

Why self-defence for emergency workers?

By Morné Mommsen, BED HRD (NWU), Midvaal Fire and Rescue and Warrior Combative

Since the last article was published, a steep increase in attacks occurred all over South Africa and even internationally. Different entities in South Africa promote visual aids on social media trying to stop violence against emergency services but the reality is that no one (you as an emergency worker) is actually doing anything about this problem because the person (attacker) with this type of outlook (existentialist's belief) in life only objective will be to hurt, steal and kill or whatever feed the need and this will never change.

As previously postulated, people (bystanders) will rather take a video of an emergency/law enforcement member being

assaulted or killed because of his/her social media craving before attempting to help the emergency/law enforcement member.

Existentialism is a philosophy concerned finding oneself and the meaning of life through free will, choice and personal responsibility. The belief is that people are searching to find out whom and what they are throughout life as they make choices based on their experiences, beliefs and outlook. And personal choices become unique without the necessity of an objective form of truth. An existentialist believes that a person should be forced to choose and be responsible without the help of laws, ethnic rules or traditions.

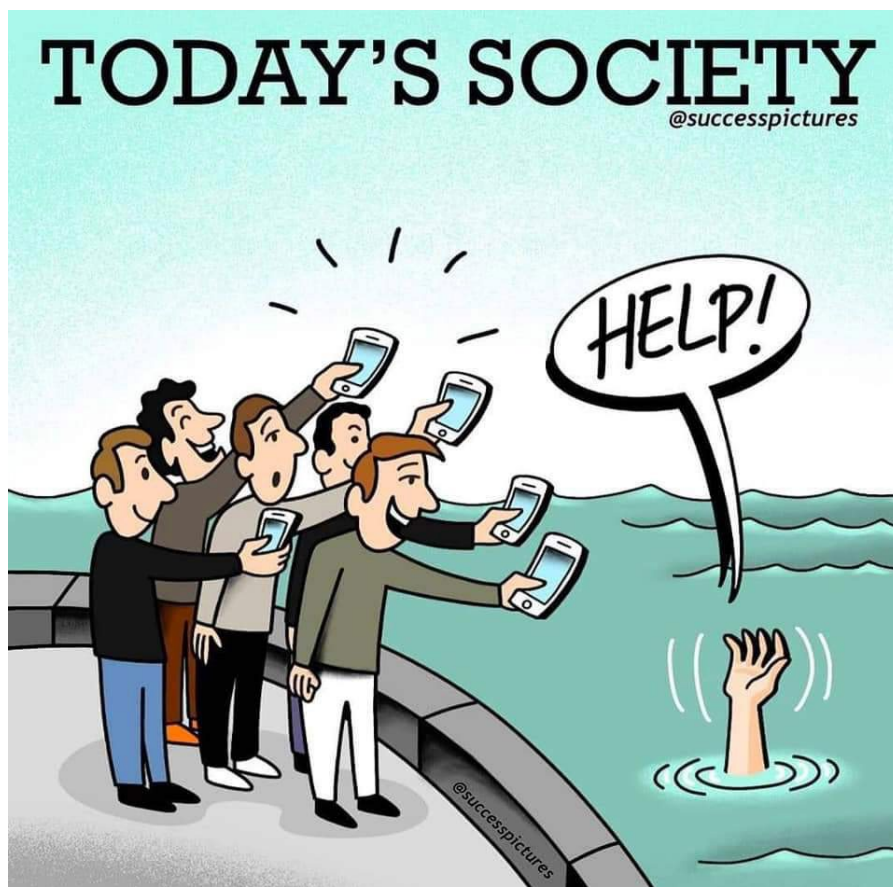
Most importantly, it is the arbitrary act that existentialism finds most objectionable, that is, when someone or society tries to impose or demand that their beliefs, values or rules be faithfully accepted and obeyed. Existentialists believe this destroys individualism and makes a person become whatever the people in power desire thus they are dehumanised and reduced to be an object. Existentialism then stresses that a person's judgment is the determining factor for what is to be believed rather than by arbitrary religious or secular world values. "The will to survive sometimes blind the act to commit a crime" (Mommsen,2018).

Start asking yourself the following questions:

- Can I really protect myself and my love ones?
- If you carry a firearm, can you really use it? (In documented proof, the ability for a trained person to take the firearm away from the one pointing it is easy and can be accomplish in less than two seconds; chew on this proven fact).
- If you are surrounded by more than one assailant do you really know what to do?
- Do you know how to protect yourself against any type of edge weapons?

If the answer in no to even one of the above, then you are not even close to be able to protect yourself or in fact anyone.

As an instructor who has been in the martial arts long enough to understand this and who has 30 years' service experience in the fire and rescue department, I feel I should share the following with you. ▶



Self-defence



- ▶ Emergency members need to get regular training in some-kind of self-defence system. I signify myself with Warrior Combative International and Mile High Kickboxing - Shidokan who specialises in the Krav Maga System, Kickboxing and have written consent on a National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) Self-Defence Course designed for the purpose of defending oneself against the reality of the street.

It really takes hard work and dedication to be able to defend yourself and I can promise you, nothing comes easy in today's world of mixed martial arts. A question before we continue, if someone in the martial art world who is a good fighter in the cage, battle to defend him/herself in the street, what will you that don't have or think you have the skills, do in a real one-on-one or multiple attacker fight?

You need to start with a programme that will assist you to concentrated

on awareness, communication skills, basic stances, target areas, how to plan escape routes, how to control the fight and flight effects and if all fails one-on-one fighting skills, multiple attacker fighting skills, knife fighting skills, firearm skills and so much more and remember, nothing in life is for free or come easy.

On so many occasions training programmes and skills development with regards to self-defence for emergency members was send and introduced to various departments, entities and everyone always reply with a "Wow" or "What a good idea" or "We must make this a priority", for how long do you as management want to make it a non-priority skill or do we first need to wait till the first emergency member pass away or get raped or go missing. In fact, you all take note of the medic that was killed.

No pamphlet, YouTube video, standard operating procedures

(SOPs) or a member from your management environment will be able to protect you; but preparing yourself with physical and mental skill will provide you with the ability to avoid a situation and, if needed, protecting yourself, partner, family or even patient(s) against a physical attacks.

This is not only for emergency workers but include law enforcement, hospital staff, clinic staff, office environment people, general workers, school children, university students or whoever need that personal confident to act.

Get yourselves enrolled in a self-defence system and keep on training. It does not matter how difficult it becomes, "Bleed in training, victory in battle".

"Curriculum is only the blueprint, how to implement and survive it, is Self-defence"

Basic recommended needs for a person? (To be implemented and supplied as personal PPE).

- Proper planned long-term self-defence training programme, which include a daily fitness programme
- Bullet proof (no reflective on it), including training how to use a bulletproof to your advantage in a fight
- Strong and durable waterproof flashlight (high lumens with strobe) fitted on bullet proof for easy use
- Proper multi-purpose axe with belt (Titan crash axe for emergency services only, if properly trained)
- Pepper spray fitted on bullet proof for easy use
- Proper expandable baton fitted on belt or bullet proof for easy use
- Duke pepper and sonic grenade that is fitted on bullet proof to be use as needed
- Body cam fitted on bullet proof.

If interested in any form of assistance please contact us via email:
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