

## **Intimidation (aka the “oh Shit” factor):**

This weekend was the Nanaimo Chapter of the Hells Angelø annual ride into Victoria to commemorate the death of one of their leaders several years ago. One of the first things that I noticed, was that several members of the group were wearing full-face helmets that were designed to look like human skulls. I noted that several people upon seeing these helmets (both LEOø and civilians), immediately succumbed to their implied intentí í INTIMIDATION !!!!!

Throughout the ages; groups, organizations, gangs, armies, and individuals have used the art of intimidation to their advantage. Through clothing, jewellery, make-up, body tattooing, and other accessories, people are hoping that the ÷visualö impact of their presence, will illicit the ÷shock and aweö needed to psychologically intimidate (control) their intended target(s). For those who use this tactic, the fight has already been won way before the first strike is even launched. Remember, the mind guides the body. If your threat can cause you to go into a state of hypervigilance because of the way they look, then they are in control.

Not only can intimidation be visual, but it can also be audible, and physical in nature. It should also be understood that it is not uncommon for an aggressor to utilize all three forms of intimidation at once, thus overwhelming oneø senses in a coordinated psychological and physical barrage.

Intimidation, either real or implied, is a tool that many have used (including myself in my job as an LEO) quite successfully to win the fight. Knowing this, how can we as instructors, teacher, coaches, and students best prepare ourselves for dealing with intimidation ????

- Understand intimidation for what it is; a psychological tool designed to elicit the "negative" fear emotion in you, the intended target
- Understand that you, the intended victim, can control the negative consequences of the fear emotion that intimidation is designed to elicit, thus being able to use the emotion of fear in a positive rather than negative way. Please refer to my article on using fear as your ally located at:

<http://members.shaw.ca/tmanifold/fear.htm>

- Design scenario based training sessions that utilize all forms of intimidation thus creating a "psychological inoculation" to its intended purpose and effects.
- Do some soul searching. What forms of intimidation have you faced in the past, or are most frightened of, that have caused you to go into a state of hypervigilance. Use Combative Based Action Imagery to visualize yourself confronting these situations in a positive (desirable) way. Please refer to my article on Combative Based Action Imagery located at:

[http://members.shaw.ca/tmanifold/combative\\_based.htm](http://members.shaw.ca/tmanifold/combative_based.htm)

To me, the Angels that wore these masks were not the real physical threat that most believed they were. Yes, given their association to their club they warranted closer scrutiny and heightened awareness, but like a dog, their bark was worse than their bite. IMO, the real dangers were from those members who blended into the crowd, kept a low profile, and did not hide behind a mask. To me, the masks showed a sign of weakness rather than a sign of strength or intimidation.

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