

# MCEMS System Safety

Mike Hill, B.S., EMT-P  
Mesa County EMS System  
Coordinator



# Current Mindset

- We haven't had an EMT shot or stabbed yet so why would we worry it can happen?
- We stage until LE says the scene is safe. So how could we get shot or stabbed?
- People don't shoot at EMS providers!
- Patients will get upset with us if we ask them if they have weapons on their person or search them and their possessions.
- LE will protect us.



# New Mindset

- We are responsible for our own safety and we are willing to do what is necessary to protect ourselves, our partners, and healthcare professionals in the local hospitals.



# Cooper Mind-set

- Jeff Cooper: The Carry Book
- Color Code as it relates to the degree of peril you are willing to do something about and which allows you to move from one level of mindset to another to enable you to properly handle a given situation.
- “Your mind-set is your primary weapon.”
- WHITE -> YELLOW-> ORANGE-> RED



# Cooper Color Code

- WHITE MINDSET
- Unaware and unprepared. If attacked in condition **White**, the only thing that may save you is the inadequacy or ineptitude of your attacker. When confronted by something nasty, your reaction will probably be "Oh my God! This can't be happening to me."



# Cooper Color Code

- **YELLOW MINDSET**
- Relaxed alert. No specific threat situation. Your mindset is that "today could be the day I may have to defend myself". You are simply aware that the world is a potentially unfriendly place and that you are prepared to defend yourself, if necessary. You use your eyes and ears, and realize that "I may have to shoot today". You should always be in **Yellow** whenever you are in unfamiliar surroundings or among people you don't know. "Always cover your six."



# Cooper Color Code

- **ORANGE MINDSET**
- Specific alert. Something is not quite right and has your attention. Your radar has picked up a specific alert. You shift your primary focus to determine if there is a threat. Focus on the specific target which has caused the escalation in alert status (but you do not drop your six).



# Cooper Color Code

- **RED MINDSET**
- Condition Red is fight. Your mental trigger (established back in Condition Orange) has been tripped. "If 'X' happens I will shoot that person" — 'X' has happened, the fight is on. Time for you to fight or flight.





# WEAPONS ARE OUT THERE!

- If you don't agree, you haven't been looking for weapons and you live in a white mindset and you are a victim waiting for an attacker to find you.
- You should ask every patient if they have anything on their person or in their belongings that could harm YOU i.e. guns, knives, or sharp objects.
- You are allowed to search a patient's belongings before placing them in your ambulance.



# MIKE'S DISCLAIMER

- I WILL BE PRESENTING 10 RULES TO LIVE BY WHEN WORKING ON AN AMBULANCE.
- You should follow your agency's SOP's and by no means are my rules mandatory for MCEMS providers.



# Mike's Rules to LIVE By

1. Every patient gets searched via a primary/secondary exam *before* they are placed in your ambulance.
2. All bags, purses, backpacks, or other patient belongings should be searched *before* they are placed in your ambulance.
3. The **ONLY** people you trust to do the searches are you and your partner.



# Mike's Rules to LIVE By

4. Never RUN up to the house or building to which you are responding. Walk up while looking and listening for clues as to what might be happening.
5. Never stand in front of a door when you knock or ring the door bell.
6. When you enter a house or building, the first thing you do is plan an escape route.



# Mike's Rules to LIVE By

7. Do not approach a dark house at night.
8. While on a call, it is important to have situational awareness of all that is happening around you.
9. Don't assume the scene is safe just because law enforcement is on the scene.
10. Never transport two combatants in the same ambulance.



# I Found a Gun on My Patient. Now What? By Jeremy Jones

- Jeremy Jones is a Chief of Police with 22 years in law enforcement and 12 years as a level II firefighter in Ohio.
- First and foremost, every department or private ambulance company should have a written policy prohibiting the possession of any type of weapon (gun, knife, box cutter, screwdriver, etc.) inside the vehicle.



# MCEMS SYSTEM GUIDELINES FOR PATIENTS WITH CONCEALED CARRY FIREARMS



# Thoughts? Questions?

- Safety is something that happens between your ears, not something you hold in your hand. Jeff Cooper
- Working safely may get old, but so do those who practice it. Anonymous