



What is Self-Defense?

Self Defense is anything we think or do to increase our physical, mental, and emotional safety.

Self Defense thinking and behavior is assertive, rather than passive or aggressive.

Self Defense refers to rights and responsibilities we have in our relations with others.

RIGHTS Respect yourself and assert your rights	RESPONSIBILITIES Don't contribute to the cycle of violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Control who touches our body✓ Be spoken to respectfully. No put-downs or insults✓ Set limits and enforce physical and emotional boundaries✓ Feel strong emotions, including anger✓ Protect ourselves from physical violence with physical self-defense techniques✓ Get help dealing with violence by telling someone we trust what is happening✓ Have safe intimate relationships free of fear, intimidation, threats, and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Ask permission before touching others✓ Speak respectfully to everyone, including those we have power and authority over✓ Respect the limits others set with us, even when it is not what we want✓ Learn skills to manage our anger so we aren't violent in our speech or actions✓ If possible, use more peaceful techniques like yelling or running, before striking or kicking✓ Learn skills for safe intervention and give help when we can✓ End unhealthy relationships if we can, and seek help to break free if we can't do it on our own

The Five Fingers of Self-Defense:

Think ♦ Yell ♦ Run ♦ Fight ♦ Tell

Think

- ✓ **Assertiveness** – Present yourself assertively: in voice, body and eyes.
- ✓ **Awareness** – Violence can come from strangers, acquaintances, friends, and family
- ✓ **Intuition** – Listen to the messages your body sends about possible danger
- ✓ **Attitude** – Believe you are worth defending and that you can do it!
- ✓ **Act** – Take action! Try something! If it doesn't work, change strategies.

Yell

- ✓ **Energy** – Get energy flowing. Scare the attacker. Summon assistance.
- ✓ **Voice** – Set limits, enforce personal boundaries, calm someone down, speak up for others, take charge of the situation.
- ✓ **Volume and Intensity** – Adjust as needed. Show you're willing to cause a scene or show your ability to control the situation by communicating assertively

Run

- ✓ **Escape** – Run away. Avoid danger. Get off the elevator. Leave the relationship.
- ✓ **Instincts** – Trust them; Think “What do *I* need to be safe?” NOT “What will *they* think?”
- ✓ **Keep your Power** – Believe that evasive action is brave and intelligent.

Fight

- ✓ **Choose** – Consider what is worth fighting for. Are there other options?
- ✓ **Timing** – Especially if they have a weapon. Pretend to cooperate to get them to put it down. When you choose your moment to respond, do not hold back!
- ✓ **Connect** – Your strong natural weapons to their weak vulnerable areas (especially: eyes, throat, knees and groin).
- ✓ **Commit 100%** – Bend your knees, Yell! Put your whole body behind your strike.

Tell

- ✓ **Heal** – If you have experienced violence, it is helpful to talk about it with someone you trust. It's never too late to begin talking.
- ✓ **Break the Silence** – Listen to others' experiences. Share your own. Know you're not alone in the fight to end violence.
- ✓ **Share** – Share self-defense strategies, information, and success stories with others.
- ✓ **Be an Ally** – Speak up for others when you witness biased speech.