

## Domestic Violence Escape and Survival Considerations

### Introduction:

There is not much that is more heinous or cowardly than domestic violence. Living a career in law enforcement and seeing the results and effects of numerous domestic violence and domestic trauma situations firsthand, RAS Group as a whole is dedicated to helping those in need where we can, however we can.

Within the preparedness community we often prepare for any number of situations that never happen. We game plan for natural disasters to Red Dawn invasions. Yet, we often overlook and neglect the most practical and real survival situations or community members are facing, including domestic violence and abuse. RAS Group is proud to offer this comprehensive guide for free of charge in the hopes that this can help someone in need.

We understand that no two situations are the same in terms of severity, frequency, or manners of abuse. However, we hope that this guide is of assistance to you, a loved one, a friend, a co-worker, or whoever you suspect may be in the midst of domestic turmoil.

### Signs of Domestic Violence:

In order to adopt an effective response to a problem, we have to know that there is a problem and more specifically what the problem is. Domestic Violence is not always blatant hair pulling and verbal bombardment. It can be almost silent. Psychological, emotional, mental games that would put any person's mental health into rubble are also just a glimpse of what a DV victim goes through. This is not the end all be all of signs to look for, but this is a start.

#### 1. Behavioral Changes

Do you know someone who use to go out all the time? Would always be down to have some drinks on a Friday night after work and now goes straight home without almost saying a word? Or someone that use to always come in to work or the gym laughing and joking and now it seems like their almost scared to talk to anyone?

Behavioral changes are a real thing in noticing domestic violence or abuse. We have seen this time and time again through hundreds of DV cases and knowing individuals before, during, and after their traumatic relationship.

A huge narcissistic trait of abusers is obliterating the self-confidence of their victims. Instilling the mentality that I am the only thing you need; I am the best thing for you, and that even thinking you need anyone else in your life is a direct insult to me. As logical non-shit bag people we know that this is way out of bounds, but it happens more than what you would think. Most DV offenders are not bearded, burly dudes with tattoos and visible anger issues. They are charming, calculated, well-mannered, soft spoken in public settings, seemingly forgivable to

regular life annoyances, and go out of their way to make everyone around them feel at ease. This is not because this is who they are, it is by design.

Slowly, little by little and over time, the DV offender will slice off sections of their victim's life that do not include them directly and form rhetoric to convince them that this in their own best interest or that they "want" to eliminate these aspects of their life. Victims will begin to become more withdrawn a result and almost forcibly introverted. This is a major contributing factor to the reason why many DV instances go un-reported and unknown. Not even so much fear of the DV offender, but fear of violating that trust and loyalty to that DV offender and "ruining what they have going." This is psychological manipulation at its finest.

A chronic DV offender knows that winning over the inner circle of their victim is key. If your best friend, sister, and mother are all convinced I'm a great guy, then the odds of them taking your out-cry seriously are not great, and they may just tell you to patch things up and not to ruin a good relationship. Despite them having no idea.

A chronic DV offender will also use this same narcissistic charm with law enforcement and medical personnel. They know how to profile (read) others and use that to their full advantage. They will rhetoric responding emergency personnel to create doubt in a case and usually will blame the "mental health" of their victim. Something to the effect of, "She's off of her meds man and I'm just trying to keep her safe, you know how it is."

## 2. Appearance changes/ visual observations

Changes in appearance are another indicator that something is not right. People usually alter their appearance when they experience some sort of major life event. This should not be observed and dismissed. Changes in appearance could include:

- Long hair being cut short. This is common for victims where the DV offender will use their hair as a weapon. Pulling it, yanking it, using it as a means of restraint. This is one area that victims can feel that they can take control of and explain it away to the offender.
- Wardrobe change up. This is usually a quick tool employed by an offender. The thought process is that if a woman wears attractive clothing, other men may come calling, and that's a threat to the control that the offender has over their victim. If the person being controlled realizes that there is a better life to be had and they find a way to leave, then the offender is left without a source of something to have full control over. The way they combat this is the onset of guilt tripping. "Who else are you trying to impress?" "You dress like you're single." "Is my opinion of how you look not good enough?" Once this is employed, a subtle hint of flattery for less revealing clothes is implemented. "I honestly think you look best in less revealing clothes." "I don't think sexy clothing is really all that sexy." Once these stages of transcended, we enter the demeaning and derogatory statements. "Go ahead and wear what you want but you're just going to

embarrass yourself.” “I don’t think that flatters your body type.” “Wearing that is an embarrassment to me, are you trying to embarrass me.”

The sudden change in a person’s wardrobe from fun and outgoing to bleak and subdued can be one of the first major indicators of something being off. Pay attention.

- Lack of make-up. Now, there is some honest, good individuals that believe that make-up is not what makes a woman attractive. However, if someone is use to wearing make-up and suddenly stops, ask them about it. Just like with the wardrobe topic, an offender can make a victim feel guilty over wanting to look and feel pretty. They will continue to push the narrative that any attempt at wanting to look pretty is an attempt to leave the offender or insult them.
- Loss of sleep, appetite, and energy. Being involved in DV relationship is like living in a constant warzone with spurts of rest and spurts of survival, except you have no idea which is coming or when. Victims will constantly be tired from sleepless nights of being on edge. Bags will form underneath their eyes, and they may have trouble focusing or maintaining an in-depth conversation. They may nod out occasionally in the break room, their workspace, or in their car in the parking lot. They can’t find peace to rest at home and their body will try to find it anywhere they feel remotely safe.

Victims will experience a loss in appetite, or in some instances, a tremendous spike in appetite. I’ll explain. With an offender psychologically controlling a victim to the point of dictating their physical appearance, the offender instills a fear that if their victim were to gain weight, then they would lose the offender. Remember, the offender has already instilled the mindset that the victim is dependent upon them and needs them, so this is why the phycological aspect is so important. Someone may use to never be bashful about eating and going out for food with friends, and all of a sudden, the once bacon cheeseburger with fries and a beer is now a salad with a glass of water. They don’t partake in the in-work celebrations or family gatherings where food is plentiful. They may eat a small amount compared to what they are known to consume. On the other hand, you may see a rapid spike in appetite. Some offenders use food as a means of control and compliance, meaning that food is not readily available or permitted in the home. This can translate to a victim consuming as many calories as they can when they can when not in the presence of the offender. Someone who use to eat relatively healthy is raiding the work fridge and always available for some sort of gathering if there is food involved. Rapid weight gain may be a symptom but not always. Pay attention to this and make note if it seems to be happening more than normal.

Obviously, if someone is food and sleep deprived then their energy is going to tank. This could result in more sick days taken at work, more plans cancelled, and general absence across the board. This may result in work discipline due to the victim unable to maintain focus, being irritable, and declining in work performance. Hobbies are no longer a priority. Bike rides, walks, yoga, sports, etc. are now a thing of the past. Most likely because of the restrictions of the offender, but also because they don’t have the energy to partake in what they once loved

anymore. Fun hobbies now seem like an unneeded chore. We touched on this a little bit earlier, but it is a positive indicator to keep an eye on.

- Bruises and injuries. Everyone gets hurt in life, that is a fact. However, it is not normal for anyone outside of BJJ, boxing, extreme sports, etc. to constantly have bruising and injuries to their body. Offenders are notorious for purposely striking their victims where people won't see them, this also ties back into the wardrobe change. Long sleeves and full-length clothes cover more skin, thus hiding more evidence. Maybe you know someone who suddenly has gotten "clumsy" and has had more than a few ER visits for someone who is relatively normal, and un-ironically been going through a new relationship or as shift in a current one. A bruise or boo-boo here or there is pretty normal, constantly having new bruises on them and explaining them away is not.

Also, track and see if slight bruises are gradually becoming cuts, broken bones, or other elevated injuries. Studies show that an offender does not decrease the violence or severity over time but ramps it up. The injuries sustained getting progressively worse are a sign that things are escalating and to a point of grave concern. People who are DV offenders do not "change". They are violent, insecure, and have a deep-rooted aggression that they only show behind a close door. Instances can happen hours to months apart, do not discount any form of aggression or act of violence as "Well, it was only the one time."

- Damaged Property. Do you know someone who always seems to have a broken phone? Their clothes are pretty patched and repaired over from tears and ripping? Their glasses arms are wavy from constantly being re-bent? Their vehicle seems to have subtle, small new dents in it every so often? Maybe they even have all these indicators while maintaining a comfortable salary. That does not mean anything.

Offenders not only control their victims via their finances, but their possessions. Often, we see offenders damage anything a victim owns. Literally anything. This is not so much as wanting to broadcast to the world that they're a DV offender, but more so a strategy of gaining compliance from their victim via destruction. "Do what I want, and I won't break all of your shit." Pretty sadistic, but effective for a victim who has pride in themselves and work ethic. Coupled with the control of finances, the offender now instills a mindset that if the victim wants nice things, they need to ask the offender. Furthermore, that the offender can take these nice things away at any time if they so choose or believe the victim deserves it.

This could result in a victim not investing in themselves anymore. Either because they don't believe they deserve it or because their funds have been seized by the offender. This could also manifest as the victim giving away sentimental or valuable items or giving them to a friend for safe keeping for seemingly no explained reason. Pets are a huge indicator. If someone you know is an animal lover through and through and suddenly wants to give away their beloved animals, something is wrong. It most likely

means they fear for the safety of the animal and want to remove it from a dangerous situation in which something awful very well may happen.

What you can do as a concerned party:

We talked a lot about signs to look for when it comes to victims of domestic violence. Now let's look at some steps YOU can take as a concerned party.

## 1. Research

Someone trapped in a DV relationship may not be ready to openly disclose what they are experiencing due to fear, shame, and the unknown. Doing your own research is something that can be done prior to asking the question. We encourage it for multiple reasons.

- The offender - The offender is a source of information in itself. What social media presence do they have? Who else have they dated? What does a criminal history reflect? DV charges? DWI's? Assaults? This may help you in confirming your own suspicions, but also this may be all new information to a victim. An offender gets their power and control through charming manipulation. They obviously are not going to open up about a dark past. Being armed with this information can help open their eyes to the real situation at hand and who they are really involved with.
- DV resources – Many victims that find the courage to report are then dropped into a whirl wind of hell trying to navigate who can help them and where. The emotional and mental battle of getting a new, better life is still hard. Help them ahead of time. Research and know where they can find assistance and for what. What the lead times are for various services and the extent those services can help someone. Not sure where to start, contact a local police department and inquire about DV victims' services.
- Plan of action – Just as stated above, the process to transition out of a DV situation is not easy. There is a lot to be done. DV resources are a great asset but not all encompassing. Help figure out a plan ahead of time. Apartments or houses for rent in the area, a friend with a spare room or two, or even a friend with a camper for the warmer months. How long does it take to get a CCW permit where you live if applicable? Start researching beyond what will be the immediate needs of the victim and be able to offer your findings to them. This also shows a sign of caring, and that someone is not alone in their endeavor.

## 2. Document

- Documenting your observations of what you have observed and when is crucial. This not only can assist in a law enforcement investigation down the road but can also be an eye-opening experience to who you are trying to help. They may not have realized the mounting instances that they have sustained. Also document your findings on the

above-mentioned research. What you know about the offender, resources in the area and how to access them, what those resources offer, and a tentative flexible plan to get them out of the situation as soon as possible. This can additionally go a long way in a civil proceeding. This may not always be the case, but solid documentation can be the difference in retaining what is rightfully a victim or having to completely start over.

### 3. Ask and Offer

- One of the last steps you can do is inquire with who you believe is a victim. This will not be an easy conversation, and out of pride or shame, you may be met with great resistance and anger. Use your active listening skills (ALS) and convey empathy. This is where being armed with your research is crucial. Do not ask to speak to them in a crowded space or where they are going to have to soon go back into the public eye. It needs to be an empty parking lot, a conversation over coffee in your home, etc. This is already a humiliating and emotional journey for them, putting them in a position to be vulnerable in public is not recommended in the slightest.

Be prepared for this to be a long conversation. This should and most likely will not be quick. Also, once this conversation takes place be prepared to enact your tentative plan immediately. They may find the courage through your support, and this is your moment to act. Be prepared to call for a peace officer from the local police department to retrieve their belongings with them. The conversation of charges should be had, but the most important thing is getting them out of that situation. Remove any public postings you can of where it is that they are going. Inform and remind the officer arriving that no personal information can be relayed to the offender under any circumstances. Have a plan in place to get a new phone number assigned to the victim and social media temporarily or permanently disabled. There is much more that could be done, but it is going to depend on the victim and their wishes.

**DO NOT CONFRONT THE OFFENDER.** We cannot stress this enough. They are masters of manipulation. You need to play chess, not checkers. They are not your priority, your victim is. Putting yourself in a compromising position does nothing for them. You may find yourself arrested and then who is left to help them continue their path towards a better life? Is it worth it? Stop and think.

### What you can do as a victim

First, if you are a victim of Domestic Violence, thank you for having the courage to keep fighting and we hope that this guide offers literally any help that it can to you. It goes without saying that RAS Group has your back, and we commend you for finding it in yourself to give yourself a better life.

1. Have a plan that is for YOU.

The plan is crucial and will dictate most of the rest of this list. The things that need to be considered are:

- Where do you need to get to?
- How are you getting there?
- What do you need to take with you?
- Who do you need to take with you?
- Who do you need/ want to let know?
- What time frame are you looking at as far as when this plan can happen to how long the plan will need to manifest for, (travel time)?

This will be different for each and every person and situation. The answer as to where to go is where you will FEEL and BE safe. Some people will need to go across town, others across the country. Some will have children to consider, and others won't. It really all depends. The common denominator, have a plan.

## 2. Finances

This is obviously a tough one, but necessary. In modern day society, money is the currency of the land. Know what budget you're looking at. As in, how much money do you need to get to where you are going and what do you need once you get there. However, there are things that can assist with this.

Know your contacts between you and your destination. Most people will be more than willing to help assist a friend in a time of need, don't be too prideful to lean on them. This is not a regular occurrence for anyone. Even if they cannot help directly with money; food, water, shelter is something that will cost them very little and help you tremendously.

Credit cards. We get it, no one wants to ding their credit score, but this is about primal survival not socio-economic standing. Apply for anywhere from 2-4 credit cards with at least \$1,000.00 limits per each. This will be more than ample to get you from A to B. Have them shipped to a P.O. Box or trusted friend if possible. If not, contact your local post office and see if they can hold the mail for a certain time frame. Also, see if a friend can pull up and screen your mail ahead of time. Have them remove anything with your name on it, and then have them re-insert the non-credit card mail the next day. Worst case scenario, know when the mail gets there and be ready.

Siphon as permitted. If someone else is in control of your funds, this is extremely difficult. However, small amounts do add up. Loose change, \$1's, \$5's, etc. all matter. A \$5 bill could be a quick meal while on the move. Cash in cans and bottles. **DO NOT KEEP ACTUAL MONEY ANYWHERE ACCESSIBLE.** This will undoubtedly be taken by the offender. Keep it somewhere safe. A work locker, outdoors, an empty hairspray bottle in the back of a bathroom cabinet,

literally anywhere that is not obvious to possibly have money. If possible, cash money is ideal due to the lack of being able to track spending. We will get more into this later.

Be prepared to steal. Absolute worst case, be prepared to be ok with stealing. I, nor anyone of decent moral character believe stealing is ok. However, I along with everyone else acknowledge that desperate times call for desperate measures, and this is one of those. Produce stands with honor system lock boxes are not too farfetched. I'm not saying take the lock box, but a few apples unaccounted for are expected. Remember that this is survival, what needs to be done must be done. The rest can be sorted out later.

### 3. Important Documents/ Photographs

Copies of important documents such as marriage licenses, lease agreements, vehicle registrations, identification cards, birth certificates, social security cards, documentation of your abuse, etc. need to be made or even taken in the event of escape. An important aspect of setting up a new life for yourself is being able to show who you are. Another important aspect of this is being able to have these items accessible for civil court or criminal charges moving forward. The assumption is that the offender will destroy and damage anything that is left behind after they discover you have left. Plan accordingly.

Password and Account information. We recommend that you make a hard-copy list of this. Bank accounts, emails, joint billing accounts, important contacts, locations with addresses, etc. These things will come in to play for a variety of reasons. I am a fan of having both a hard copy printed out version and backed-up USB drive. Redundancy is a founding principal of survival, and this situation is no different.

Important photographs are again, important for a few reasons. One, sentimental items should not be left to chance, especially physical photographs. Digital photographs should be moved to an SD card or SIM card and kept safe with the documents. We will get into it, but you're not going to want to bring your existing cell phone with you. Also, if you have documented your abuse through photographs, this is also important for the sake of civil or criminal processes.

### 4. Communication

Communication is probably your biggest asset if you plan to escape your domestic hell. First, alert your contacts and resources of when you are expecting to leave. These need to be trusted sources and not just acquaintances. Next, alert local law enforcement that you will be leaving the area, you are of sound mental being, and that you are NOT a missing person. Upon noticing your leaving, the offender may attempt to report you as a missing person in an attempt to get free help in locating you. If this does happen, let law enforcement know you are ok, that you are not willing to disclose your current location or where you are going, and that you will be in touch with them again soon. They just need to know that you are ok, not where you are. Additionally, let any prior obligations, such as work, know that you have an appointment on the



date you are leaving and not that you are going out of town. This minimizes suspicion and also if word gets back to the offender somehow, it can be easily explained.

Cell phones. A blessing and a curse. First, when you leave, your existing cell phone needs to be 1.) destroyed 2.) Left at an area motel 3.) placed on a greyhound bus going in the opposite cardinal direction that you are going. Wipe the phone entirely prior to ditching it. Any single shred of anything left is subject to further inquiry. All contacts, apps, browser history, photos, everything needs deleted. Purchase or have someone purchase you an unactivated Trak phone with minimum of (2) unused minutes cards. Ensure you have a wall charger and vehicle charger to accompany this. If not, they need to pick those up for you too. Standard plan cell phone like iPhones can be tracked pretty easily, do not risk it.

Hard copy of names and contacts. Most of us are guilty of relying on cell phones for keeping track of our important information. This would normally be fine, but a key part of separating yourself from a threat is leaving trackable items behind. In addition to the burner phone, you need to have the means to contact the people that need to be contacted. The less time you spend inputting information into a burner phone, the better. Having the hard copy of contacts prevents the time you need to spend in preparation. Additionally, if something happens to your burner phone, you still have the means to use a public phone given still having the hard copy of important information.

Secondary contact source. This is really up to you. This could be a Wi-Fi only phone, like an old iPhone. It could be another Trak phone, or even a HAM radio. Redundancies are great if possible. Being that communication is one of the most important aspects of escaping this type of situation, we highly recommend redundancy here. If it is not possible then don't waste time over it, but it's not a bad idea if available.

## 5. Vehicle/ Travel Preparation

Ensuring your vehicle or travel equipment is staged and ready by game day is paramount. We are going to touch on the scenario of having your own vehicle and the scenario of not having your own vehicle.

A common denominator is paper maps. Paper maps have been vastly disregarded since the dawn of GPS systems. Problem being, these are most definitely trackable and actually readily so. GPS systems should be avoided if not directly integrated into the vehicle itself. Paper maps are not super hard to read and use, but it seems to be a lost art. Paper maps for your local area, state, seaboard, and local map of where you are going are recommended. The more detailed the better. Most convenience stores still carry paper maps to the tune of \$5-\$10 a piece.

If traveling in your own vehicle, ensure you have:

- Roadside emergency kit
- First aid/ trauma kit

- Survival blanket/ shelter
- Fire starting materials
- Spare fuel canister with fuel

Traveling with your own sourced vehicle offers numerous advantages. You can load and carry more equipment and belongings. You have an impromptu shelter in a pinch, and you dictate your direct course of travel. The downside is that you need to be focused and alert to the road. You can't rest. Also, your vehicle may be an identifiable thing about YOU. If you have any custom stickers or paint jobs or anything, this could be a way of locating you. If this is the case, make sure you have a window scraper, a couple rolls of painter's tape, and a couple cans of black spray paint on standby to alter the appearance or obvious features in a hurry. Also never allow your gas tank to drop below half a tank. This is ideal for a lot of reasons outside this topic, but this ensures that you have at least a couple hundred miles baseline to get going in the right direction. Something like a hand-siphon pump is not a bad idea. We talked about being ok with stealing if needed, and we meant it. Worst case scenario, you may need to take a few gallons from an un-suspecting person in order to get to where you need to get to. Do not hang around and say sorry or leave a note, this a bread crumb on the trail. Just know that they would most likely be ok with it if they knew what you were going through and keep moving.

Traveling via Uber, bus, train etc. also has some advantages. You can rest while in transit or game plan your next move. You are not in transit via something that comes back specific to you. However, you also lose the capacity to carry a decent amount with you and you may not be taking the most direct, time efficient route to where you need to get to. We would still encourage you to have a first aid/ trauma kit, small fire kit, and at least a mylar blanket with you as part of a basic survival kit should you find yourself out of a ride. If using public transportation, keep your face covered as best as you can, do not sit next to a window, and do not engage anyone in conversation or interaction. Not right away anyway. The farther from the offender that you get, the more you should feel free to start decompressing.

## 6. Self Defense considerations

It goes without saying that if you are running for your life, you are also willing to fight for it. Please do not get caught in the mindset that just because you left, the offender is willing to accept that and let it go. The risk of them pursuing you is a very real possibility. There are a few things that you can do to better your odds.

A small blade or edged weapon tool is something that we recommend for our first steps of building out an EDC, and this is no different. Knives are seen as more utility than offensive instrument in modern society. Which is fine, we very much like the idea of someone not being scared that you are armed. Easily concealed, easily transferred from pocket to pocket, and easily disposable if needed. Knives are also easily sourced. Available at any gas station or Walmart, whereas a firearm requires a little more work to obtain.

However, if possible, a firearm is obviously another valuable tool to have at your disposal. Now I understand that not everyone may have their own firearm, but does your abuser have an extensive collection that they are not always home to monitor? Do they have a particular firearm that he just doesn't favor? That is now yours. Or have you heard of Polymer 80 Inc. and the ability to manufacture your own home-built firearm? This is a decent option if funds allow, this can grant you the comfort of a firearm without ever having to go through any paperwork or put anything on the books. Just something to consider.

Additionally, we recommend the appropriate support gear if possible. A CCW holster, 2-3 loaded spare magazines and an option that affords you a weapon light are always preferred.

Audible alarms are another worth-while investment. While not able to directly affect an attacker with force of any kind, they draw attention. This can be just as valuable when looking to escape or evade. Remember that offenders are narcissistic by nature, and they survive and thrive off the ability to conceal their deviant acts away from the public eye. Individual dependent, the cost of being noticed for what they really are may not worth the trouble of maintaining control over their victim. We suggest not having these affixed to a piece of clothing that is easily removable (ie: jacket, sweater, rain gear, bag, purse, etc.) but affixed to a belt loop or something that will not be coming off readily or easily. The comfort of this tool is accessibility and ease of use, keeping with you 24/7 is crucial. There is a ton of great options on the market today. We have personally used and evaluated the REIN option, and it seems to be more than noticeable within a structure and plenty noticeable outdoors.

## 7. Comfort and Appearance

Comfort and Appearance are not only an employable tactic to evade detection and location, but a morale booster that is widely underestimated. Going through a fight or run for your literal life is not something to take lightly, and the small victories will be paramount to notice and acknowledge. Being able to feel good and look presentable are things that most take for granted in the world of not being controlled. To someone who is taking back their life this is major.

Clothing is obvious consideration with not so obvious considerations. Everyone has a certain style. Having clothing that doesn't fit your norm is a plus in this situation. Usually where dresses? Buy some sweatpants and hoodies. Where darker tones? Have some bright shirts. Or vice versa. Essentially, identify the pattern in your usual preference of wardrobe and alter it. About 2-5 changes of clothes per person is a pretty good standard depending on space and distance to safety. Another way to calculate this is consider your travel days and then add (2) sets of clothes. This allows you the means of clean clothes once you get to your destination where hopefully doing laundry is an option. Keep in mind that plans change. You could get rerouted, you could get delayed, you get sidetracked. The same thing goes for any additional humans that may be traveling with you, such as children. Extra diapers and infant clothing are included in this as well. One of the best ways we have seen to set this up is a go-bag per

person. Each go-bag will have each individual's set of clothes, personal items, etc. and the ability to pick up and go will be enhanced.

Appearance altering agents. Hair dye, reading glasses, hair cutting scissors or shears, make-up, etc. The art of disguise is a real thing and has aided some of the world's most notorious fugitives from being apprehended for several months or even years. Do not underestimate it. In some instances, it's been documented an abuser will force their victims to look a certain way to suit their skewed mindset. Or, a victim will have to alter their appearance in an attempt to alleviate ways of abuse, such as hair pulling, clothes ripping, etc. Either way, the ability to completely change your face value appearance is a tactic that has been used hundreds of times over to elude detection or capture. We see this life changing situation as worthy of this measure. Also, being able to take back control of how, what, and who you want to look like is an amazing and liberating feeling.

Hygiene Kits. This is straight forward; you need to maintain your cleanliness and hygiene while in transit or abroad. Ideally you won't be without a legitimate bathroom for more than a few days. However, things happen, and plans change. We recommend a hygiene kit per person with a toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, soap, nail clippers, deodorant, baby wipes, etc. All the normal essentials of daily grooming. Having a small travel sized assortment of the above for each person should give you about a week to a week and a half of travel necessities without adding a ton of extra bulk or weight to the overall kit. Also, this may not be a bad place to have small first aid kits for each person. Simple over the counter drugs, bandages, etc. take up no room and most children know to look for these near the bathroom stuff. Even in war soldiers are issued DOPP kits to maintain hygiene in the field. It has been proven to strengthen resolve, morale, and enhance performance because of such. Do not underestimate good hygiene.

Comfort and Entertainment. Especially important if you are traveling with others or children. Children understand trauma from a very young age and seek escape how they can. Imaginary friends, games, TV, books, coloring are all avenues of mental and emotional escape for children in order to find some solace in something other than what just happened or is happening. Having a dedicated bag for children's entertainment is not a horrible idea. Have each of their go-bags ready and staged and then a completely additional bag with toys, books, games, etc. for them to use once the plan has been enacted. You're comfort and entertainment matters just as much. We already discussed that you should leave your cell phone behind. As adults, this seems to be the primary source of entertainment for most of us. However, books, note pads and pens, crossword puzzles, word finds, even an iPad or really whatever you tend to grab when bored may be a solid thing to ensure you have packed. You need to allow yourself moments of rest and distraction. This is important for your mental health as much as just being an overall morale booster. Make sure that you are counting your small victories and taking the time to appreciate them when available.

## 8. Nutrition and Hydration.

For some of us the idea of feeding yourself is better said than done with the busy lives that adults seem to have now a days. This is sometimes difficult for someone who is not running for their life, I can only imagine how hard it could be for someone who is. Bottom line is you NEED to keep your body fueled with adequate calories and hydration. You need to be alert and ware and in a heightened state of hyper-vigilance. Hyper-vigilance is what makes the blues bluer and the reds redder, your senses are heightened due to an increased fear or risk of danger. Undoubtedly, most victims experience this on a daily basis. We just ask that you keep it enacted a little longer so that you never have to live like that daily ever again.

Nutrition. Again, this seems obvious. However, how many people are traveling with you? How many calories do they need to consume per day for an extended trip? Some shelf-sustaining snacks can go a long way. Trail mix, kind bars, cliff bars, crackers, etc. are all decent options to be able to have to eat on the go. This is also a tremendous booster to immediate evasion from the threat source. If you must stop and grab a bite to eat around a couple hours in as opposed to 4-5 hours in that's not ideal. You will have no way of knowing when your offender discovers your absence and what they may do. Maybe they will try to pursue you, maybe they won't. The odds of them finding you within a couple hour radius of where you have left from is much greater than 4-5 hours away, and possibly even in a whole other state all together. This is why we previously brought up the concept of false location trails with ditching your cell phone on a bus or something similar. Also, this ties back into the concept of cash. If you can have food accounted for then that's one less thing to purchase on the road. Resource allocation is important in this instance, and the less that needs to be allocated. the better.

Hydration. Self-explanatory, I'm sure. You and your travel companions need to stay hydrated. A case of bottled water isn't ungodly expensive and can sustain a few people for a couple days or possibly more. A couple of cases of water sitting in the trunk of a vehicle isn't a bad idea in general, and most definitely a necessity. It is common and not out of the norm where most people would think anything of it. Also, a small water filter kit such as a sawyer water filtration system is relatively affordable and easily stowed in a vehicle glove box. If all else fails, most state laws require restaurants, even fast-food ones, to provide water to those asking free of charge. Being in a first world country water shouldn't or won't be too hard to source but it always better to be beyond prepared and have your own resources on your own terms.

A note from your Author:

My name is Garrett Neel, and I am one of the Co-owners of RAS Group LLC. At the time of this publication my partner, Aaron, and I have been working 3-11P shift road patrol as police officers in New York State for going on 8 years. We also manage and run RAS Group with the assistance of our team member, Kristy and Tyler. We couldn't do any of the things we do or content we release without these guys.

Coming from a law enforcement background we have seen a large array of domestic incidents. Some violent, some not. Some with male victims, female victims, mutual aggressors, etc. No two situations are alike, and we know that not every situation has the same considerations. We assembled this basic guide based on some of the worst incidents that we have come across and the courageous victims that endured these. Professionally and personally, we have seen the effects and acts of domestic violence for ourselves and would love nothing more than to help those in need and punish those who would oppress.

Overall, we know this is not the end all be all for a DV preparedness kit. Feel free to adjust this or alter this in any way to suit your needs and specific situation. This list was compiled from a combined 16 years in law enforcement experience. Please reach out to us on our social media, website, or email and we would be more than happy to help you as best we can. Any input is greatly appreciated, we hope to continue to expand and modify this guide as a free, totally comprehensive resource for those in need. Any questions are also appreciated. As always, thank you, stay safe, stay trained.

- RAS Group

IG - @\_rasgroup

Website – [rasgrouptraining.com](http://rasgrouptraining.com)

Email – [Garrett@rasgrouptraining.com](mailto:Garrett@rasgrouptraining.com)

