

# WHERE'S THE "FIRE?"

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## WHAT TO YELL IF YOU'RE BEING ATTACKED!

Some years ago, I appeared on *The Today Show* in a segment concerning rape and fighting back—prompted by an incident in Los Angeles where a young woman, walking to her car in an empty parking garage, was jumped by a concealed assailant and raped. The segment featured two re-creations of the rape scenario with a security specialist playing the part of the attacker and a young woman volunteer playing the rape victim.

The first re-creation was identical to the original incident. Prior to the second re-creation, however, a martial arts instructor gave the woman volunteer a self defense lesson which included simple strikes and kicks, advice to keep moving and the instruction to yell "Fire" (to attract attention and assistance). After her lesson, the volunteer-victim was clearly able to prevent the rape. I was proud to appear on this program, but disagreed with the advice to yell "Fire!" even though others value it highly. Here's why:

- **The "Bystander Effect."** It's dangerous to depend on others for aid. In the real attack, the garage was empty so no one would've heard the woman yell "Fire." Even if people had been around, it's well known that most bystanders, upon hearing cries for assistance, bolt, freeze and/or are too confused to take any action.
- **Easy Target.** The real purpose for yelling is to empower you and let the attacker know he hasn't picked an easy target—not to attract attention! Many, many criminals will be dissuaded by those who respond aggressively if attacked. Thousands of accounts bear this out. Yelling "Fire" psychologically tells an assailant that you're helpless (i.e., exactly what he's looking for).

**The Warrior Yell.** One of the most important techniques I ever taught in my Personal Safety Workshops was how to bring forth a chilling "Warrior Yell" which breaks through your panic and immobilization and makes you furiously angry—exactly the frame of mind needed for aggressive self defense!

**Safety Tip:** Don't yell "Help" or "Fire." Better advice is to yell something like "Get away from me!" or "Back-off!" or something that empowers you and projects a crime-stopping, "non-victim" attitude. If there are people around, yell "Call the Police, I'm being attacked!" to direct them what to do and overcome the "Bystander" effect.

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As featured on the  
**TODAY SHOW**

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*Take a Self  
Defense class and  
learn how to rely  
on YOURSELF in  
case of trouble  
instead of  
depending on  
others to come to  
your aid!*

*No absolutes exist  
in crime scenarios  
and no advice can  
address every  
variable.*

*Evaluate each  
situation  
individually and  
only respond in  
the way you  
instinctively judge  
will ensure your  
survival.*