



tenacity—a mindset for survival.

Some time later, two of our uniformed officers—former recruits who had experienced the Pride Run—made a routine traffic stop for a boulevard stop-sign violation, not realizing the vehicle’s four occupants were heavily armed members of a terrorist organization. These men could not afford to be found with weapons and other contraband. They decided to kill the officers and flee.

As the officers approached the vehicle, suddenly all four doors flew open and the suspects began firing. Both officers were hit before they drew their guns and knocked down by the force of the bullets. One officer was struck in his hand as he attempted to return fire. The bullet coursed up his arm, disabling his gun hand. He sat down in shock, and his gun dropped to the ground. The suspects moved forward to finish the kill.

Later the officer stated, “That’s when I smelled the eucalyptus leaves.” At the end of his Pride Run, this officer had turned the corner at the west gate of Dodger Stadium. Eucalyptus trees border this small stretch of roadway just a few hundred yards from the entrance to the police academy. The scent signaled to him he had completed the run. He had persevered.

The memory of his tenacity and successful completion of the Pride Run inspired him to a new level of determination in the present struggle for survival. Somehow, he picked up his gun with his other hand and continued the gunfight. His wounded partner also began fighting back. They killed two of their assailants and wounded the other two, winning the gunfight. These officers provide testimony to the importance of the right attitude for survival.

Ethical Perseverance

Presentations or articles on officer

PHOTO DAVE STOOKTON

Tenacity Training

Develop a mindset for physical & ethical survival

After serving several years on the streets of Los Angeles as a uniformed police officer, I was called to return to the academy as an instructor. One requirement for recruit graduation was to complete a seven-mile run within a given time period. Many recruits did not relish long-distance running and often questioned the job relevance of this requirement. We admitted that police foot pursuits rarely went beyond a few hundred yards, but we had a different

Chicago Police Department cadets participate in a run through the heart of downtown. Such runs test the stamina but build the spirit.

purpose for this training, which we called “Tenacity Training.” Our purpose was to build within recruits the ability to persevere in difficult or challenging circumstances. This “Pride Run” was intended to show them they could accomplish more than normally expected if they adopted an attitude of endurance. It was designed to build

survival appropriately address tactics, strategies and preparations designed to eliminate or reduce the likelihood of physical injury or death. But other dangers, pressures and unique demands in our profession can unexpectedly strike down talented officers. Law enforcement demands a tenacious attitude toward maintaining professionalism and ethical behavior as well as perseverance in physical struggles. By far, more officers are eliminated from the service by succumbing to these so-called nonviolent “terminators.”

Our exposure to what I call the extremes of life (death, tragedy, altercations and crime) can result in building a callous attitude as a defense mechanism. A regular dose of witnessing people at their worst can result in cynicism. Remember, we are called when things go wrong, when people misbehave. Along with these exposures come many dangerous and unethical temptations. Why not “manufacture” probable cause if not doing so will set a guilty predator free? Why not leave some of the seized narcotics available to the informant if the department will not provide some expense funds for informants?

I have not known fellow officers who deliberately plan to become criminals, but I have seen many terminated and/or sent to prison after going down the slippery slope of small compromises. Just as you take steps to prepare for physical survival, take steps for ethical survival:

1. Recognize that professional ethical survival is a challenge and plan for it;
2. Talk about this aspect of survival with your partner, and identify the sources of the temptation to compromise. Discuss these threats just as you do the physical ones;
3. Declare your planned course of action if and when you must confront an ethical dilemma. We are more likely to keep commitments that we make public as opposed to those we make to ourselves; and
4. Invite accountability. Ask your partner to bring to your attention those small steps of compromise you may

easily overlook.

In Summary

Officer survival does not just happen. You are more likely to successfully complete a fulfilling career if you anticipate your challenges, plan for them and carry out your strategy—on point. **LOM**

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