



NEWSLETTER

WCC Police Department

WHERE IS YOUR FOCUS?

Last week's safety tip discussed Situational Awareness and the importance of paying attention to your surroundings. For this week's safety tip, I want to dive into Situational Awareness further by concentrating on your individual focus or awareness.

Colonel Jeff Cooper, a Marine Corps veteran, invented "The Cooper Color Code" in the 1970's, but it still has merit today. Col. Cooper believed that most people remain preoccupied with thoughts of work, their personal life, school, or other trivialities and placed no thought on their immediate environment. By not paying attention to their surroundings, he felt that they were placing themselves in needless jeopardy. He thought that by learning to observe your environment, constantly evaluate it, and react appropriately to what you see, you could achieve a large degree of control over your fate. He invented a scale of readiness, later termed the Cooper Color Code, with four stages of mental state or awareness; white, yellow, orange, and red. Years later he would add a fifth, black, to the scale. Each color has a different level of awareness and allows us to conceptualize a basic mental state. In this week's edition, I am going to discuss CONDITION WHITE.

WHITE

Unaware, unprepared, "Tuned out"

YELLOW

Relaxed, prepared, aware. Good situational awareness

ORANGE

Identified potential threat. Ready to act, wargaming possible reactions.

RED

Taking action, high alert, actively engaged in emergency response.

BLACK

Panicked, frozen, in shock, caught off guard. Broken down mental and physical response.

CONDITION WHITE

White is the lowest level on the escalator. In Condition White one is unaware, not alert, and oblivious.

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CONDITION WHITE

This state can be characterized as "daydreaming" or "preoccupied". People in White tend to walk around with their heads down, as if watching their own feet. They do not notice the impending danger until it literally has ambushed them. You see examples of this frequently. When was the last time you saw someone walking through a parking lot while texting on their phone? They are in Condition White. They are preoccupied with the message they received or are responding to, and are unaware of anything or anyone else around them. In Condition White you have a great chance of being a victim of violent crime, because the criminal targets the inattentive, the complacent, the distracted, the preoccupied. So, when would it be acceptable to be in Condition White? When in your own home, with the doors locked, the alarm system on, and your dog at your feet. Then, you can turn off your mind, if you wish, because you have sufficient layers of protection and warning. If you leave your home, you leave Condition White behind. The instant you leave your home, you escalate one level, to Condition Yellow.



OFFICER SPOTLIGHT

I would like to introduce everyone to Dennis Boyer. Dennis began his law enforcement career in 1990 at the Carrol County Sheriff's Office in Virginia where he worked as a Correctional Officer and a Patrol Deputy. Dennis left the Sheriff's Office in 1998 to take a position as a Patrolman with the Hillsville, Va. Police Department. While at the Hillsville PD, Dennis worked as a Patrolman, Field Training Officer, and Crime Prevention Specialist. Dennis retired from the Hillsville PD in 2015 after a combined 25 years of service to the citizens of Carrol County and Hillsville, Va. After a short retirement stint, Dennis joined the WCC PD where he serves as a Patrolman. He says that working with the faculty, staff, and students is the part of his job that he loves the most. When Dennis is not working, he likes to collect firearms, ride motorcycles, hike, fish, and hunt.

When asked what advice he would give to a young person who is just starting out in life he said he would encourage them to get a good education and to find a job that they love. He said if you love what you do, "you will never work a day in your life." Dennis is married, has a daughter and a son, and lives in Carroll County. If you see Dennis around campus, please come up and say hello!!

I would personally like to thank Dennis for everything he does for our campus community. He is an asset to the WCC PD family.

Chief Lawson



276-223-4713

Wytheville Community College Police Department Carroll Hall Room 107