

Simply the **BST** Crime Survival

A revolutionary self-defense plan
rooted in LOVE and COURAGE!

A healing blend of HEART-TALK
and simple, explicit street fighting
designed specifically for NICE PEOPLE!

Debbie Gardner
“Most *Dangerous* Woman in America”

Simply the BST ... Crime Survival

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Chapter Three

Foundation Repair

TURN “QUICKSAND” ... into “CONCRETE”

Answer these four questions courageously ...

1. Will violent crime exist throughout your lifetime? (... **Yes!**)
2. Even though you are “careful and aware,” do you admit that you could someday face unpreventable violence? (... **“Yes!”**)
3. At that exact moment in your life, who is 100% responsible for taking care of you? (...uncomfortable pause ... **“ME!”**)
4. What do you *specifically* know to do to save your life, especially if your assailant is intoxicated and armed? (**“Not sure!” “Not much!” “NOTHING!”** ...)

NOTHING! NOTHING!! NOTHING!!! When asked bluntly, too many law-abiding citizens admit they know **NOTHING SPECIFIC** to help them save their own life, especially against an armed, intoxicated assailant! How do I know? I ASK! Typical answers are in parenthesis above!

Each time I hear the response **“NOTHING!”** my blood boils and my passion for this subject soars! The time has come to publicly challenge conventional wisdom. Clearly, most crime prevention rhetoric is not connecting with the needs of law abiding citizens! Maybe it is time to THROW AWAY the majority of those well-intended crime prevention handouts filled with generic data.

Don't get me wrong. The professionals who write, distribute and teach generic “safety tips” and “self-defense” ideas are decent, caring people. Their generic message is not totally wrong, it's just totally out-of-date for today's needs... especially in times of terrorism and serious crime waves.

You and other law-abiding citizens already know the importance of generic “awareness” comments. In fact, you have heard them so much that you are sick of hearing them ... and still afraid. What you want and rarely hear ... is the emphasis of your RIGHTS as well as specific survival choices if your **BST** awareness and prevention isn’t enough!

Not only do you want and need righteous, backbone-straightening choices, so does our youth! Times have changed! Most teenagers now wonder about terrorism ... as well as violence, drugs and guns in their schools.

From kindergarten through college, the specific safety guidance offered students is old worn-out “tips” that continue to avoid the new crime issues of our times. Teenagers *want* and *need* to know what to do with a gun at their head. Unfortunately, updated safety brochures continue to offer only “updated graphics” highlighting the usual safety tips taught by a “cartoon-character crime prevention DOG!” AHHHHHH!

Would we tolerate students learning AIDS prevention from a brochure starring a “cartoon-character AIDS prevention CAT?” Of course not!

Students generally don’t like safety talks or traditional safety/crime prevention programs. Can you guess why? Maybe it’s the same reason adults don’t them: they feel insulted and talked down to. I know ... because I ASK!

I listened to a sixth grader recently at an elementary school safety program. She saw the *crime dog puppet* on my demonstration table and asked if I was going to talk about “him.” I said: “*No, actually I make fun of him.*” She said, “*Good, because when I see that crime dog, I just turn my ears off!*”

TRADITIONAL SAFETY (TIPS) TRAP

How many times have you read or heard (... or said) the following:

- ALWAYS know your surroundings
- ONLY park under lights
- DON'T walk alone
- NEVER talk to strangers
- ALWAYS use your COMMON SENSE

Well, brace yourself for the truth! It is **not possible** for you to live your life and NEVER walk alone, NEVER talk to strangers, ALWAYS know your surroundings, and ONLY park under street lights, etc. Let me be blunt about something else, preventing and/or surviving crime usually takes **UN-COMMON SENSE**, not common sense! In fact, the choices law-abiding citizens need to survive violent crime are not “common” ... they are “disgusting.”



FASCINATING IDEA:

*Let’s recycle those traditional crime prevention handouts by giving them to people who **NEED** behavior restrictions ... **all CRIMINALS leaving jail**. They are the one who should **NEVER** walk alone, **NEVER** talk to strangers, **ONLY** park in well-lit areas, etc. They are the ones who need to use **COMMON SENSE** to replace their **CRIMINAL SENSE!***



“Go ahead and ask me, I know all about judges, lawyers, plea bargaining, probation, legal loopholes ...

Like most law-abiding citizens, you generally respect and follow society’s rules. You don’t litter, run red lights, make annoying or excessive noises, etc. Yet, there have been many times when you had to put yourself in possible danger or *risk* to fulfill a legitimate *need*. Do you remember feeling scared and hearing the voices of loved ones in your mind **WARNING YOU** with doubt and guilt: *“You shouldn’t be here! You are really asking for it now!”*

Well, that’s **QUICKSAND!** It doesn’t matter how big or strong you are. If attacked in that state of mind, you probably will lose because you “internally beat yourself up with guilt ... before a criminal even touches you!”

A quicksand foundation is reality for many people because we are a 24/7 society now. More and more people work long hours, late shifts, attend night-school and travel alone ... thereby surrounding themselves with strangers in darkness. Loved ones forget to compliment the positive results created by all this perseverance and determination. They prefer to sabotage the risk taker's natural strength and courage by the constant warnings of danger.

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS ... A GUILT MACHINE

Years before law-abiding citizens become the victim of a violent crime, many become victims of **learned helplessness** and **assumed vulnerability**. Decades of conditioning have produced traditional safety wisdom that now has three generations of people believing that their natural strengths and skills are limited, and certainly **not equal** to their attacker. This is especially true for women and teenagers. Traditional safety wisdom also implies that *our* behavior contributes significantly to the problem and *we* must adjust *our* lifestyles to “avoid” crime at all times.

If a crime occurs, traditional safety wisdom sometimes appears to imply that our choice put us in a vulnerable position and therefore “**we asked for it...**” by failing to follow those simple *common-sense safety tips*. Some refer to this as *Victim Blaming*.

Traditional safety wisdom ignores the reality that **law-abiding citizens need to take risks everyday in order to fulfill their personal and professional responsibilities.**

The price tag of impractical and unreasonable “safety tips” is a toxic poison called **GUILT!** Yes, **GUILT.** No matter what the circumstances are, if you are attacked, others will **should** all over you. Why? Because it is what they were *programmed* to do.

I hear the pain of guilt-driven judgment over and over again from heroes (survivors) of crime. Too often, well-meaning people, especially family members, emotionally **stab** survivors with negative judgment during a time that they most need loved ones to just LISTEN and give non-verbal, positive support. What instrument is used for the emotional stab? The reminder of those unrealistic “safety tips” of course!

Example:

A college student is attacked while walking to a night class, after work. She reacts brilliantly, prevents rape, saves her own life, and has her assailant arrested.

Because she is bruised, the police take her to the hospital. Initially, loved ones greet her with hugs and kisses. Words of relief are short lived. By the time she leaves the emergency room, she is **ATTACKED AGAIN!** This time it is by the loved one(s) who can no longer hold back their programmed judgment:

*“Don’t you think you **SHOULD** have...” (STAB)*

“Honey, why didn’t you...(STAB)

*“Haven’t I told you many times you should **NEVER ...?**” (STAB)*



Twenty-five years as a “courage coach” has taught me one absolute reality. When crime survivors seek therapy, it is usually to recover from their hidden pain ... their SECOND attack (STABS) ... the guilt-based judgment, *intended* or *unintended*, from loved ones and friends.

Many survivors cover up their broken heart by saying “*the attack still bothers me.*” What they mean is the SECOND (judgment) attack! Loved ones assume they mean the “criminal’s attack.” In an attempt to offer more comfort, loved ones accidentally give more “judgment commentary” like:

*“Well, you’ve learned a valuable lesson ...
and I’m sure you’ll make necessary changes.”*

Hearing words like that, survivors withdraw further, saying:

“I don’t want to talk about it anymore...”

What survivors wish they could say is:

*“SHUT UP! I did the best I could!. You weren’t there.
It wasn’t my fault!
STOP JUDGING ME!”*

This misidentification of the real problem (judgment attacks) creates a vicious cycle of miscommunication and unbelievable, long term pain.

When I have the privilege of coaching crime survivors, I always ask, “Which hurts worse ... pain from the attacker or pain from your loved ones and friends?” Almost always, their reply is: “Pain from loved ones and friends.” They are shocked that I know to ask the question.

Some survivors don’t even realize that the SECONDARY ATTACK is the source of their un-describable, un-escapable pain ... until I ask the question. Other survivors are so filled with guilt, that actually feel they *deserve* the secondary pain and judgment. Now that is cement shoes on their feet!



GUILT is a huge, truly destructive disease. Unlike a crime which lasts only seconds, minutes or hours, GUILT lasts for weeks, months, years ... and often entire lifetimes! As crime survivors struggle in *quicksand*, they often fight depression while recycling those fresh reminders of common sense “safety tips” (followed perfectly by everyone who has NEVER been attacked...) and they get sadder, madder and sicker every day.

With happiness and trust lost in many areas of their life, crime survivors now feel stupid, scared, helpless, and insulted. A new, sometimes chronic dis-ease is born, called “Fear of Crime.” In some cases, “Fear of Crime” grows into “Fear of Everything”...

If not treated effectively, the “Fear of Crime” dis-ease quickly

destroys short term and long term goals and dreams. It also destroys friendships, health and happiness. Small pleasures like walking in a park, going on vacation, visiting friends, sitting on a porch, volunteering in the community, etc. seem almost sinful ... because that type of risky behavior could... *invite crime again.*

Our Country's widespread "Fear of Crime" ... is rooted in the poison of **GUILT** and it is absolutely making survivors of crime ... and law-abiding citizens ... **SICK!** In my opinion, the "Fear of Crime" is a much larger problem, than "crime" itself.

IS IT SEXISM, DOUBLE STANDARDS or an ACCIDENT?

With few exceptions, women are "wired to weakness" more severely than men. Their foundations are more likely rooted in quicksand because historically, women are raised with more traditional safety rules and restrictions than men. In fact, what you have read up until now has probably *blown you out of your chair* if you are a woman, and may have *bored you to death* if you are a man.

Look, I am not a feminist or an angry woman. I just report the truth that I see. Guilt driven "safety tips" are programmed **LOUDER** and **MORE CONSISTENTLY** in women than men, even in these so called modern and equal times.

Example:

Most parents talk about “safety” very differently to their teenaged daughters than they do their teenaged sons. After 4 to 8 years of high school and/or college, male and female graduates compete for “equal” jobs and “equal” pay that involve “equal risks”... travel, airports, strangers, darkness, parking lots, late working hours, elevators, cab rides, etc.

Who is better prepared to face risk as a successful graduate in the adult work force? Who more likely received the language of confidence and freedom during the formidable, young adult years? Who, at age 22 ... is safer?



Daughters? ... who are usually programmed with language emphasizing limitations and the “fear of everything” because as a young woman:

“You’re too trusting!”

“You’re too sweet!”

“Look how much smaller you are!”

“I just don’t like where you’re going.”

“Parking lots are DANGEROUS!”

“Girls are just more vulnerable!”

“Someone might take advantage of you!”

“You always think it is going to happen to someone else!”

“You are so naive!”

or

Sons? ...who are programmed with language of freedom and the “assumption” they can handle anything:

“Just do it”

“Just use your head!”

“Get out there!”

“You’ll find a way!”

“Hey, No problem. You can handle it!”

“Heads up out there!”

“Make it happen!”

“Take good care of her...”

All this programming *in the name of safety* is so subtle and so damaging. Too often young women start their careers on a foundation rooted in (safety) **weakness** which can become career **“quicksand.”** By contrast, young men have a better chance to start their careers on a foundation rooted in (safety) **strength** which leads to career **“concrete.”**

As women try to break the glass ceiling of opportunity in corporate ladder climbing, maybe the problem is not really the “ceiling” but the subtle weakness of their “quicksand” foundation.

Example:

A few years ago, I received a call from a lady doctor from a Children’s Hospital whose work required her to leave the hospital all hours of the day and night. Responding to my comments on TV about women’s careers often rooted in safety “quicksand,” she told me (fighting back tears) that her mother was driving her crazy, bragging about “My Daughter the Doctor...” It went something like this:

“Oh, I’m so proud of my daughter. But I worry about her so much. You know she’s a doctor. She heals children with cancer. She saves lives. But, I HATE IT WHEN SHE WORKS NIGHT SHIFT. One of these days, somebody is going to get her in that parking lot!”



That’s it! QUICKSAND!!! This mom believes her doctor-daughter can save children’s lives *on the inside the building*, but she’s not capable of saving her own life *outside the building*.

Gently, I asked the doctor: “Set personal safety aside a

minute. What would it mean to your CAREER ... if your mother would say:

‘Oh, I’m so proud of my daughter. She works day and night saving children from cancer. I’ll tell you this, only a fool would attack her in the parking lot. She’d WIN! ... because that girl is focused and determined in everything she does.’

“Oh, my mom would never say that!” was the doctor’s response.

“That’s not what I asked,” I replied. *“What would it mean to your CAREER if your mom believed in your ability unconditionally?”*

After a long pause, she said: “It would make a huge difference. Mom obviously believes my strengths are limited to medicine. On a bad day ... sometimes I believe my strengths are limited too. I fight negative self-talk more than I want to admit ... yes, secret self-doubt has held me back in many ways.”

I suggested that the doctor *forgive* her mom. Then I asked her to picture **unrealistic safety rhetoric** as a form of emotional cancer secretly eating away at her career, health, happiness ... and yes, her safety.

I offered this basic advice: *“I know you are busy, but please take a little time to learn our **BST** message. Then, teach it to your mother for her safety. Be theatrical and make sure she sees, hears, and feels your natural power and confidence. Be realistic. Your mom is from the ‘old school’ and may be unwilling or unable to change her thinking.”*

“Your mom has been programmed to say ‘I worry about you.’ She believes it is just another way of saying ‘I care and I LOVE YOU.’ What mom’s (and dad’s) don’t understand is that their adult children interpret ‘I worry about you’ as ‘...I don’t trust your ability.’”

*“This is such a common communication problem in families ... and it is so hurtful. Ultimately, all you can do is CHANGE YOU! Choose to interpret your mom’s ‘worry’ as ‘love’... then let it be. Please, do not recycle this toxic safety communication with your children. Help me teach our next generation **safety willpower and tools**, not excessive worry and rules.”*

Family safety is interesting. Have you ever seen weak daughters become weak wives and strong sons become strong husbands? Do most strong husbands you know encourage and support their weak wives to seek personal growth and emotional freedom? Do they support their wife’s need to travel for their job, attend night meetings, etc.? Or, are most husbands you know, programmed to innocently enforce **limits and doubts**, like their father did to their mother a generation ago. And why did this happen? ... Fear of Crime!

Dare I suggest that in some families, *intentionally or un-intentionally*, SAFETY is not always about “safety” ... sometimes it grows into “Fear of Change” or C-O-N-T-R-O-L?

In an atmosphere of serious miscommunication and emotional pain, is it possible that in some marriages, constant “safety/control” conflicts lead to serious fighting and divorce? You bet it does!

Example:

A few years ago, I was the opening speaker in the Cleveland Convention Center with thousands of men and women in the audience. At the end of the day, I was buying T-shirts across the street in the “Rock and Roll Hall of Fame” gift shop. A man bumped me reaching for a shirt, and apologized. Then, he recognized me as the morning speaker. He stunned me with his feedback. It went something like this:

“I bought your video tape and called my wife immediately after your presentation this morning. I told her that tomorrow night when I get home, the first thing we are going to do is watch your video together ... because we need to change. Debbie, you have probably saved my marriage.”

“Really?” I said. *“What do you mean?”*

*“You got through to me. I get it now. My wife has been trying to tell me this stuff for months but her words didn’t make sense. She always says ‘I am **smothering** her.’ She’s even threatened to leave me because of it.”*

“Wow...” I said. *“You really did listen deeply, didn’t you?”* His eyes started to “sweat.” (That’s a police code-word for cry!)

“Do you see the scar on my face?” he asked. I shook my head “yes.” It was huge, from outside his left eye down to the corner of his lip. *“I did that to*

myself in a motorcycle accident when I was 16. Every morning when I shave, I think to myself, **‘If anyone ever scars my beautiful wife like this, I know I will go ballistic!’** I just worry so much about her. She is so kind and beautiful ... and naive.”

“How old are you and your wife, and when did you get married?” I asked.

“We are both 30 years old and have been married two years.”

“So your naïve wife functioned successfully, on her own, through four years of college and six years as a single attractive woman. And, you fell in love with that strong, independent woman ... right?” I asked.

“Right!” he replied.

“Then you put a wedding ring on her finger, and assumed her strength, independence, personal power and courage went out the church door ... because marriage put you in charge! Now, it’s **your job** to protect her! Right?”

“Oh, you are so right. But it’s because I know she doesn’t really have any idea of how to protect herself. I thought only I knew what to do. Then this morning, you made me realize that what I knew was pretty weak, especially compared to your **BST** message.”

“So what you are saying is, even though she has NEVER been attacked, your fear for her safety is destroying your marriage, right?” I asked.

“Yes. That’s why I can’t thank you enough. I believe what you teach. I believe I can do it. What’s most important, I believe my wife can do it. It’s simple!

We're going to watch the video together and talk. If she feels she can do what you teach, I'm going to back off and stop worrying so much. You made me realize she needs my support, not my rules."

"WOW!" I said as I hugged him. "This is BIG! I am so happy that our paths crossed and that you had the courage to tell me your story. I believe you speak for more marriages than just your own."

"I really want to have kids, Debbie, but she keeps saying 'No way would I bring a child into the world with a hyper, over-reactive, worry-wart father like you.' So, if we get like through this ... and have kids, you'll be responsible for that, too. Thanks again."

The convention meeting planners listed our seminar as "Self Defense." For that incredible businessman, it was much, much more.

Do you want more evidence of **double standards** in traditional “safety” conditioning?

While visiting the dentist or the doctor, search for and compare the **frequency** and **content** of “self-defense articles and safety tips” in common men’s and women’s magazines. You’ll be fascinated, especially by these two observations I’ve made:

1. Self-defense articles are hard to find in common men’s magazines.

Self-defense “tips” and feature articles appear annually in most women’s magazines.

2. Content comparison (if found) can be comical. Blatant example: It is common for women to be encouraged NOT to wear neck scarves, string-type jewelry or long strapped purses because of the ease of “strangulation” during an attack. Yet, NEVER have I ever read that men should avoid wearing standard “neck-ties.” Obviously, neckties are tight around the neck and can strangle men easily with one slight tug (... which is why police officers wear “clip-on” ties!)



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Consider adapting these rarely spoken, fundamental empowerment principles to immediately strengthen your foundation from “quicksand” to “concrete”:



- As a law-abiding, tax-paying adult man or woman of this great Country, you have the technical **RIGHT** to go anywhere you need to go, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! (**Of course, minors under 18 are subject to family rules and community curfews and restrictions**).

- FREEDOM does not guarantee that your life will be risk-free! Most of your everyday living will involve low risk choices. Yet someday, a high risk choice may be unavoidable and hopefully survivable. This is life. **NOT ALL CRIMES ARE PREVENTABLE!**

- **Your personal safety is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY ... 100% of the time.** It is your job to at least TRY to save yourself!

When you choose **high** risk ...
You are accepting **high** responsibility.
RISK and RESPONSIBILITY are partners!

- **Everything you need to TRY to save your life ... you already have.**

That's right ... extraordinary courage, strength, morale backbone, wisdom, power, insight ... it's all in you. Maybe you have not seen it in yourself because there has been too much toxic waste (negative thinking and guilt) covering it up.

Soon you will learn that if you can reach for a can of soda in your refrigerator, YOU CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE, including weapon attacks!

conditioning, limiting beliefs, and unrealistic “safety tips” given to you in the past by well-meaning people. Choose to focus on what you CAN do, not what you CAN’T do ... when facing a crisis.

- Restrict the mindless use of **absolute words** in *your* everyday language, especially when teaching safety to children. The use of “Don’t, Always, Never, etc.” in safety education needs to be limited, fair and reasonable. If you say never ... mean NEVER! Example:

“*NEVER talk to strangers*” is NOT reasonable.
“*Use caution talking to strangers*” is reasonable.

“*Always park under lights*” is NOT reasonable.
“*It’s a good idea to park under good lighting*” is reasonable.

- Gently correct people who carelessly put **absolute words** all over you. Example: Response to your parent/spouse if he/she disapproves of your need to walk in parking lots alone:

*“I walk with others whenever possible. However, no one has my exact schedule, especially when I work late. **I can handle myself.** If you really want me to help me be safe, I need your gift of belief in my ability, not your doubt and worry. Your words play in my head when I’m afraid.”*

“The next time I am frightened, do you want your words to give me strength ... or ... guilt?”

- Look over the written safety policy at your school or place of employment. Are **absolute words** used fairly? Respectfully ask for an update of old, unrealistic safety tips. Example:

During my first year as a personal safety consultant, a security director from a major corporation called me a week after my seminar with a complaint:

“Gardner, your seminar has just cost this company thousands of dollars!”

“What?” I asked, totally confused.

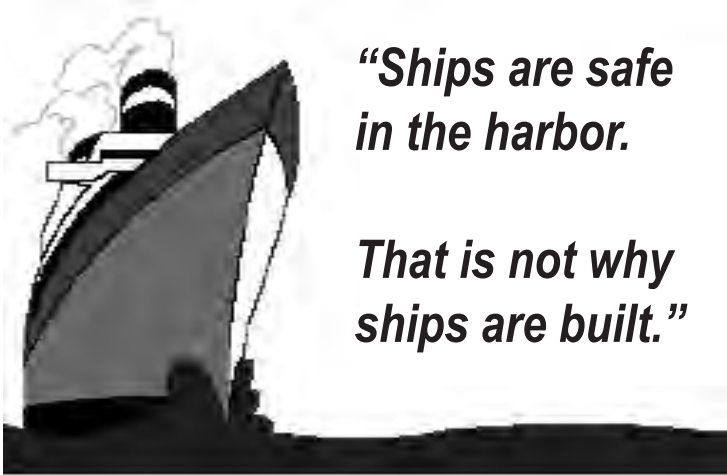
“Well,” he said, “we just threw out 10,000 personal safety booklets which were recently printed for our traveling sales force. Until we heard your message, it never crossed our minds that we were sending our sales reps, alone, all over the world ...with safety information that was in direct conflict with their need to perform their job.”

“You know, the traditional stuff ... ‘don’t walk alone, don’t talk to strangers’ ...all the things you said that had us laughing in your seminar. So, this morning, we threw them all away. I just thought you’d like to know!”

What delightful feedback! One man listened and created significant change for thousands! His company’s safety rhetoric was improved with realistic safety choices adjusted to reflect our **BST** message!

- Accept that everyone needs the same, simple self-defense tools when facing crime, regardless of size, sex, age or physical strength. Effective self-defense needs to be considered a life skill that everyone learns **accurately**, like basic first aid and fire safety.

Now that your emotional foundation is solid **CONCRETE**, my **BST** crime survival message will empower you with crime prevention and survival principles that you can use immediately and remember forever!



***“Ships are safe
in the harbor.***

***That is not why
ships are built.”***

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