



Awareness Colour Code: Your Mind is Your Key Defence Mechanism

Personal safety is an important part of our daily lives. We share some tips from Leo Prinsloo, who earned worldwide fame after footage of a failed heist was published online last year. Where you place your attention at any given moment is key to how well you can protect yourself. The below awareness colour code helps to break down your attention level, and what it means in terms of taking action.

WHITE: In this state, you are totally oblivious to everything that is happening around you. You are probably checking your phone while you wait at a robot or driving into your house, thinking about what you're going to do next. This is extremely dangerous because it means that should you suddenly find yourself in danger, you will not be prepared. Strictly speaking, you should never be in code white when you are awake.



YELLOW: This is a state of relaxed awareness. It's the state you are in when you wake up: you are starting to become alert to the sounds of the day, like traffic outside or dogs barking, but there are no noises or movements that register as threats because they are out of the ordinary. You will stay in this state as you start to prepare for the day, get dressed and take your car out of the driveway, at which point you need to become more alert and watchful. Does anything strike you as unusual? Are there any people or cars loitering or even moving towards you? If so, you need to move to the next state: Orange.



ORANGE: Now you are on alert. You're looking around with enough intent to start noticing specifics. If you've heard a strange noise, you are trying to find out where it comes from. If you see someone walking towards you, you are trying to see where their hands are.



RED: This is a decision-making state. You've ascertained that there is a threat and gathered information about it. Now you need to decide how you are going to handle it. Your decision-making process might look like this: you realise that you are facing a possible hijacker because cars are blocking you. What is the best course of action – should you try to take the hijackers by surprise by slamming on the brakes? Or should you reverse your car so hard that you ram into the hijacker's car behind you, maybe even jolting it out of the way? The action you decide on will depend on what you are willing to do, your environment, and what you feel capable of.



BLACK: We consider this the point of no return. In this state, you are facing a violent attack, and you have to defend yourself in an equally violent yet controlled manner in order to contain the threat. Violence can only be part of the solution if you are trained in this area, as it is as much a mental skill as a physical one. How you react to using violence to protect yourself and how far you are prepared to go will have a massive influence on the outcome of the situation.



Source: *Leo's Guide to Not Becoming a Statistic, with permission*

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