



## Network Enjoys Growth at NRA Annual Meeting

by Marty Hayes, President  
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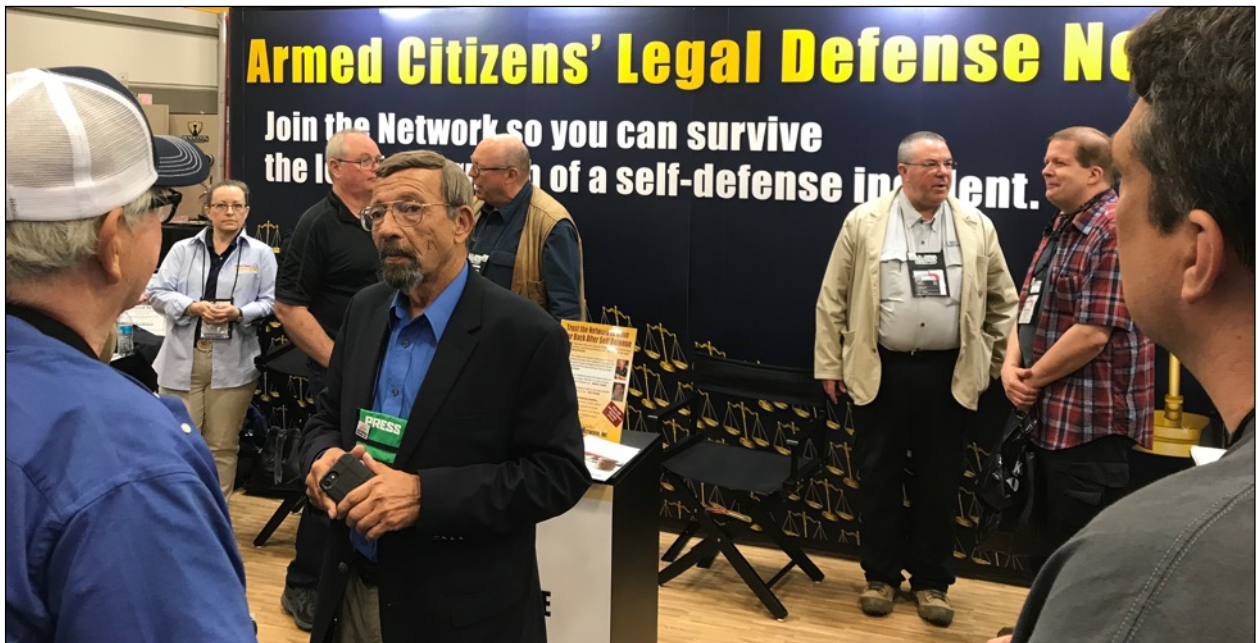
Last year at this time, I published an open letter to Wayne LaPierre, the Executive Vice President of the National Rifle Association. You can read it at <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/open-letter-to-nra> and I would suggest the reader become familiar with my arguments before continuing.

Now, I return a year later with no less of a commitment to the thoughts and feelings I stated in that letter, and from the perspective of a year of business competition that has taken place. In that year, the Network has seen its greatest growth year ever, adding 3,000 new members while retaining over 80% of our current members. When I published that letter, I was accused by two NRA board members of fearing competition. They missed the point. I didn't fear the competition, but instead was angry that an organization that I supported publicly, privately and financially would start up a business endeavor that competed against me and others who are NRA members. Now that is all history.

This year, when the Network had an exhibit at the NRA Annual Meeting in Dallas, TX, it was quite a different story. When I entered the convention hall, I was not bombarded with huge banners of Dana Loesch promoting NRA CarryGuard. Instead, the marketing was very subdued, and the only mention of NRA CarryGuard was at the NRA booth, and that contained NO mention of CarryGuard insurance. I can understand that. As most who follow these matters are aware, the NRA CarryGuard program has been under attack by the State of New York. New York has determined that the NRA CarryGuard program was being sold illegally, and fined the insurance broker, Lockton Risk \$7,000,000. That is seven million. Lockton has agreed to pay, since as I understand it, that \$7,000,000 fine is a negotiated settlement.

I was very curious about what had happened to the insurance product the NRA had offered, so I asked the good people at the NRA booth what was happening with CarryGuard insurance. They told me there were no representatives of the insurance program at the booth and the crew in the booth had no information for me.

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On Saturday, visitors to our booth chatted with Network Advisory Board members Massad Ayoob, John Farnam and Dennis Tueller (shown) as well as Jim Fleming who had stepped out of the booth on an errand when this picture was snapped.

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They told me that if I wanted to call a number they pointed out on a computer screen, I could talk to someone from the program. It is my understanding that one could not purchase CarryGuard insurance at their booth.

What was unveiled at the booth was an expanded and re-vamped training component of CarryGuard. As many members know from reading my letter to Wayne LaPierre and my follow-up open letter to the Board of Directors at <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/open-letter-to-nra-board> my other concern about CarryGuard was that the NRA had begun competing directly against my training business, The Firearms Academy of Seattle, Inc. I was not concerned about losing money because of this competition, as I felt their program was doomed from the start. After seeing the re-vamped program, I still predict its demise. I remain concerned about just how much money the NRA Board of Directors is willing to allow the Executive Board to spend on a failing program. This question remains unanswered, although I suspect at some point they will put an end to it.

Having learned those facts during my time in the exhibition hall, I stayed on for an additional day after the weekend to attend the Annual Meeting of the NRA Board of Directors.

At that meeting, I learned that Lt. Col. Oliver North was to lead the NRA in the upcoming year. This was a surprise to the members attending the meeting, although not to the board members. I have always liked Col. North and I believe this was a pretty good choice. Of course, time will tell whether my belief is accurate.

During the Board of Director's morning session, each member of the Executive Committee stands up and gives a report. Last year, those reports stressed how the introduction of CarryGuard was intended to help "modernize the financial underpinnings of the NRA." This year, I was looking forward to getting the straight scoop from Josh Powell, the Director of Operations, on what was happening with this program. Unfortunately,

there was no discussion of CarryGuard in the public portion of the meeting, but instead, Powell's report to the Board was reserved for an executive session.

The approximately 80 to 100 NRA members in attendance were kicked out of the board room, and for about an hour, we can only presume that CarryGuard was discussed among the board under the cloak of secrecy. The reason for the secrecy was never divulged.

What is happening with one of the Network's major competitors? Your guess is as good as mine. Suffice it to say there is more to come. But for now, I do have some really good news to share from the 2018 NRA Annual Meeting.

## Record Setting Attendance

According to figures stated about the attendance, more people attended this Annual Meeting than ever before. 87,254 to be exact. That is good news, and because of this robust attendance, the recruiting effort by the

Network was the second best ever, only exceeded by the meeting in 2014 in Indianapolis. We were pleased with the news that the NRA AM is returning to Indy next year! We look forward to signing up many new members then.

## Meeting New and Current Members

We had a great time shaking hands with current Network members, too, and giving each one of our new pins. We gave away over 200 pins this way and they seemed to be popular amongst the members. Members, I am glad you liked them. We expect to

make the lapel pins a permanent part of our outreach at public events. We are sending pins to new members when they sign up because they fit into the new member packaging without additional cost. Members, if you're pin collectors, put a \$5 bill in the mail to us (ACLD Network, PO Box 400, Onalaska, WA, 98570) and we will send

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**We had a good crew. When booth traffic was slow, Network President Marty Hayes, our Membership Renewals Lead Jennie Van Tuyl and Advisory Board member Massad Ayoob had a little fun mugging for the camera.**

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[Left to right] Network President Marty Hayes, Advisory Board members John Farnam, James Fleming, Massad Ayoob, Dennis Tueller and Vice President Vincent Shuck. Unfortunately, Advisory Board members Tom Givens and Emanuel Kapelsohn could not join us. We missed them.

you a pin. That is approximately the cost of the pin and postage cost, and as you know, we like to be fiscally responsible here at the Network, so we ask this courtesy of you.

## Meeting of the Network Advisory Board

This year, we did something different for our Network Advisory Board meeting. Instead of gathering at the S.H.O.T. Show, we postponed the annual meeting of the advisory board until the NRA Annual Meeting. This worked well, and since we were at the NRA AM, one of the new things we did was set aside a time in the booth for our members to come meet our board members, chat a little and if they wanted, get a picture taken. We then held a dinner meeting for just the Advisory Board so we could both socialize and conduct a bit of

business. Our 2018 efforts in Dallas were satisfactory and this outreach method is one we are anticipating revisiting next year, too.

## Conclusion

I am no longer angry at the NRA. Business success has a way of mitigating negative feelings against a competitor, and the Network certainly has done well during the last year. To me, doing well means increasing the Legal Defense Fund so we can potentially help more members. To do that, we focus on bringing in more members who can also be educated and protected by the benefits of the Network.

As we enter one of the most volatile periods in our history, as the pro-

gun and anti-gun sides rally, posture and line-up to oppose each other at every turn, we must look to the big picture and realize that in order for our side to win this war against us, we must be united and support each other. To this end, if you are not an NRA member, please browse to <https://membership.nrahq.org/forms/signup.asp?CampaignID=JoinNow> and join. It is my understanding that there are close to six million NRA members at this time, which is a record. The strength of the NRA as a lobbying group does not come from the money it spends to support pro-gun candidates running for election, but instead, in its nearly six million members it can motivate come election time. We all should be a part of that number.

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Please enjoy the next article.]*





## President's Message

By Marty Hayes, J.D.

As my weekdays are spent working on projects with the Network, along with even answering phones when everyone else is busy on other lines, I

don't have as much time to teach classes as I once did. This means that I cultivate, train and hire good instructors who will follow the program of teaching the use of firearms for self protection that I have developed over the past 30 years. But I do occasionally teach a class to keep my hand in it, but it is more likely that I will drop in on classes and talk to the students when I can. I did this last Sunday, and I want to share that experience as this month's President's Message.

There were two activities occurring at the Firearms Academy of Seattle last weekend. The first was a special IDPA training event taught by IDPA and USPSA Master Zach Campbell. The class was a small one, as he put two on the calendar this year, and this last weekend's session coincided with another shooting event that drew potential students away from the class. Nonetheless, what I saw was a professional instructor giving it all for these students, even going overtime on the last day to make sure the four students got everything they could out of the class. What was special for me was that when I dropped in to say hi, Zach (one of the best competitors in the country and certainly in the Pacific Northwest) attributed getting his start in the shooting profession as one of my students several years ago. He said that after taking his first class, he wanted to learn more, took more classes, started competing and had gained his success as a result of starting out at FAS.

Now, I know that he put in a lot of hard work over the past

several years getting to the top, but it is nice to see he remembers where he got his start. In this course, we also had two FAS staff instructors taking the class, Jennie Van Tuyl (who works for the Network during the day and teaches and competes on the weekends) and our newest instructor, Erik Knise. Erik just got his start three years ago and joined the staff of FAS this year. Any school that is going to survive after its founder moves on has to recruit and train the younger generation to succeed him. This is what I have done with both Jennie and Erik, along with a couple more young-uns. I was able to observe Erik attaining the IDPA Master Class rating, shooting his best classifier ever after the three days of training. Fun stuff.

I next dropped in on the Defensive Handgun class, taught by our senior staff instructor Rick Bressler and another youngster, Brian Yip. The class consisted of nine hard chargers, wide-eyed and full of energy and the desire to learn. I spent about 20 minutes discussing FAS and the Network and answering questions. What particularly struck me was comments one of the students made in private. He had a couple of legal questions to talk about, then he thanked me for building FAS, saying that what we are doing touches lives. Sometimes when you are in the middle of the class working your behind off to make sure the students "get it," you forget occasionally that teaching is more than work. It is a passion and a calling. Like in so many other helping professions, a professional instructor not only teaches to make a living (or at least augment their day job, as very few firearms instructors actually make a full-time living teaching) but they do it because they like helping people. They like touching lives.

I guess it also applies to the Network, because I know the work we do here also touches lives, both for the members who have used our assistance after a self-defense incident, but also those being educated every day by the effort of our educational outreach. I have been told more than once that a member sleeps a little better because they joined the Network. And, at the end of the day, that kind of makes the work we do here all worthwhile.

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Please enjoy the next article.]*



Erik Knise, left, congratulated by Zach Campbell.

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## Attorney Question of the Month

Last month, we took a break from our usual discussion topics and entertained a discussion of a more general question, yet one on which every experienced armed citizen has an opinion. Our affiliated attorneys had some fun with it and many, many responses came in.

Here we wrap up the second half of our affiliate attorneys' answers to the following question:

***The current political unrest regarding gun control is causing many people to purchase their first handgun. If you were to give one piece of advice to the brand-new gun owner, what would that piece of advice be?***

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The one piece of advice we would give to a brand-new gun owner would be to make training a priority. Remember what the late Colonel Jeff Cooper said, "Owning a handgun doesn't make you armed any more than owning a guitar makes you a musician."

What should that training look like? First, take a basic course that will emphasize safety. Even if you are one of those individuals that can say, "I have been around guns all my life," you will nonetheless benefit. One cannot know too much or have too many reminders about basic gun handling, safe gun storage, and the fundamental safety rules.

After the basic course is under your belt, continue your training as much as your budget and time will reasonably allow. Without question, it would be very beneficial to take classes with The Firearms Academy of Seattle, Masaad Ayoob, Gunsite, Tom Givens, John Farnam, Tiger McKee and many other nationally recognized trainers.

However, some of us have budgets that will limit some or all of our training to quality local trainers. As a matter of fact, our budget may limit us to books and/or videos.

Whatever your situation allows, do your due diligence by asking where your trainers or educators have trained and continue to train. Set a goal to be educated and trained in broad areas that include safety, marksmanship, gun handling, mindset, as well as avoidance and less lethal techniques.

Also, training and education regarding self-defense law and gun law for the concealed carry holder is highly recommended. You must understand the law when it comes to firearms and self defense. If you think you do not have the time and/or money to spend on training, ask yourself if you are willing to bet the life of a family member on your level of skill and knowledge—and then reconsider your budget and time constraints. Lastly, seriously consider joining ACLDN. The educational DVDs alone that you will receive as a new member have value that exceeds the cost of membership for many years.

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I would have a lot of pieces of advice, but here is a good one learned from personal experience: "Try before you buy." Go out to a gun range and try different kinds of guns. Try a model of the gun you are looking at buying. Learn a bit about how it feels to hold, shoot, reload, and clean.

My wife's first gun was a little five-shot .38 Special. She liked it at the store because it was small and "cute." Once she fired it, though, she hated it. (A quick lesson in physics: less mass in the gun equals more kick to your hand.) I traded it with her since it was a decent concealed carry gun, and she wasn't going to carry concealed anyway. A larger frame police model .38 has become her personal favorite.

While at the range, get what advice you can from experienced shooters. There is a LOT to learn and they are almost universally happy to share their knowledge.

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“What’s the best advice for a new gun owner?” is a question I sometimes get at dinner parties, or from new clients. In those situations, I generally get a little background info from the person that guides my answer. For purposes of this article, I’m going to assume that the new firearm owner has no military, or other weapons handling experience. If that’s the case, then my advice is that every firearm owner absolutely requires basic gun skills training by a certified instructor in the gun owner’s home state, or state where he/she will be carrying. I emphasize “home state” training because most reputable firearms instructors will include training on local gun law.

We’ve all seen the memes and posts by the anti-2A crowd stating that only police or military service members should be allowed to carry guns. That’s not an uncommon opinion, especially here in the People’s Republic of Western Washington. In all of my gun trials, jurors have cared deeply about whether a shooter was properly trained, and whether he acted in conformity with that training when he drew or shot.

I recently tried a brandishing case in which my client, a former Navy Master at Arms, was accused of flashing his Sig P320 to stop an attacker. Fortunately, most of what my guy was accused of doing was tactically and legally sound when he drew his pistol to stop a younger and more aggressive man from assaulting him.

The jury believed that my client should have retreated (it was a Seattle case), but they still acquitted him of all criminal charges. They felt that he used the least amount of force necessary to prevent the altercation from escalating. They liked that he first issued a warning, was mindful of what was downrange, and spoke authoritatively about his training and desire to not hurt anyone. His training was essential to getting the acquittal.

I, like many shooters, am a firm believer in the old adage “I’d rather be judged by 12 than carried by six.” I’m also a believer in hedging your bets, so if you’re going to own a firearm, then get training and shoot regularly. Follow up on that training with more training, and more shooting. If I could give you two pieces of advice, it

would be to also develop a relationship with an experienced gun attorney before you need one.

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The number one piece of advice I would give to a new gun owner would be to take classes on gun usage and safety from a certified firearms instructor. There is so much to learn after that but you have got to start with the basics.

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I think there is one piece of advice with two parts:

- 1) Get good and substantial instruction in the effective and safe use and storage of your handgun; and
- 2) Familiarize (preferably with qualified instruction) yourself with the legal concepts and rules around the justifiable use of lethal force.

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In obtaining a weapon for protection, the best advice is a matter of common sense rather than legal advice. The exercise of a right implies an understanding of the obligations and responsibilities that go along.

Not long ago, I was in line at a gun store when a fellow confidently plopped a box of ammo on the counter by the cash register. The clerk told him to double check the caliber size on the box, since the ammunition could not be returned. To the silent astonishment of everybody within earshot, the fellow asked what a caliber was.

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At the same time, you need to learn about your legal rights and duties as a lawful gunowner, you need to take the training, retraining and refresher training to keep the talents sharp and honed.

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Get professional advice. NOT the internet. Not the blowhard at the gun shop. Not the guy who used to be military/police/a spy. A professional who knows his stuff and equally important knows how to teach. Teaching is hard and I have seen it done badly and even stupidly far too often. Where to find such a person? Ah! That is a different question.

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The best advice I would give would be to practice, practice, practice. The most important tool for your survival is your knowledge and training and you can never have too much of either.

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My advice to a new gun owner would be as follows:

- Please do your best to get a handgun that fits well in your hand and allows you to shoot it comfortably and accurately. Please make sure that it is well-suited to your intended purpose such as target shooting, competition, hunting, self defense, home defense or a combination of the above.
- Please make sure your handgun is safe for its intended purpose and that there are no issues regarding over-penetration in case the handgun is to be used for home defense in an apartment dwelling.
- Please get the very best training you can immediately to make sure that you can safely handle, load, fire and unload your handgun safely, proficiently and without hesitation.

- Get a holster that covers the trigger guard.
- Get a safe to secure the handgun when not in use, where it is safely kept away from children and unauthorized users.
- Acquaint yourselves with the rules of firearm safety and follow them at all times.

As you can see, there is not just one piece of advice to give to a brand new handgun owner.

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Take Massad Ayoob's MAG-40 class and Shivworks ECQC. That may seem like a lot of money to spend; however, I bill at \$350 per hour. If you have a case involving the use of your firearm, or even exposing it to someone intentionally, it's a ten-hour minimum. Compared to that, training (which will keep you from paying me and will be a lot more fun) is cheap.

**Timothy A. Forshey**

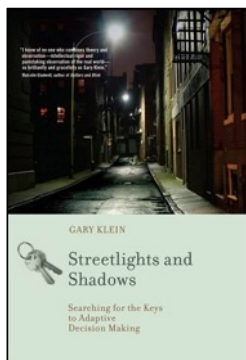
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I believe this is a critical question that all too few new gun owners fail to recognize. By far the most important factor, even before discussing such issues as fit, caliber, recoil management and the like, is the issue of training. I see many people in my CCW classes who have shot very little (if at all) prior to the class and who have obtained zero training on even the basics. I cannot imagine purchasing a piano without first determining my desire and ability to play a piano through at least some lessons. And, lest we forget, pianos rarely cause fatalities (Looney Tunes cartoons excluded).

Find a good, qualified trainer to teach good lessons from the get-go. They will also be able to assist with the aforementioned concerns once the decision to purchase is properly made. Don't forget—practice does not make perfect—perfect practice does.

*A big "Thank You!" goes out to our affiliated attorneys for their contributions to this interesting discussion. Please return next month when we have a new question for our affiliated attorneys.*





## Book Review

### Streetlights and Shadows:

**Searching for the Keys to Adaptive Decision Making**  
by Gary Klein  
ISBN: 9780262516723  
352 pages, softbound, 9x6  
\$19.95

<https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/streetlights-and-shadows>

*Reviewed by Gila Hayes*

Making decisions without all the facts is an issue for self defense, especially when called on later to justify use of force to people who were not present. Rules about use of force get codified into law and society expects armed citizens to adapt those rules to the situation. I picked up cognitive psychologist Gary Klein's book, *Streetlights and Shadows: Searching for the Keys to Adaptive Decision Making* seeking how to overcome the uncertainty of incomplete facts and how to later describe perceptions driving such a decision.

Klein challenges ten popular axioms about making decisions. These have worked in predictable, structured situations, he suggests, but fail in unpredictable, fast-breaking circumstances. Many emergencies are a mix of the predictable and unpredictable, he asserts. This book studies where those domains overlap, shows the value of experience over analysis, and defines why rules and procedures often fall short.

People want simple rules to guide decisions, but rules and procedures which rely on explicit knowledge rarely suffice, Klein writes. Good decisions draw from both rules and intuition. "For many types of complex work we need both procedures and the judgment to interpret and work around the procedures," he writes. SWAT teams, for example, operate under procedures and rules, but the unpredictability of their callouts perfectly illustrates "adapt[ing] as the mission unfolds." Klein adds, "Skilled performance depends on...how we interpret, modify, and replace the standard procedures when they don't work." While sometimes rather academic, the book is full of

examples illustrating real-life applications of his premises.

Defining what he calls tacit knowledge and its role in perception, pattern recognition, problem solving and judgment calls, Klein acknowledges that intuitive knowledge "is hard to articulate or even to notice. We depend on unconscious processes to carry out tasks. That's how our experience gets translated into our actions. Because most of the time we don't think about this background knowledge, it stays hidden under the surface of our lives."

Klein diagrams a triad of decision-making, sense-making and adapting at the center of which is a core of experience. Recognized patterns from earlier experiences "let us judge what category of situation we are facing," he explains. "We draw on dozens and hundreds of experiences to sense when something seems familiar, or to pick up anomalies."

Experts struggle to describe perceptions and mental models when asked to explain their decisions. He reports, "I have had several expert decision makers explain to me that they felt they had made specific life-and-death decisions on the basis of extrasensory perception. It had felt like ESP to them because their decisions weren't based on conscious reasoning. Eventually I got to the bottom of their strategies and showed them that they hadn't in fact used ESP, but getting there took a lot of work."

Intuition, Klein says, applies "experience without consciously thinking things out," and is just as important as analysis. "We need both logic and intuition. Either one, by itself, can get us in trouble," he adds. Decisions are only as accurate as the knowledge—tacit or explicit—on which they're based, he explains. Filling in unknown details through our own biases is another impediment to accurate decisions, he continues, comparing decision making to vision. We exaggerate the contrast between objects to determine what we are looking at and unconsciously "adjust for this distortion." He suggests that we accept and adjust around this kind of inaccuracy in many aspects of daily life.

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Klein blames information overload and over thinking for judgment errors. Intuitive knowledge defies verbal explanation. Over-analysis encourages wrong choices by favoring explicit knowledge over an intuitive response that can't be explained. Analysis of explicit information alone "keyholes" our focus to obvious elements and often overlooks vital context, Klein asserts. "The notion of favoring logic and statistics over intuition leads to overthinking. It pretends that we can make sense of facts without taking context into account," he explains.

How can we reduce how much data we have to consider? Klein suggests, "The more skilled one is, the fewer options one thinks about." Experience eliminates poor options without wasting time. He interviewed experienced fire fighters who insisted they didn't decide how to fight fires by comparing options, but Klein concluded that the fire fighters were actually imagining how options would play out, quickly eliminating the poor choices and acting on the best.

The academic description for matching a known pattern and imagining likely outcomes is the Recognition-Primed Decision process. "Good decision makers use their experience to recognize an effective option and evaluate it through mental simulation," Klein stresses. Experienced people—like the fire fighters—imagine possible outcomes so smoothly that each option is not consciously evaluated. Experience creates hunches about how to react. He illustrates the same process in use during an offshore oil drilling emergency, Captain Sullenberger's 2009 Hudson River landing, and by nurses and even chess experts.

All this assumes being able to acquire applicable experience Klein acknowledges in chapter seven of *Streetlights and Shadows*. "People become experts by the lessons they draw from their experiences, and by the sophistication of their mental models about how things work," he introduces. "Mental models are developed through experience—individual experience, organizational experience, and cultural experience," he writes, offering an example of connecting numerous facts to predict a horse race winner. "Our mindsets frame the cues in front of us and the events that are unfolding so we can make sense of everything. Experience and patterns produce mindsets. The more experience we have, the

more patterns we have learned, the larger and more varied our mindsets and the more accurate they are."

The next section titled *Making Sense of Situations* promised more about emergency decisions. Klein builds on examples sketched out in the beginning of the book to illustrate developing theories, so I'd absorbed a lot of information to reach this part. Fortunately, the foundational material was interesting and worthwhile.

Experience makes it easier to resolve contradictory information or to digest large quantities of data. "Sensemaking is not just a matter of connecting the dots. Sensemaking determines what counts as a dot. Jumping to conclusions is sometimes the right thing to do even before all the dots have been collected," Klein introduces.

Klein warns against information overload with examples of hesitation to react to numerous early warnings in the face of impending natural disasters. That's particularly likely when a heavy load of data fails to point to a uniform conclusion, he explains. More data is not needed, he argues; better analysis is needed. When plagued with too much or incongruent data, we must focus on what is known, not the unknown, he advises.

In the book's summary chapter, Klein advises readers to embrace uncertainty instead of struggling to gain control. When trouble strikes, "People with the control mentality get frustrated and discouraged. However, when the routines break down, those with a resilience mindset switch gears," he reports. This leads into a section titled *Anticipatory Thinking*, which teaches advancing from one task to the next and allowing for surprises, detecting discrepancies, absorbing meanings and confidently resolving problems. Of all of *Streetlights and Shadows* this segment is most applicable to the daily safety decisions of the armed citizens. "Anticipatory thinking describes how we actively speculate about what might happen next," he continues.

Using combat pilots as an example, Klein explains that accurately assessing change requires quickly recognizing what's applicable and putting it into

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perspective for present circumstances. Of all the details a pilot sees, what is trivial? What is immediately important and what will become crucial in moments? What is not yet apparent? "Sensemaking seems to depend heavily on seeing such connections. We can't find the connections by exhaustively linking all the elements because we don't know in advance which are the relevant elements," he explains.

The third section of *Streetlight and Shadows* is entitled *Adapting*. "In complex situations, our attempts to make adaptations may fail if we persist in pursuing the goals we started with, if we rely too heavily on identifying and minimizing risks, and if we maintain the ground rules we set at the beginning of an activity. Adapting means revising our goals, becoming resilient to threats we cannot predict, and changing the way we work together. To adapt, we have to learn, but we also have to unlearn," he introduces.

Adapting can require compromises that fall short of the desired outcome, Klein continues. When goals shift or are in conflict, seek the best tradeoff. Look for new connections; don't doggedly pursue the original goal, he advises. In a chapter on risk management he challenges the notion that with sufficient effort we can eliminate risks. If we've never tackled a problem of this sort before, how can we fully anticipate the risks? He calls risk assessments created "purely on the basis of statistics drawn from previous events...like driving while looking only through the rear-view mirror." He adds, "In complex situations, we should give up the delusion of managing risks. We cannot foresee or identify risks, and we cannot manage what we can't see or understand."

Klein explains some of our denial when he quotes Nassim Nicholas Taleb's theory about black swans—catastrophes that happen so rarely as to be statistically impossible. "By definition, these kinds of events are hard to comprehend and so we explain them away." Risk management encourages denial because we erroneously believe disaster planning protects us. "Plans sensitize us to expect some things, but that can mean ignoring other things that we don't expect—precisely the kinds of black swans

that can catch us off guard...When working in an unfamiliar and shadowy landscape, we can't neatly identify, prioritize, and cauterize all the risks in advance."

Instead, Klein advises, "Learn from the near-misses rather than wait to learn from accidents." Cultivating an adaptive mindset increases ability to "anticipate, avoid and manage risks." Build in resilience instead of trying to "predict and control unpredictable risks."

The next chapter addresses unlearning outdated or erroneous information, is also applicable to armed citizens. Klein discusses getting fixated on an initial explanation despite evidence to the contrary, an issue he has raised earlier in *Streetlights and Shadows*. "Fixation isn't a type of defective reasoning. It's a natural outgrowth of the way we use our mental models to guide our attention and make sense of events," he introduces.

To correct fixation, we must first recognize it. Symptoms include repeated efforts to explain away mounting pieces of contrary data, Klein suggests. Unfortunately, "People usually have to lose faith in their old mental models before they can seriously consider new ones," he writes. Other solutions include fostering curiosity about anomalies, seeking an outsider's viewpoint and rephrasing the situation as an analogy or metaphor.

It is easy to chuckle at the doubters who spoke out against Copernicus and Galileo's discoveries, but how often—even presented with convincing evidence—do we fail to adjust our own mental maps? Mindset needs to be like snakeskin, Klein suggests. In order to grow, we have to shed the old so the new can accommodate growth.

*Streetlights and Shadows* requires a lot of concentration to adapt the lessons to our concerns. The lessons are present, though, and I thought the book was well worth the effort to read and learn.

[End of article.  
Please enjoy the next article.]



## Editor's Notebook

### Wasted Energy; Unnecessary Risk

by Gila Hayes

A surprising number of questions, especially from non-members who aren't sure whether the Network is their best choice, ask if we'll pay an attorney to get them

out of trouble after one hypothetical situation or another.

Our answer is always the same: The Network assists members after self defense through legal means. Since your hypothetical incident hasn't happened yet, there aren't enough facts to answer accurately. "Well, isn't doing XYZ self defense?" their follow up inquires. Without knowing what led up to XYZ, there's no way to answer that question.

Now, I have to admit that there is a small part of me—that unkind, impatient part to which I keep duct tape firmly affixed across the mouth—that wants to quip, "If you have to ask, it probably isn't self defense!" and no, dear correspondent, you really aren't defending yourself when you stomp up onto the neighbor's porch cursing about her dog using your prize rose garden as a privy.

Unfortunately, the self defense argument often falls apart quite a while before the first blow is struck, the first violent threat made, or the first move toward a hidden weapon initiated. In an echo of the first question, it is not unusual for a phone or email question to give a brief sketch of use of force by "a buddy" who was subsequently convicted of assault. "That wasn't right! If it happens to me, will you help?" comes the question.

Unfortunately most of those questions detail aggression when our "hero" 1) refused to give another driver a break in traffic and was swept up in road rage, 2) was "just picking up his stuff" at the ex's house when (fill in the blank) happens, 3) strode across the street to tell the neighbor's teenager to quit driving like an (insert vulgarity) and got pounded, 4) and, yep, that all-time favorite: went over and rebuked the neighbor about his obnoxious dog(s). Oh, boy, here we go again: willfully engaging in conflict over someone's driving, someone's pets, someone's girlfriend or someone's offspring.

Much like the old adage advising about the foolishness of trying to teach a pig to sing: the recipient of our correction is not receptive and our attempt to improve another person only creates a higher level of anger and resentment. Somehow, we convince ourselves that the target of our intervention "needs" to be schooled, when in truth, we are merely trying to make ourselves feel better by explaining our superiority to the poor fool.

Why are we so shocked by hostile responses when we take it upon ourselves to correct the bad behavior of others? Please think long and hard about the larger consequences of being the one who starts a confrontation, fails to withdraw when tempers heat up, or just has to get in the last word. Inciting a fight invalidates the claim that you were just defending yourself.

*[End of June 2018 eJournal.  
Please return for our July 2018 edition.]*

June 2018



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June 2018