



## Rise, Shine and Go, Girl!

'Shine Theory' was coined by two friends Aminatou Sow and Ann Friedman in 2013. Both women describe 'Shine Theory' as the idea that "I don't shine, if you don't shine." We want to use the same collaborative approach to shine a light on safety for women and girls. We believe that if just one woman helps another woman stay safe, all women will benefit.

This guide, developed by the Richmond Safer Neighbourhood Board, has been refined by women for women and girls. It aims to awaken women and girls to channelling the survival skills and instincts that we all sub-consciously have, to help any woman in the unfortunate event they find themselves at risk of harm.

## What's the aim of this guide?

Nothing is more nerve-racking than the thought of becoming a victim of harassment, stalking or violence, particularly when you are on your own. We aim to show how you can tap into the innate skills that all women have, by practising a few very simple exercises – using your senses of sight, hearing, and smell – and ultimately boosting your knowledge and confidence, quickening your reactions, to prevent a problem before it happens or to deal with danger if it does.

This guide effectively helps you create a safety plan and to practise it, so that your response is well rehearsed in the unfortunate event you are threatened.

## Back to first principles

Prevention starts from the comfort of our own home. You can practise these simple exercises from the safety of your home, helping boost your confidence, reactions and allowing you to deal with any attack before it happens.


## Fighting the freeze

Our instincts are automatic, pre-programmed responses to particular trigger events. Our choices in a dangerous situation are often Fight, Flight, or freeze

- 1 Fight – take on the threat head on.**
- 2 Flight – run from the threat as fast as you can.**
- 3 Freeze – keep still and hope the threat goes away.**

This is nature's automatic response when danger or the perception of danger threatens any of us. These instant responses are designed to protect you, making you act quickly in life-threatening situations.

Flight or freeze are the most common reaction for men and women. Freezing in a dangerous situation can clearly put you at a greater risk. So, this guide aims to help you train yourself to fight the freeze by giving you simple exercises to practise and advice to help increase your awareness of your surroundings and stay safe.



This in turn will increase your confidence, giving you a greater ability to cope with threats, helping you not only change how you feel about yourself, but also how other people perceive you.

Practising greater awareness of your surroundings, can help you to stay safer in them, and give you more confidence in your environment. Showing the world you have greater confidence, could ultimately change a stalker or attacker's perception of you.

Build your confidence at home. Fine tune your safety plan by thinking about the following advice and trying some of our suggested exercises. The science behind this proves that the more spontaneously you can move and shout, the body bypasses the brain (which can over think things and slow you down) creating what scientists call a "quick and dirty" signal.

These survival traits or instincts allow the body to react without speaking to the rational part of the brain. They save several precious seconds and could save you. So, practise these

simple exercises with your voice and your body - just as if you are training for a performance or sport.

**Try them. Practise them. They work.**

## Train your body

Like training your voice, you can teach your body to react more quickly, to move and get you out of harm's way faster. If a sight, noise, smell or feeling triggers your fear or sense of unease, you can train your body to move in a split second, when you are confronted by a risky situation.

## Remember


- 1 Eyes – use your eyes and keep them focused on your exit route – not the threat.**
- 2 Thighs – take positive, big steps to put as much distance between you and the threat as quickly as possible.**
- 3 Rise – make yourself big, don't delay and don't engage with your stalker.**

Do this repeatedly and it will become automatic. Try it. Practise it. It works.

## Weaponise your voice

**"Words are a martial art that can be used to say NO".**  
(Farrah Fray, "Girl Combat, London")

When you are frightened or threatened, you may open your mouth to call for help and find that nothing comes out. But you reduce this risk too, by practising and learning to shout at will.







## AT HOME

Find phrases or words that work for you and maybe rehearse them at home, so they become automatic.

- 1 Step 1 - Find a particular word or phrase that you like ("Stop", "Oi", "No", "Get back").**
- 2 Step 2 - Practise shouting your favourite word or phrase in your bedroom, shower or at your partner.**
- 3 Repeat, repeat, repeat.**

You'll soon find you can shout this automatically. In any scenario, your favourite phrase just comes out, giving you confidence.

Confidence is only the first step in verbal prevention of an attack. Don't forget to add the icing on the cake – volume! Once you have found your voice, use it, to the max. SHOUT! If you are ever in danger, your favourite phrase, shouted loudly, will help attract the attention of people around you, may be seen or heard on CCTV and may disrupt your stalker. Perpetrators do not like attention, and they certainly don't expect such a strong reaction from someone they see as a 'victim'.

**Try it. Practise it. It works.**

## IN PUBLIC

Once you've practised at home and found your voice – use it.

In any situation where you do not feel comfortable, make plenty of sound. Words aren't just helpful for attracting the attention of others around for help. Perpetrators often don't expect such a strong reaction from a woman. Put up a verbal fight and give your stalker or potential assailant a "verbal battering".

But remember the first exercise - if your situation doesn't feel right, move it!

## Safety precautions when you're out and about

Most of us know how to try and keep safe. These precautions are common sense. But because of those freeze or flight auto-responses, common sense can go out the window when you feel threatened. So read them over and over.

### Before you go

- 1** Plan your route in advance so you are not relying on your phone for directions. Write down a few basic directions if you have to.
- 2** If it's a journey you take often, consider varying the time you take it any the route you take.
- 3** Use your phone as little as possible when you're walking along the street. Make any necessary calls and send important texts before you go out.
- 4** Remember that using two earphones puts you at a disadvantage by taking one of your five senses out of action. Keep them in your pocket or use just one, until it's safe to put them both in i.e. in busy, public places.
- 5** When you go out, tell someone where you are going, who you are meeting and roughly what time you will be home. Plan your route in advance and let your family or friends know when you have left and what your ETA is.
- 6** Why not enable a friend or family member to track you using the "Find My" app (iPhone) or Google's "Trusted Contacts" app (Android). There are many other safety apps available, so research the one that works best for you, your friends and family.
- 7** Consider carrying a personal alarm. Or check out the PeopleSafe App <https://peoplesafe.co.uk/products/smartphone-app>.



## When you're out

- 1 Be alert, don't switch off.
- 2 Walk tall with your head up and back straight - confident not confrontational. When we use body language effectively, those around us (including anyone showing us unwanted attention) can read it and respond appropriately.
- 3 Walk with confidence. You own this street as much as them. Walk with your head held high and straight back. Be alert, don't switch off.
- 4 Be noisy if you are nervous; whistle, sing or call to an imaginary dog or friend.
- 5 If you feel completely uncomfortable walking alone, make plans to walk with friends or call an Uber/ Taxi.
- 6 If you take an uber, share the license plate number with friends or family by text.
- 7 Stay in the light and in crowded places as much as possible & walk in the middle of the road on quiet streets. Look for CCTV which can be a great deterrent for any unwanted attention.
- 8 If you feel unsafe, 24 hour supermarkets, shops or petrol stations can be safe places to take refuge or to ask for help if you need it.
- 9 Finally, always be on your guard in bars and clubs and make sure you don't leave your drink unattended. Report any suspicious behaviour to the Police immediately.

## The final word

London Belongs to you. So walk through stations, along the streets & onto trains or buses with your head held high as if you own the place – because you do.

Despite recent tragic, high-profile cases, the streets of London and its public transport network are safe. However, understandably, many women do still feel afraid to go out after dark or to walk home at night and no one should take risks.

We hope that the simple precautions set out in this guide can help you & them feel safer.

## More secret weapons to keep you safe

**'Ask for Angela'** - If you feel unsafe or threatened, you can go up to the bar or restaurant staff and "Ask for Angela". This well-known safety protocol will alert staff, and not your stalker, that you need help. Staff in hospitality or retail are trained to respond. Your request for help may lead to you being taken to a place of safety, see you reunited with a friend, get you to a cab or even see the venue's security or the Police called to make sure you are safe.

**British Transport Police (BTP)** - The BTP have a text reporting system so you can contact the police without having to speak. It's available 24/7 and 365 days a year. Text any concerns to 61016. Give the details of your train or tube and your nearest station and briefly describe the problem.

**Police** - You can also report crime online [www.met.police.uk/report](http://www.met.police.uk/report) or by dialling 101. Remember - if the threat is extremely urgent, don't delay, always dial 999.

**The Suzy Lamplugh Trust** - The Trust's website has thoughtful advice on staying safe at home, at work, online and on dates. Check out - [www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)

**National Stalking Helpline** - You can call 0808 802 0300 for advice or to report your concerns.

**Refuge** - Refuge is the nationwide organisation that supports all those affected by domestic abuse. See [www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk).

## Remember:

Plan your journey in advance, Let people know your route & ETA in advance, Trust your instincts, Train your body to help get you out of harm's way faster, Eyes, thighs, rise!, Find your voice & train it to say **"NO"**, Spread the word - share this leaflet and discuss the ideas in this guide with family and friends – a simple discussion could help save someone's life.

