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What are your lines in the sand?

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Will you let a home invader tie you & your wife up? Would you let a carjacker pull you out the car while your kids are in the back? Will you let a couple muggers separate you from your girlfriend?

What are you [willing to allow](#)? What will you let happen to you and your family, and [what will you not](#)?

You need to read the following article by Kathy Jackson. And then reread it. Arguably the best article on personal boundaries (a.k.a. lines in the sand) out there.

The "best" part? Where she's brutally honest about the possibility that she might get her kids killed. Can you make yourself face such thoughts?

[Personal Boundaries](#)

By Kathy Jackson

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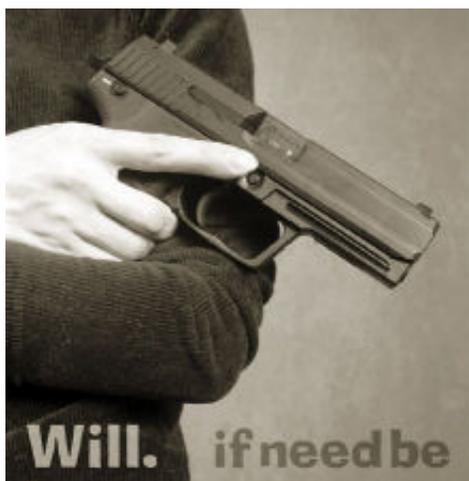
Listed below are some conditions under which I intend to fight back *even if I don't think I can win.*

I have made this list for myself because I understand that the natural thing to do, when something bad happens, is to deny that it is happening: "This can't be happening to me!"

Even if you get past that thought (a lot of victims never do), the other natural tendency is to tell yourself that if you wait, if you do what the other person says, things will get better. The situation will work itself out. All you have to do is cooperate. The attacker will take your wallet, your car keys, whatever, and leave you alone. Just wait, do what he says, and everything will be okay. That's what most people who are attacked tell themselves — and in most cases, that is *exactly* what people should do. Even if you are armed, why kill someone if you don't have to? It's only stuff!

But while waiting for an opening and cooperating with the attacker might be the best survival strategy in many situations, there are a few very specific situations where waiting and cooperating are the worst things the victim can possibly do.

A woman forced into a car by an attacker, for instance, has a 95% or higher chance of getting killed if she complies. Even if it seems highly likely the attacker will kill her right there if she *doesn't* get in the car, the fact is that right at that moment, the odds are the very best they will ever be for her. They might be lousy odds, but they aren't going to get any better. So I have decided, in advance, that if I'm ever in that situation, that's when and where I will fight back *no matter what my frozen brain and in-denial guts are telling me about my odds.*



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Similarly, a man forced into a back room on his knees, with his back to the attacker, has just been put into the execution position. Most of the time, when someone is forced into this position, what comes next is a bullet in the back of the skull. Once you are on your knees, you don't have any more choices left, even if do you suddenly realize what is about to happen. If you're going to save your own life in such a situation, you have to make the choice to fight back *before* you're on your knees.

The purpose of analyzing this stuff beforehand is to make sure that even my frozen brain and my in-denial guts cannot lull me into cooperating if I am ever in one of the extreme places where a victim really needs to fight if she is going to survive. Because I've thought about this stuff in advance, if something like it ever happens, even my frozen brain will have a definite decision point.

Some of my personal boundaries are:

- **I will not go anywhere at gunpoint.** If the bad guy wants me to go somewhere else, it's because he will be able to do something to me *there* that he is unwilling or unable to do to me *right here, right now*. Therefore no matter how bad the tactical situation seems right here and now, right here and now is the absolute best chance to fight back I will ever have and I intend to use it.
- **I will not be tied up.** If the bad guy wants to tie me up, it is because he wants to do things to me that I would be able to prevent if I were not tied up. Therefore, I will resist while I am still able to do so.
- **I will not kneel.** No one is going to execute me. If I die, I'll die fighting.
- **If someone tries to take one of my children, I will fight** even at the risk of my child being killed in the resultant firefight. I plan this not because I have positive assurance that I would be successful, but because I would not be able to live with myself if I simply "allowed" my child to be taken, brutalized, and his body perhaps never found. I'd rather watch him die in front of me. (Yes, that's harsh ... but given those two options and *only* those two, which would you choose?)

My point is *not* that your boundaries should be the same as mine. It is simply that even though you can wait until the very last moment to make the final decision about fighting back, you should have certain things already set into your decision-making machinery beforehand. If you don't, and if you are ever attacked, you may not have enough time to do anything but stand there with your brain frozen solid while your attacker takes all your choices away.