

## LIVING A SAFETY LIFESTYLE

Lifestyle choices abound in modern society. There are those that choose to live a healthy lifestyle, whereby they strive to eat only foods that are deemed nutritious and to exercise regularly. There are hedonistic lifestyles whereby folks strive to satisfy their every desire the moment it comes to them, all with disregard for the future consequences of their choices. Some lifestyles are rooted in service to their god, with the hopes of converting others and to ensure a desirable place in the afterlife. Then there are lifestyles such as minimalism that strive to simplify spending and consumption to achieve some semblance of balance against society's push to think otherwise. "Lifestyle" means to base one's thoughts, attitudes, and choices around a particular way of looking at the world. So what exactly is a "safety lifestyle?" What thoughts, attitudes, and choices make up a safety lifestyle?

**"CHANGE YOUR THINKING, CHANGE YOUR LIFE"**  
- Feather Stone

Thinking in the context of a safety lifestyle involves constantly contemplating every situation that you are in to identify what can hurt you or hurt others around you. This is no different than if you adopt a healthy eating lifestyle and you are constantly aware of how everything that goes into your mouth affects your weight. In a safety lifestyle you are constantly striving to avoid choices that can create unsafe conditions for you or for someone else. It means, for example, that you would not leave a spilled liquid on the floor so that someone else could slip on it. So the key here is that you are not going to make yourself responsible for getting hurt or hurting someone else.

**"ATTITUDE IS A LITTLE THING THAT MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE"**  
- Winston Churchill

The fundamental attitude that is found in a safety lifestyle is that you view every accident or unintended consequence as being completely preventable. Once this attitude is adopted it is not possible to go into any situation without taking account of the role of your decisions or the decisions of others in any outcome. Except for rare natural events or truly random events, you realize that everything that happens to anyone is a result of a choice that was made by someone. Accidents are very deterministic in that regard. A person adopting a safety lifestyle will always be asking what you can do to prevent and survive any situation and you will always assess the choices that others have made.

**"LIFE IS ABOUT CHOICES. SOME WE REGRET, SOME WE'RE PROUD OF.  
SOME WILL HAUNT US FOREVER. THE MESSAGE – WE ARE WHAT WE CHOSE TO  
BE."**  
- Graham Brown

Living a safety lifestyle vectors all choices so that they reside in the realm of taking only survival risks or ordinary risks. Recall in my book, UNSAFE, that survival risks are the risks that one must take in order to survive (like eating) and ordinary risks are risks that are deemed as reasonable given one's profession or activities (like riding a bike). Further, the

choices in a safety lifestyle strive to eliminate all risks that fall into the unnecessary category. Recall from my book, UNSAFE, that unnecessary risks are those risks that are taken purely for the sake of taking them without a real benefit (like recreational skydiving or riding a motorcycle without a helmet). Indeed, in a safety lifestyle, all choices are bounded by these risk categories. Knowing that choices lead to consequences, good or bad, is sufficient motivation to avoid unnecessary risks. I recently listened to a podcast interview on the Tim Ferris show with Arnold Schwarzenegger. In his movie contracts, as is typical for all movie stars, Arnold was restricted from partaking in any unnecessary risks, including activities such as skydiving, scuba diving, and motorcycle riding. Why is this? It is because the people paying for the production of the movie don't want to lose their investment in Arnold. If Arnold were to get killed in the middle of producing the movie, then millions of dollars would be lost. The investors know full well that there is no point in taking unnecessary risks with their money, and that translates into Arnold not taking unnecessary risks with his life, health, and looks. Now imagine if we all thought like that how much less injury there would be in the world caused by unnecessary risks!

“RIGHT NOW I’VE GOT JUST TWO RULES TO LIVE BY. RULE ONE: DON’T TAUNT ELEPHANTS. RULE TWO: DON’T STAND NEXT TO ANYBODY WHO TAUNTS ELEPHANTS”

- Sergeant Schlock (Howard Tayler)

You will notice that a safety lifestyle fits in nicely with any other positive lifestyle choice. However, a safety lifestyle ups the game by extending safety beyond physically getting hurt or killed and by simplifying how you approach a lifestyle choice. If instead of just focusing on health in a health lifestyle, you focus on protection and survival of your body, and you elevate your thinking beyond merely counting calories or doing more pushups. A safety lifestyle choice gives you the perspective of a holistic approach to self-preservation in terms of health, money, stress, happiness, and longevity. For example, if you are healthy you will save money on medical care. It is this approach that allows you have as much respect for mishandling a 5000 lb elephant and extending that to handling a 5000 lb car. Both the elephant and the car and easily kill you can cause a lot of physical damage if you mishandle it, but for some reason we are more easily respectful of the elephant! This is where human nature fails us. When we text and drive are essentially taunting a car accident to happen. Yet no one of right mind would taunt an elephant into an attack. When you adopt a safety lifestyle you will begin to see the life consequences equivalence of the elephant and the car. Both can kill you, cost you a lot of money, and cause a lot of stress if mishandled. It is all one in the same.

Check out my safety books and other safety resources and information at <http://www.markkowaleski.com> for more insights to guide you on your journey to living a healthier, wealthier, happier, and more successful life.

Remember: keep TABs on your safety: Think safe, Act Safe, Be safe!

- Mark M. Kowaleski