home.

♥ Do not allow force or threats to get you into a car. Never get into a car even if someone is pointing a knife or a gun at you from inside. Just start to run away from the car screaming. It's much more likely that he will drive away to find an easier target.

♥ If a driver asks for directions, do not get close to the car. Keep a polite but safe distance.

♥ When using public transportation, sit toward the front of the bus and be aware of the people getting off with you.

♥ Always be alert in parking lots, especially when it's dark. If you are afraid, don't be too shy to ask someone to escort you to your car. Between cars and inside cars, it's easy for someone to hide and wait until an un-alert person comes along.

♥ If a robber asks for your purse, DO NOT HAND IT TO HIM. Toss it away from you. Chances are he is more interested in your purse than you, and he will go for the purse, giving you the opportunity to run screaming like mad in the other direction!

## PURSE SNATCHING



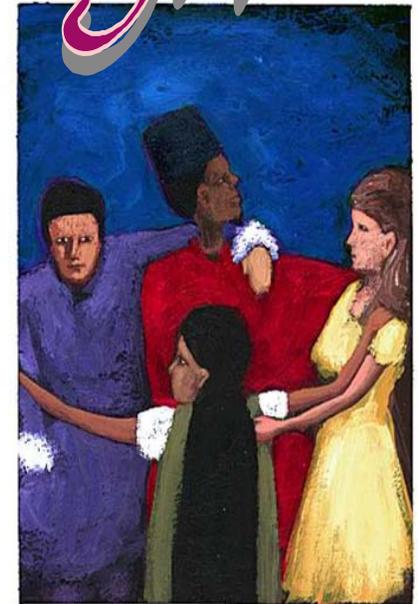
Purse snatching is a crime of opportunity. One way to prevent purse snatching is not to carry a purse, or to carry it in a way that makes it quite inaccessible, such as wearing it under your coat. If you choose to carry a purse, keep a secure grip on it and don't allow it to dangle. Keep fasteners and zippers closed and any openings close to your body. Keeping your purse close to your body and your arm over it makes it a little bit harder for someone to grab the purse. Never leave your purse on a store counter or in a grocery shopping cart – even for a moment. When carrying a purse, women should have only 3 or 4 one dollar bills placed inside. Credit cards, currency, driver's license, keys should be carried in an inside pocket to reduce the opportunity of large losses. If you carry a purse, don't wrap the strap around your shoulder, neck or wrist. If your purse is grabbed, a strong strap will not yield easily and you may be injured or fall. **However, if threatened by a demand for your purse, do not choose your purse over your own safety.**

You might reduce your anxiety about this crime by taking advance steps to minimize its impact -- **never carry anything more valuable than you can afford to lose.**



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## **INCREASING YOUR AWARENESS FOR YOUR PERSONAL PROTECTION**

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Awareness can be a life-saver. Awareness is having or showing realization, perception, or knowledge. It is very important to pay attention at all times to whatever is going on around you. ***It is always better to be safe than sorry!***

### **AWARENESS IN YOUR HOME**

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- ♥ List only initials and last name in the phone book, on mail boxes, doors, etc.
- ♥ THINK every time before you leave your name, address or phone number in public view or give out information regarding your daily routine.
- ♥ When you go on vacation, let a friend know when you leave and when you plan to return so someone is aware if you are missing.
- ♥ Use lights at all entrances, inside and out, and keep your garage well lit. Keep garage door shut and locked at all times.
- ♥ Leave lights on in various parts of the house if you will be coming home after dark. Buy time devices that will activate lights, radios, etc.
- ♥ If you come home and think someone may have been inside (or may still be there) do not enter. Go to a neighbor's house and call the police.
- ♥ If you hear a prowler, turn on all outside lights and call the police. Alert your neighbors.
- ♥ Keep curtains closed and shades down at night.
- ♥ Ask for identification of all service personnel before opening the door. If you

have not requested service, ask for the office phone number and name of dispatcher. First validate the phone number by checking it in the phone directory, then call the office to verify employment. If you have doubts, do not open the door.

- ♥ Do not leave extra house keys in obvious places like under door mats, in flower boxes, above the door, etc. Leave them with a trusted neighbor.
- ♥ Do not allow a stranger in the house to use the phone, regardless of the emergency. Offer to make the call for them.
- ♥ Do not depend on a chain on your door. Use a peephole to check on visitors while keeping the door locked.
- ♥ Close and lock all doors and windows, even if you go to a neighbor's or make a quick trip to the store.
- ♥ Be aware of places attackers might hide, both inside and outside. Trim bushes and shrubbery so no one can hide in them.



### **AWARENESS IN YOUR CAR**

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- ♥ As you walk on your way to your car, look underneath to see if anyone is hiding. Check the interior of your car before getting in. Consider purchasing a small flashlight for checking at night – one that fits on your keychain is ideal.
- ♥ Have your car serviced regularly to avoid breakdown. Keep your gas tank between half and full.
- ♥ Keep a flare and a CALL POLICE sign in your trunk to use in case of emergency.

- ♥ Keep a cell phone charged and in your car. If you do not have a cell phone, make sure that you have a calling card or change for a public phone.
- ♥ Avoid leaving personal objects in open view. Keep all valuables locked in the trunk.
- ♥ Have your keys in your hand and ready to use before you go outside. Fumbling in your purse en route to the car or at the door provides a would-be assailant the opportunity to approach you.
- ♥ Always lock your car when you leave it, even if you're just returning a video, paying for gas or planning to be gone only a short time.
- ♥ Park in well lit areas near your destination. Be aware of anyone in the vicinity of your car in a parking lot. If a van has parked next to your car, enter your car from the other side. Vans are frequently used for abduction.
- ♥ Keep your doors locked and windows rolled up far enough to stop a probing hand, especially in stop-and-go traffic. Keep your car in gear at stop lights.
- ♥ If you discover you are being followed, drive to the nearest police station or open business. Honk your horn repeatedly until you attract attention. **DO NOT DRIVE HOME.**
- ♥ If someone signals from another car that something is wrong with your car or tires, drive to the nearest well lit or crowded area or service station. Do not stop to check your car until the other car has driven away.
- ♥ Never leave keys to your home with car keys when your car is left in a parking lot or at a service or repair station.

