

PreDefence

Self defense before SHTF

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Dealing with the knife

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Gabe Suarez has an article out on dealing with a knife attacker (garden variety criminal or media-seeking terrorist). As always, his thoughts are worth reading. **Especially** for those people that try to dismiss Suarez out of hand.

Parts of this article remind me of the what-is-his-weapon discussion, the knife or the man. Like [Johnny Pain asking](#) something along the lines of "The guy's holding a knife on me, so you want me to shoot him in the knife?"

So read on and learn well. And keep in mind, every man a [counter-terrorist](#).

Here's the repost of Suarez's article, in full, and without permission:

[THE KNIFE AND THE TERRORIST](#)

All weapons are special niche weapons. Some of those niches are larger than others, but in its own world, each weapon rules the day. At ten feet, with a skilled and athletic gunfighter, the knife will not prevail. Make that gunfighter slow and overweight and the scale tips to the knife. Make the distance 21 feet (yes, I have seen the videos), and the fit, athletic skilled gunfighter wins every time – provided he has been properly trained. Change the battlefield and make it in an elevator, a bathroom stall, a confessional, or similar confined space and the knife has the advantage over the most powerful holstered, or drawn pistol.

We live in a time of war, and last week we heard of more jihadist attacks in France. So lets wake up on the matter of blades. You often hear about “surviving the knife attack”. First, that is the wrong attitude. One survives terminal disease, an unprepared night in subzero blizzard conditions, or a plane crash. A fight is something one enters into, willingly or not, with the idea of fighting like a man possessed and with as much evil intent toward your attacker that the words “controlled rage” only begin to describe your mental state. In other words, there are no limits.

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Incorrect assumptions about the knife:

1). The knife man will be unskilled. This comes from the knife prejudice that the knife is the weapon of the fool, the pauper, or the unskilled thug. While there are fools, paupers, and unskilled thugs with knives, the same can be said for the gun world...perhaps more so. Assume the knife man is skilled and experienced. Oh, and as soon as you see what is beginning to happen, move, draw, and send half your magazine into his face. Or, hit him first with whatever you have on hand. Hard for him to stab you if he is on his way down five flights off the balcony trying to get his knife out.

2). You will always get cut: That is like saying in a gunfight, you will always get shot. We know that is not true and it is the same for a knife fight. Is it possible...even likely? Of course, but it is not inevitable. Knowing the probabilities should increase your degree of violence dramatically and rapidly. There is a loose corollary that the more violent you are, the more likely you will win. The longer the fight goes, regardless of weapons, the more likely you will get hurt.

3). The knife man will attack you like in the movies...or (gasp) like in the dojo. When I teach a gun-centric class, I teach the gun guys to maintain the status quo of distance past arm's length. We teach them how to move quickly and dynamically. The reason is simple. The gun can project force whereas the knife must be within touching distance. Our guys defeat the 21 foot rule at 6 feet! But if I was teaching the knife against the gun, I would tell the knifeman to keep the knife out of sight. I would tell him to set the fight up where the gun man was in a confined area such as a hallway, restaurant booth, elevator, etc. Then I would tell him to close surreptitiously and attack suddenly. Don't assume that others haven't figured this out.

Solutions:

1). Learn some hand to hand skills for the zero to five foot realm. The guy with the one second draw that has zero hand to hand skills will die not matter how good a shot he is, or how fast his draw is, if he does not have some way to deflect or nullify the initial attack. Disagree with me? Cool...come to a force on force class and show me. The beauty of today is that we can test everything.

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2). Learn to move. There is no compromise here. A close range knife attack is not an egalitarian event where everyone gets a fucking trophy so their stupid feelings are not hurt. If you are too fat to move, you will lose and you will die. That can be fixed with a little discipline and some dieting, but a severed jugular cannot be fixed. If you can move, you can evade an attack and create the circumstances to access your weapon (pistol or knife). If you cannot move, your firearm will not save you.

3). Consider where you carry. Where can you get to your blaster the fastest? Where can you carry that will allow you to align your pistol on target with minimal preparatory work? Where can you carry so you can draw in a clinch, on your back in the guard, or pushed up against the wall while holding the attacker's knife at bay? Where can you carry so you can draw and kill with either hand? I'm not going to tell you...you need to develop your own answer here.

4). For the guys that won't have a gun, there isn't an easy or clean solution. Listen carefully...there is no secret technique for an unarmed man to defeat a knife attacker. And if you focus on the knife, grabbing for it and hoping the disarm you learned works, well...lets just say we wish you luck. What do you do then? You damage the knife attacker so he thinks about his pain and his self preservation more than stabbing or cutting you. Will you...might you get cut? Maybe...like I said, there is no easy answer.

The knife, like the ground fight, is a reality of possibility. And we keep seeing that our modern enemies like the knife and like its ease of access. To ignore it due to fear, or to make assumptions out of training laziness or physical sloth, is the sure path to failure. Do your study. Gather your intel and data. And then organize your skillsets so that the knifeman is in as much danger from you as you are from him. We live in a time of war, and our enemies use many different weapons.