



The Rdella Training Podcast: Episode #241

The Complete Transcription from the interview with Aaron Jannetti, Author of “How To Survive An Active Killer.”

This is the entire transcription from the interview with Aaron Jannetti. Aaron is a self-defense expert and author of the book “How To Survive An Active Shooter: An Honest Look At Your Role In The Age of Mass Violence.”

Scott Iardella:

We are here today because I wanted to somehow be able to “make a difference” in a time of mass violence. In light of the recent shootings in Parkland, Florida where I live.

My hope is that this interview will be a valuable resource to really help people survive and possibly prevent any threat of an active shooter, in any situation, school or other, and when we hear about these incidences of mass violence and shootings that are so incredibly unfortunate.

The event that happened here in Parkland was in a school, but I think it is important to keep in mind that these tragic situations really can happen anywhere in any public setting, and this is definitely an uncomfortable topic.

It's **uncomfortable** for me to talk about, but I believe it's a necessary one, and I hope that this interview can really be a major resource for listeners here today.

Joining me today is **Aaron Jannetti**.

Aaron is the author of a recent book that I recently stumbled across and bought immediately after the unfortunate situations that happened here in Parkland.

The title of the book is *How to Survive an Active Killer: An Honest Look at Your Role in the Age of Mass Violence*.

With that said, let me just say this before we get into the interview, my heart goes out to all of the families that were effected here in Parkland.

10 days ago, 17 innocent people lost their lives, three teachers, educators, coaches, and 14 students. This incident happened literally just a few minutes away from where I sit right now, and it's hard to say that, and it's hard to think that this unimaginable thing happened in this community.

Aaron, I want to thank you for coming on the show. I know this is going to be a really valuable interview, and I know you're going to share a lot of great things.

As we get started, let me ask you this. What is the big thing that you hope that we can accomplish during this session here today?

Aaron Jannetti:

Yeah. First and foremost, again Scott, thank you very much for reaching out. As far as what we're going to try to accomplish with this conversation, there's a lot of areas where people don't understand these situations, and we're really hoping to fill some gaps because the more we understand about what's going on, the better we can prepare ourselves, the smarter the conversations we can have around, "Okay, what are maybe some **preventative measures,**" and then more importantly, the more we can **set ourselves up to be prepared** for the long-term aftermath of these types of effects.

When you get into it, if we don't understand them out of the gate, the more of a shock and awe that they are, the harder it can be in the long run, and a lot of people, it's very unfortunate, but these are, in the media at least, it's kind of a fire in the pan, a real flash fire.

It happens. Everybody's concerned about these events for a week, two weeks, and then they kind of fall by the wayside, and that's very unfortunate, but if we can start getting people to understand, "Okay, these are how these events play out. These are the realities of them. Yes, they're insanely rare, but they are possible. Let's talk about preparing," and part of that being, what are the long-term effects in the aftermath?

We can really save some lives both short-term, long-term, and everything in between, so the goal is really to educate and allow people to get a better understanding no matter what route they want to go as far as preparedness goes. You've got to understand the situation to get that done, and I hope we can accomplish that today.

Scott Iardella:

Can you tell the audience a little bit about your background, because I think that is important as we move forward in the questions in the discussion.

Aaron Jannetti:

Yeah, absolutely. I run a facility here in Columbus, Ohio, I'm in central Ohio, and we teach self-defense.

We teach strength conditioning, wellness in general, but one of the big things we've been doing is teaching courses about how to survive these events, how to prepare for these events. I have a background in various martial arts dealing with unarmed and armed.

We've been doing this pretty much for a decade. I got into educating people on these courses through a gentleman by the name of Matt Kissel who was one of my instructors when I first started, but he was a sergeant in the Gahanna Police Department, which is a local precinct out here, and he would teach situations about work, workplace violence, and school shootings, and so I was blessed with the opportunity to work with him a little bit, learn from him, and that's what got us on the journey of working with these courses.

We've been teaching these in some form or fashion, or associated in some form or fashion since about 2009, and since then we've had the pleasure of working with some really great minds in the self-defense industry, not just from a tactical aspect or a physical aspect, but also from a psychological side of things of, how does the body break down, the mind break down under the stresses of fear?

We'll talk today about guys like Tony Blauer. We'll talk today about guys like Rob Pincus and Ryan Hoover, and it's more than just what people kind of imagine. It's not just about owning a gun and using it. It's not just about running. It's not just about possibly doing unarmed stuff. There's a lot that goes into this stuff. **It's very complex.**

We've been studying that off and on for a very long time. In 2015, unfortunately right after San Bernardino and the Paris Attack, we were very busy.

It's a very unfortunate thing to be busy with, but I talk about 80 courses just in the 12 months of 2016, and it gave us an opportunity to learn even more. Up to that point, we only taught maybe one or two, maybe three seminars a year, and it gave us an opportunity to learn from the people taking the course, what's working, what's not working, how are these things adapting, and so I tell people all the time, we've got plenty of certifications

and diplomas and things that we could put on a teaching resume, but the most important part is that we then spend many hours working with thousands of different people to see what is actually helping and studying these things, and I would say that's probably the most relevant piece of our background and how we approach these things.

Scott Iardella:

What would you say to a listener who says that we shouldn't learn how to survive - **we need to stop the problem in the first place?**

Aaron Jannetti:

Yeah. There's a lot of different angles to that question, and the one thing that you're going to find out during this interview, I'm going to be as honest as I possibly can with everything. I don't think there's anybody that's going to disagree with the fact that we should be putting efforts towards stopping these things. I have my thoughts on that. Everybody has their thoughts on that based off their experiences and their backgrounds and their beliefs. We're all in the same place with that as far as our desire to stop them.

The problem is, violence as a whole is not new. If you're on the biblical side of things, you can go back to Cain and Abel and everything else that goes into it, but if you're just in a historical mindset, it's not new. What is shocking about events like this is that we lose so many people at one time, and it's in a place where we would expect it to be safe, and that's where the problem is.

It's that this specific type of violence is now making its way into what we would commonly see as safe places. One of the references that we give all the time is every large city has their bad neighborhood, their bad area, where there's a lot of gang violence, maybe there's drug issues, you can read about one or two or three murders almost every day in those areas. Larger cities have that problem, and we aren't surprised by that because it's an area where we go into. Okay, that's kind of expected.

When people go off to war, casualty is kind of expected. Law enforcement officers, it's their job to run towards danger. Violence is expected for them. Where it becomes an issue is when it comes into our safe spaces, when people are showing up to churches and coming into schools and murdering children. That's shocking, but violence isn't going to stop, and again, that is not saying that we don't focus on preventative measures, but the most

important thing that any of us can do today is to start to prepare ourselves, our family, and make sure that we are better taken care of, and even though the context of this podcast specifically is dealing with mass violence, this is basic stuff, the same exact things that we're going to talk about, the same ideas, the psychology, the aftermath, the options are no different if you have a home invasion scenario where somebody's coming into your house to rob, steal, or kill your family.

It's no different than a carjacking scenario. It's no different than a domestic violence situation that then turns into raged violence. It's no different than a road rage situation that turns into it.

Violence has been there, and so preparing for those things, knowing that we can't avoid them, knowing that it's unfortunate, but law enforcement is not going to get there fast enough, they're always behind the curve on this stuff, and it's not for lack of trying, it's for distance and time and the fact that they're human and they have to deal with bad information, so we have to understand that we have a personal responsibility to care for ourselves. If we talk about medicine and dealing with trauma care and stopping blood loss from a mass shooting situation, that's no different than if you get into a very bad car accident, and now you have traumatic blood loss in a family member, you should know those **basic skills** that can maybe buy time until EMS can show up, and eventually EMS can get them over to the hospital.

So I don't think it's a one or the other. I think we need to focus, yes, on learning how to prevent these things and learning where did we do right when we stopped these things before they started and where did we do wrong when they turned out bad?

That's huge and we can't avoid that, but the one thing that will hold true front to back, top to bottom, is at the end of the day, the absolute last line of defense is you and your family, and that's not fortunate. I'm not saying it's fair, but it's life, and it's tragic if you think about Parkland specifically, but if you look at the warning signs beforehand, you look at all the issues that came up leading into this event, you look at some of the things that are coming to light lately about law enforcement response time and how that was handled, as terrible as it sounds, there's not a better example of why it is so important for the individual to know how to care for themselves and to learn how to make really, really big decisions, life or death decisions in those moments.

That stuff is attainable. It's trainable. It's learnable.

We're not downplaying the intensity of these. We're not downplaying the levity of the situation, but it's possible. You can see it in actions. You see the coach that jumped in front of bodies. You see the student who held the door shut. It's possible to do that, and the more we train people and prepare them and get through that, the more likely those things happen.

Scott Iardella:

Do you think this is more of a new standard today, where we need to learn how to care for ourselves in the age of, again, mass violence in these ... What are the stats on these incidences, as well?

Aaron Jannetti:

If you look at some of the probably more accurate statistics will be pulled from DHS. They put out a study originally that covered 2000 to 2013, and then they've since then gone and done 2014, 2015, and we'll see statistics from '16 and '17 coming out as well, and the trends are that, yes, the frequency is going up.

It seems to be holding the same trend and the same intensity it has going across, but again, that doesn't mean it's new, and that's what's really, really, really hard, because yes, the frequency is going up, but if you were to look at it, *it's still very unlikely.*

As much as we're hearing it, there's this new threat and this new attack and things like that, in the long run, it's still very unlikely, and that's hard to balance that and accept that with how much it's in our face in the day to day, but even if the statistics were saying that we're on a down curve and it's five times less likely, ten times less likely, it's still likely, and what I try to explain to people is you can pull statistics up and I can take statistics and I can twist them to my agenda and you can take statistics and twist them to your agenda, and we can do that all day, but even if there's a 1% chance, or let's say a .00001% chance that this will ever happen to you or somebody that you love, those statistics didn't matter at the school.

It didn't matter at Pulse. It didn't matter at the Fort Lauderdale Airport, and that's just talking about Florida, so know matter how small or how large those statistics are, it's still a possibility.

One of the things that is often brought up in active shooter training is in schools we do fire drills constantly. We love fire code. Buildings have to be built to fire code. You can find a fire extinguisher almost everywhere. Just here at our facility, the fire marshal came in for his routine, "Hey, are you following the rules?" We love fire code. There hasn't been a death in a school fire since I think 1966.

As we get into it, the statistics on that ever happening are so low, but we still respect that it can happen, and we still have put things in place and we've trained people and we've learned, and I don't know exactly what's done nowadays, but when we were in school, you learned stop, drop, and roll. You learned the basic aspects of how a fire extinguisher worked. You learned obviously your basic fire drill which is pretty common, but we also were taught the whole idea that if there's a lot of smoke, you wet a cloth and put it over your mouth, a lot of basic, simple things.

A fire is terrifying, but we know that it's a possibility. We know that it's severely unlikely, but we know it's a possibility and we know we should educate people and physically train them on it, and it shouldn't be any different, no matter what the statistics are, and so no, I don't think there's a problem. We use statistics to guide our training, but even a 1% chance is a 1% chance, and so you have to respect even the smallest of statistics when it goes into it. You have to avoid falling into stereotypes and things like that, which is tough. It's tough because statistics are ... You can't argue with them, right? This is the number, but unfortunately, the statistics don't matter when it affects the people that it affects.

Scott Iardella:

How do we feel safe? I'm sure you've had that question before.

Aaron Jannetti:

Well, I'm going to give you **an analogy**, and I'm almost positive I stole this from Ryan Hoover, but if you moved near water, like you got a house on a lake and you had kids, you would be concerned that they might drown, possibly.

That's got to be at least a concern in the back of your head, so what is the absolute best way to avoid your kid drowning or avoid you drowning, is to educate yourself on how to swim, educate yourself on how that water works, does it freeze, are there tides, pending on where that body is, and it's

education is what it is. When we see things that are scary, we like to avoid the topic, and the problem with avoidance on that topic or following into the ignorance is bliss mentality, is that when it then does hit us, we are scared because we don't understand it.

If I were to come in and tell you, "Hey, look. In our training courses, I'm going to teach you that if you are in a situation where you had no other choice, you could not run, you couldn't find cover, concealment, or a barricade, and you were stuck face to face with a gunman and you had to grab onto a gun," if you don't know how that gun works, it's going to be very hard to understand how you could stop the gun, and so that's where a lot of this fear comes into place. That does not mean that as much as I know about this stuff, that does not mean that I'm not terrified of these things happening. I tell people all the time, I've spent my life teaching this. It's what I do. Violence and dealing with violence, and that doesn't mean that I am completely safe. It doesn't mean that this stuff doesn't just scare the snot out of me. It absolutely does.

I have kids. I have a wife. I have a family. They go to the movies. They go to church. They are going to eventually be going to school. They're in day cares and things like that, so there's a fear, but I understand the situations to a point where I can then see how we can survive them, increase our chance of surviving them, understand how they're playing out, and because we understand a little more about them, we educate ourselves on them, they became less paranoid frightening.

It doesn't mean you're not going to be any less scared in the moment, but it becomes less of a, "Oh my God, I can't go see a movie now. Oh my God, I don't want to send my kids to school. They don't feel safe," because we're educating them, and again, it's been proven time and time again that if you take somebody who's uncomfortable and scared with something and you actually educate them on it and you put them in those positions and you make them work through it, that it's vastly more beneficial than it is negative, but if I don't learn those things and I don't put myself in those positions I'll never be comfortable.

It's like driving on a freeway. If you took a kid out to the busiest freeway the first time he ever got into a car, he's going to be terrified, but if I start to educate him on how the car works and what the road laws are, and I take him into a parking lot to drive and we drive from a parking lot to a street, a neighborhood and then a neighborhood to a main causeway, and then all of

a sudden we're on freeways, we've educated ourselves to understand what this big, vast thing is, and we're less scared and we do it better and we perform better, and I know some people are going to say, "That's a far stretch talking about somebody coming in and murdering a bunch of people and driving on the highway," but from a learning curve, it's not.

It's not any different. This is just now it's driving on the highway, but it's 500 miles an hour in a race car. It's still the same idea. We build towards it, but we can understand and we can be less fearful of it in the day to day.

Scott Iardella:

You know a lot about this subject. What do you think could be done in the short-term to help prevent these type of situations, and then also in the long-term? If there were changes to go in effect over the next five years, what kind of changes would really help to really prevent these type of situations from happening?

Aaron Jannetti:

Yeah. The one thing I tell people all the time is I don't claim to be a preventative measures expert.

I have my opinions and my thoughts on it in the long run, and I think we all do, but these situations are complex. Let's say that we took every school in the entire nation and we gave them bulletproof glass and locks and cameras and you had to buzz in, and we did a really good job of preventing people from getting into schools and shooting, that's not going to stop the crazy individual from going up and shooting up a movie theater, unless we just turn the entire country into a complete lockdown.

If we passed sweeping gun law tomorrow, it still wouldn't go into effect for six to eight to ten months, and then there'd be long-term things after that, and then we're to a point right now where with over 200 million guns, with the statistics going out around that where how do you get rid of all of those? Can you actually track them? What are the resources and finances going behind actually tracking and supposedly destroying all of them?

I've had two guns that have completely bit the dust, and I've just gotten rid of them, like disposed of them properly, but they just don't exist anymore, and nobody's going to know that. There's no, outside of maybe going and looking back, all of mine have been done through FFLs, so there's records

of it in the long run, but the fact of the matter is, whatever we do today, if we do a thing, it's not going to completely mitigate this.

It might slow it down, but we're talking about when violence takes place, violence is going to take place. Everybody wants to talk mental health issues. They want to talk gun laws. They want to talk individual responsibility of parents taking care of their kids. See something, say something.

All of these need addressed. It's not a thing. There's no band-aid. You can't say, "If we pass an assault weapons ban tomorrow, this is going to solve all of this. If we pass mental health stuff tomorrow, this is going to solve all this."

In the short-term and the long-term, we want the government to fix this, but **the one true north that will always take place is that we can start individually today in our household.**

How do we educate kids on signs of what other people look like, and how do we understand that okay, we told law enforcement several times that this was going to happen, so now how do we fix that? How many laws are in place that aren't strictly being followed, whether it's gun laws or mental health laws? We put sweeping measures in schools, how are we tracking every school to make sure that 24 hours a day, 265 days a year, they're following the protocols?

It's a lot bigger problem to digest from a solving it, I believe, legislation-wise and things like that. I'm not saying those can't be good things in the short-term or the long-term to prevent it, but it's more than just one piece, and I have a feeling that a lot of people fixate on one thing. People that are gun people tend to focus on mental health, and then people that are on the opposite side tend to focus on guns.

There's probably fixes on both sides of that. If we don't have a legitimate functional conversation about it, civil conversation about it, we won't fix it, and if we do put new laws in place, if we don't actually perform the tasks, give the money they're going to need, the resources, whether it's through hiring employees and things like that, we're not going to make those changes anyway, but if we start ... It sounds a little flowery and things like that, but the reality of it is, if we start getting back to actually having conversations like this with our families, talking to our neighbors.

How many families still sit down and have family dinner and ask their kids what things are going on and find out things that way and track their mood that way?

If we start reaching out and taking care of our one community and everybody did that, again, I know for a lot of people, they're going to go, "That's not it. That sounds flowery. It's inside of my community. That's too small," but the fact of the matter is, if you're worried about it affecting your community, everybody takes two seconds to better their community, I believe that's going to get things done faster on our level. We have a tendency to forget that we technically are still in control of a lot of stuff.

We want to go, "It's the government's fault this happened or it's the NRA's fault this happened or it was this person because they didn't follow up," and I get that, they should've done their job, and you might not agree with the thoughts that are out there, but the reality of it is we still are in control of a lot, and there's still a lot we can do, and I think we've had a tendency to push that responsibility off on other people and let them take control, and it's just not the way it is.

You can start local and build out, and you've have a faster sweeping effect that way. I believe that. A lot of people are going to disagree, but there's not one answer. Short-term, long-term, there's not, and I respect that that sucks. I really, really, really do. We are a people that want one answer. I want to say that if we pass this law, this will be over, but it's not. That's not the way it's going to work.

Even if you look at, and I know it was a hit to everybody, the house bill 219 in Florida that was turned down, but even if you were to look at that, even if that got passed, it wasn't going to go into effect until October 1st, 2018, so nothing was going to get done until then, and then even the registration process I believe for people that owned stuff prior to that date, they didn't even have to register until a year later, like October 1st, 2019, I believe, and so the timeline is on that. If you wanted to say, "Hey, how do we fix this in a year?"

Even that bill wasn't fixing anything in a year, and I don't think people realize the government moves pretty slow, but we could start today taking care of our areas and our neighborhoods and things like that, and again like I said, I know it sounds flowery, but it's true. You take care of your house and it builds out from there.

Scott Iardella:

Like you said, there's a lot of different problems. It's a multilayered, problematic situation that's going on here. When you look at the thing in Florida, a lot of things were dropped.

Every day there's something new about another loophole, some sign that was missed with this kid. What I can tell you, and again, this is not my area of expertise at all, but I've learned a lot about gun laws in the last 10 days, and the laws here are lax for sure. A lot of things you just said though, the timelines and getting laws changed, I didn't know that. I'm not up on this stuff.

Aaron Jannetti:

One of the things, and I wrote a post about this the other day, because they're presenting a bill here in Ohio, it's like HB260, but it's essentially an assault weapons and high capacity magazine style bill, and again, you want to talk about things that we can do personally, and it's actually take the time ... This isn't a challenge in any way, shape or form, this is me trying to advise people, but as these bills come up, if you want to understand why they get voted down, and you want to understand why maybe people are resistant of it, you've got to go in and read the bill.

It's a lot of stuff that is surrounded by legalese and terminology that really words things in ways that you'd be like, "It makes absolute sense to ban assault weapons and high capacity magazines," somebody might think that and understand that, but if you look at the terminology in the bill that's coming out in Ohio, they're claiming assault weapon to be any automatic or semi-automatic firearm essentially that takes anything over 10 rounds, and that's not the common accepted, normal, even from a legislation standpoint, definition of an assault weapon. It's usually a select fire where you can get fully automatic and things like that.

Then you have a bill that's being presented to the people as an assault weapons ban, but would actually ban 90% of firearms, and that's a problem because then what ends up happening is if people do read it, one or two people read it, it gets shared that that's the way it is, and all of a sudden now you don't even trust your government to present logical bills, and why is that bill going to get absolutely voted down? It's because in Ohio, we have relatively loose gun laws as well, and even if you were to have an educational or a civil conversation about, "All right, gun people, let's talk

about what are some acceptable laws to this," you can't go from zero to 90. You're going to get very, very visceral pushback from people.

Again, I don't care where you fall on that side of the fence. I don't care if you're way over here where you're like, "Don't take my guns away. Don't touch my guns. I have full right." I don't care if you're way over here, "Banish all guns and get rid of them." You're not going to make any progress if it's all or nothing, you know what I mean?

That's one of those things, and so the problem is you have, and again, this is speaking locally in Ohio, but you have a bill that comes out that presents itself as an assault weapons bill, but it's not.

It's "jargoned" in where it literally would take ... I teach firearm training. I teach gun safety. I teach people how to defend themselves. Even with active shooter courses, when we teach our response to action shooter courses, the firearms that we have converted for training, technically in the long run would be banned by this bill that's coming out, and these are guns that we've essentially made into training ones that only shoot blanks or nonlethal firing rounds and things like that.

That becomes a problem. You can't have that conversation, and again, I refuse to position myself on one side or the other. I see both arguments. If I put myself in somebody else's shoes, I'd have the same exact opinion based off their experience levels, but we're not going to have smart conversations if we're not reading into everything, so HB219, the one that was voted down there in Florida, it was only 20 pages, and it really wasn't a super complex thing, and I don't know the exact reasons.

It's politics, so I'm sure there's maybe money changing hands, and I'm sure there's positions and opinions on things, and that's there, but if you look at the language on it, one of the areas in it is talking about essentially restricting and banning guns with seven rounds or less, and that's their definition of a high capacity magazine, and that bans a lot of guns.

And so even if 90% of that bill would maybe have been accepted, that 10% where you say, "It's either this or nothing," might be the reason it gets voted down, but we wouldn't know that because all you guys heard, for the most part, was there was an assault weapons ban on the table and it got voted down, and that's unfortunate, and they don't make it easy to find that stuff.

You would have to go to the legislation website, and you'd have to look up HB219, and you'd have to click on the PDF, and you'd have to take the time to read it. They're not making an effort to put it out there for you to read it, but that's something we can fix.

If I'm going into that and I want to make a debate for HB219 or I want to make a debate against it, I sure as heck better go in there and read that 20 pages and read every word of it, and make sure that I understand why it's not going to pass or why it is going to pass, and then be able to have good conversations around that, and that's very unfortunate that they don't make it blatantly plastered out, "This is the 20 pages. Read through it," but they know most people aren't going to read it.

It's a boring 20 pages unless you're very interested in the topic and you're going to go in there and read it. That's the unfortunate measure. You've got to really watch what floats around the internet on all sides.

I keep saying both sides, but it's all sides. People that are for it, people that are against it, people that are pushing mental health.

I try my best, and I was having this conversation the other day, as much as I can't stand Facebook, people can't live without it, but I know I'm at least keeping honest when my feed is a mixture of all sides, and it's not just things that I agree with, and there's things that challenge me, and I try to make it a point to read all sides of it and try to understand the conversation the best way that I possibly can, but it's easy with the metrics and the things that social media does, where they want you to stay, so they want you to see things you want to see.

It's easy to fall into seeing the same thing you agree with over and over again, and it's swaying your judgment, and that's unfortunate, but it limits our ability to have constructive conversations, and even if again, I hate to say it, but even if I'm 90% accurate on a speech I give, but if I say one word or one phrase that is wrong, inaccurate, or comes off as ... It shoots the credibility of the conversation down, and that's not how it should be.

I should be able, from the other side if I was on the other side, I should be able to see, "Hey, you know what? I agree with 90% of that. There was one section I didn't agree with. Let's have a conversation," but what soundbite are you going to see on your Facebook feed for the next week, two weeks?

It's going to be that one soundbite that proves that that person didn't know what they were talking about, and it completely shuts down their argument on there.

It's complex. It's complex all the way down to us and the way that we understand it, and again, I know that sucks. I'm not great at, "Here's the one answer," but we're going to get there again one by one, by getting a little more involved, educating ourselves, understanding things.

If you want to make an argument against guns, then the first place to start is go find somebody that likes guns and go shooting with them. Understand how the gun operates, what it smells like, what it feels like, how fast it fires.

Understand. Ask them questions about how they got that firearm. **Educate yourself on the opposite side**, educate yourself on the subject, and then we can have some smarter conversations about it, and again, I don't want anybody to think that I'm saying everybody is an idiot. That's not it. It's just we have a tendency to go, "Man, I read this article and it said this, this, this, and this," and we don't vet the information or we don't take time to talk to somebody that's in the middle of the road, and most people are in the middle of the road.

There's this whole idea that it's the right-wing NRA versus the liberal snowflakes or whatever everybody wants to call them. Think about the conversations you have with 95% of the people you encounter.

They're usually middle of the road conversation. **They just want to know how to prevent these things.** They're not falling on one side or the other. They're not wanting to hurt anybody in any way, shape, or form. We just want to know how to stop this stuff, whether that means this, this, this, give or take in the middle, and the problem is we just don't see that stuff because the middle of the road conversations don't happen as often.

Scott Iardella:

Well, like you said, gun laws are very complex. Again, I don't know enough about it at all. I think it's interesting that you say that if you want to ... What did you say again about going and basically learning about a gun from someone who loves guns? Why do you say that? Let me understand that a little bit more.

Aaron Jannetti:

Here's the thing. What is the best way to talk to somebody about my opinion on a subject other than to learn their opinion on a subject and why it is that way and experience it?

If you're going to go, and again, I cannot stress this enough. I'm going to say it 500 times. I'm not saying I'm on either side of it, but if I'm going to come to you and say, "Hey, look, I'm a firearms instructor," you want to have a conversation about banning all these guns and things like that, let me take you out, let me have you shoot a handgun, let me have you shoot an AR if I can get my hands on an automatic one, which is a lot harder than a lot of people actually think. Let's shoot that. Let me put this in your hands so that you understand from both sides of this how it actually works, how long does it take to load a magazine, how long does it take to change a magazine, how long does it take to clear a jam?

I think conversations like that are going to be a lot more productive because now you can sit back and go, "You know what? I went out and I fired this exact gun, the one that was used in this situation, and now I know exactly how it fires. I know exactly the physical capability you have to have to fire it. I know exactly what it can get done," and I'm not saying that's going to sway your judgment the other direction, but I'm saying now you can verbalize why from experience, and that's not just good from a conversational piece, but that's also good from a fighting piece, because if I'm deathly afraid of firearms or if I've never been around firearms, I'm not going to be able to understand, as I mentioned earlier, how I can survive that situation.

If you were to say, and this is a conversation that we get all the time, "How can you even think for two seconds to teach students how to fight a vicious armed gunman?" The reality of it is, again if you want to play a little bit of statistics, **the majority of these people are not strong, physically fit, able-bodied people.**

That's why they're hiding behind a gun. That's why they got in the position they got into, and I'm not saying weakness is a reason for anybody to shun you and things like that, but that's usually the instance. If you look at the person, we try not to use their names, but the person that shot up the school recently, he's not a big guy. He's not a well-bodied guy. If I can get to a point where the gun cannot harm me because I understand where that position is, that's not a complicated fight. It's not a complicated fight for a 15 year-old, 16 year-old, 17 year-old, 18 year-old.

I'm five foot eight, 170 pounds. I had a nephew that by the time he was 15 was a foot taller than me and weighed 40 more pounds than I did. That fight can take place, but you can't expect to know that unless you've been behind that gun, understand how that guns works, and we can have a logical conversation about how the gun works, and then we also can't begin to understand that unless I take you in and show you what it feels like to fight over a gun and try to survive a life or death situation in there, obviously doing it in a safe training environment.

So I understand when people want to say, "How could we possibly let somebody go in and buy this death machine or machine of war," or any of the terminology around it, and I understand how people could say, "How could you want to train a kid? There's no way I could stop a gunman," but you don't know that unless you've been there, and if we're going to get something done, there's nothing that is going to be better for your debate, I don't care what side you're on, but nothing is going to be better to your debate than to be able to speak to the context of the person that you're arguing with or debating with or discussing with, and if you've never shot a gun, any gun, handgun, revolver, rifle, different types of rifles, shotgun, whatever it is, then you can't make an educated conversation on it.

You're making assumptions based off of maybe what you've seen in movies, based off of what the media has told you, based off of what Facebook has told you and your friends have told you.

It's unfortunate. If you think back years and years ago, you said earlier, are we to a point where we have to start protecting and learning to defend ourselves, and we never left that point. It's just that we got better about more formalized law enforcement departments and more formalized first responders, and so we got complacent. EMS will be here in 10 minutes, so if I'm having a heart attack I can deal with it then. No, I should deal with it right now, and we should know how to deal with that, but if you think about it, if you owned a farm 60, 70 years ago, you knew basic medical stuff out of necessity. You owned a gun to protect your land out of necessity, and no, we're not in that place, we're quote unquote a lot more civilized and a lot more modern and things like that, but the understanding of that shouldn't have left.

It's adapted. It's changed. If you live in the inner city, then you better know about guns and how they work and things like that. If you're afraid that somebody might come in and shoot up your church or your school, you

have to go learn about these things so that you can have the conversations in a way that's going to be respected, and then also prepare yourself better for it.

Scott Iardella:

In a situation like what just happened here, someone that had the proper training and background, could they have somehow intervened and taken this guy down with knowledge, some of the knowledge that you're talking about, and then again, basic self-defense skills that you teach that are outlined in your book? Is it possible to overcome a kid that has a gun like this?

Aaron Jannetti:

Yeah. Here's the thing, it's been done. It's been done several times. Again, if you want to play with statistics and things like that, and again, I don't care what the actual statistics are, but if you want to go back into it from 2000 to 2013, the first study that DHS put out, they identified what they believed was 160 situations that met their criteria for mass violence, active shooters, and **21 of those 160 situations were ended by unarmed civilians**, so it's been done. It's been done several times. That does not mean it's easy. That does not mean it'll be super simple.

The exact question you asked earlier is, in this specific situation, could somebody have stopped him? I don't know. The only way that I would be able to know is if I was able to see security camera footage from everything and say, "This incident, this incident, this incident." I don't know. The chaos of a fire alarm and then gunshots and then smoke grenades and all that stuff, those are a lot of variables.

Can training increase your likelihood of surviving? Absolutely. Can **medical training** *possibly* have saved one or two of the lives of the victims that got shot? Absolutely. All of those things matter, and a lot of people get hung up on what we mostly hear about, as far as responding to these things physically, is **run, hide, fight**. That's the big national terminology behind everything, and it's a good step by step process, well not step by step because it's cyclical, but it's a good idea.

We're getting good information. Don't be there if you can. If you can't be there, try to keep the bad guy away from you, and then if you can't, fight

back. That's great, but that's only a couple of the pieces of it, and people have a tendency to do one of two things.

They either don't discuss fighting at all.

They say, "Well, as a very last resort, fight back," but they don't tell you how or train you how, or the opposite end of that entire thing, which is, "All you want to do is talk about fighting." That's a piece. That's one piece of the entire thing when it goes into it.

So yes, run, hide, fight. If you can take the term run, hide, fight, and apply it to areas that make sense, awesome. Run, hide, fight on its own is just a tagline, and if there's no training applied to it, then it doesn't mean anything.

Personally, we think the term hide is terrible because it assumes getting underneath a desk and waiting for law enforcement to show up, and that's not proactive. That's not increasing your chance of surviving.

There's a lot of pieces to it. Medical training is a huge piece of that. How do I interact with responding law enforcement officers?

One of the issues that came up specifically in this school situation and happens in all of them is parents want to call and find out where their kids are, but if I'm trying to stay concealed away from something, I don't want my phone ringing, so how do we teach the parents how to deal with that situation or the kids to silence their phones? There's a lot that goes into it. It can't be simplified into one piece of the puzzle, so could somebody, could everybody's chances be increased of surviving that situation? Absolutely.

Do we ever get to 100% guarantee that we don't die or get injured? No. It's physically impossible.

Let's say, and obviously this is hypothetical, but let's say that the fire alarm goes off, and you're making your evacuation, and when you go to turn the corner, you're 10 feet from the gunman, and now you have people behind you that might limit your ability to go backwards, the exit is 10 feet behind the gunman, and now I have these couple of different options.

Let's say we have three main options. Try to push back through the crowd and go backwards around the corner, run past the gunman to the exits behind him, or attack the gunman, and let's say that you have a 50% chance

if you run back. Let's say you have a 30% chance if you run past the gunman, and let's say you have a 15% chance if you attack the gunman.

What you need to understand is in all of those cases, you could survive or not. Does that make sense? I could tell you, "Just run. The best course of action is running."

I would love it if every situation ended that way where I just made it away from the bad guy and nothing bad happened, but what are my chances in the exact position that I'm in of that taking place? If I'm running past the gunman, can I get to the door before I get shot? If I'm running past the gunman and I'm going to be very close to him anyway, do I have higher chances or odds if I intercept the gun? If I intercept the gun, maybe I get injured, but is there a possibility that I mess with his psychology and he takes his own life and that ends the threat, and either I survive the situation harmed or unharmed, or maybe I don't survive, but maybe I stop the situation sooner.

Again, that's not me saying jump on the bad guy, everybody be a hero.

I don't think that's part of it at all, but I think people have a tendency to believe that it's three simple steps, and if you do these steps, you win, and that's not how it works.

You're going to be in a very chaotic situation.

You have to process information. You have to make a decision as soon as possible in a very short period of time, and you're only going to be able to make that decision based off past experience, and so if you don't have any experience in any way, shape, or form, if you don't know how a gun works, if you don't know what a gun sounds like, if you don't have medical training, if you've never trained in practice fighting, if you've never taken the time to understand the multiple routes of evacuation out of the building that you're in, if you've never taken time to understand that maybe we can break a window, and even though we're on the third story, maybe there's a way for me to drop, or maybe we're putting ladders in the third story classrooms and things like that.

If we've never done that, then now we're expecting these teachers and the kids and the parishioners and things like that at the churches, and the people that are out at malls, we're expecting them to make the hardest decision of their life, that could end in them dying, with no prior

experience. None. Now, your chances of getting away and surviving that situation drastically decrease because you're taking your options away, and that's where we're really big.

We want people to understand it's an individual response to this stuff. Scott, if you and I were in a room with 12 other people and a gunman entered the room and started shooting, the 12 of us would have **12 completely different experiences** in that event. It's not the same event. It might be the same shooter, it might be the same room, and it might be the same people around us. We're all experiencing that situation completely differently.

Whether we're shot, we're close to the gunman, far away from the gunman, near and exit, not near an exit, have prior fight training, don't have prior fight training, carrying a weapon, not carrying a weapon, know medical care, don't know medical care, all of these things are going to change that, and nobody is going to perform in a cookie cutter fashion and that's one of the most important things that I think we just keep coming back to is it comes down to individual training.

That individual training, it's not to scare people. It shouldn't make you paranoid. It should do the opposite. It should make you feel prepared to understand that these things do happen. Even though they're still very unlikely and very rare if you look at statistics, still very rare, but they can happen, and if I don't train for them and prepare for them, then I'm cutting off my own legs.

That's not victim blaming in any way, shape, or form. That's trying to educate people going forward. If we know we can't stop these immediately, then how do we start preparing and chipping away and making things better?

Maybe somebody can take the gunman out. I don't know. It would depend on the situation. It depends on how close did he get to people when he was shooting? Did anybody stop short and try to plead with him? You wouldn't know that unless you went back and watched the footage, and the problem when most people go back and watch the footage, which I don't foresee many people outside of law enforcement being able to ever see the footage, but when people do go back and they watch reenactments or they watch security camera footage, they want to Monday morning quarterback it, and they want to do it from that perspective and say, "I would've done this and I

would've done that," and it's absolutely false. It's a total lie. You are lying to yourself.

You have no idea what you would do. None.

All you can do is prepare yourself the best way you can prepare, and then hope you make the best decision possible under those circumstances. It's sad, but it's true. We go around and I train people, and we'll get done with a four, five, eight hour seminar where we've been running them into the ground, we put them in live scenarios with fully functioning firearms with audible blanks and actually having to run and actually having to stuff gunshot wounds and call 911 and interact with maybe a responding officer and tackle a bad guy and hide, and we do all of that stuff, and at the end of it, still, you have no idea how you're going to respond.

We're just trying to chip away and make it more likely that you'll get there.

Scott Iardella:

Yeah. That's really the thing is what happens when all of that training and preparation goes out the window in a real world situation? One of the things you said earlier in the very beginning was that the body and mind breaks down in the face of fear. Is it possible to really train ... Let's say someone picks up your book, they attend a workshop, and they've learned some basic concepts, how do you know that that's not going to change when it really happens.

Aaron Jannetti:

For some people it won't, and it's very unfortunate, but it's true. For some people, from the get go, you're a person that takes active, you're proactive, you go forward, you've had those experiences your entire life, if you pick the book up, and again, the first sentence in the book is, "**This book is not enough.**"

It's just not. When you go into it, the ability and the likelihood of you actually taking action, making smarter decisions, increases every time you train, so it's not picking up a book, it's not training one time. When I pick up a book, if it's a good book, I am more likely to do something and act better because now I have the education on it.

When I attend a training session, I'm a little bit more likely to do better, and if I train again, I'm more likely to do better, and if I train again, I'm more likely to do better.

That's how we chip away and increase those chances of surviving, how we increase those chances of psychologically breaking through that fear freeze and moving past it, and again, you want to talk about understanding. If you're going to go, and this is a cop out that everybody has and you see it on the internet all the time, no one is smarter than somebody in the comments section on social media. Everybody is a genius and they know what they're talking about, but if you go into it, they'll say, "There's no way anybody could stop it. They'll all break down," all that fun stuff. If you take the time to research how the body responds under stress, you can understand that there are ways to shorten how much you freeze. The distance away from the threat increases your likelihood of doing something properly and making better decisions.

The longer you have warning increases your likelihood of doing better. The closer and closer in proximity to the event itself, the more chaotic it's going to be, so in that situation there, the only way to get better is to train, and little by little by little, and one of the things that's in the book is how do we do that, and resources are out there.

Let's say you go through the book and you go, "**I've never thought about medical training and being able to stop traumatic blood loss.** Maybe I should go attend a course."

I can show you courses across the nation, whether it's just a basic Stop the Bleed campaign from NEMT, which is essentially like CPR now where they're getting to a point where they're realizing, "We used to teach CPR and make everybody do it. We came up with a hands-on policy, which is pretty much I don't care if you're trained or not, jump down and start pushing on the sternum," ECON and stop the bleed is trying to do that.

You can find a course on that and you'll be more likely to do something productive and make the decision to take action if you have that training, and then you go and, "*I don't feel comfortable with the idea of jumping on a gun. Guns scare me. How do I increase my chances of shortening the freeze when a gun is present? I go shooting. I get around guns. I get comfortable guns.*"

That does not mean I want you to buy a gun. That doesn't mean I need you to carry a gun. It doesn't mean I expect you to do any of that, but if you know that the gun scares you, the only way to shut down that freeze and to maybe get past it and push past it is to get around the gun. Start to realize how they operate it, when they're dangerous, and when they're not dangerous.

Can you take somebody and train them to take action? Absolutely.

When you get in these traumatic situations and you fall in the freeze, your brain is trying to recall a time in your life where you experienced something similar to this, and if it can't do that, it keeps freezing and processing and I don't know what to do, and it'll either revert to basic instinctual things, which is drop down to the fetal position or just turn and run, or it'll come up with a plan that it thinks is effective and may or may not be effective, but **the more I've put myself close to those situations, the shorter I can make that freeze** because my brain can go, "*We've been here before.*"

It doesn't mean you'll make the right decision.

It doesn't mean you won't freeze. It means that we can shorten that freeze and we can get to a point where we take action a little bit faster, but it's not, again, just like fixing and preventing these things, it's not a bandaid. If you go to a class, you're not done.

You just took one step to more likely surviving these situations. You've got to put time in. You've got to train. You've got to go into it. It doesn't always have to cost a lot of money. It doesn't always have to be insanely time consuming. In the book, I talk a lot about **mindset drills**, things you can do that cost absolutely zero money and you can set yourself up better for success and have plans and make yourself more likely to take action.

Resources online that you can find where you can see some drills that you can practice with a friend.

All too often we think that we have to find an expert on these things and if I'm not training under the explicit eyes of the expert, then I'm not going to be productive and that's not true.

I tell people all the time when you leave my course, pick out the things that you didn't feel comfortable with, and if fighting back and controlling a

weapon and trying to survive that scared you, find a buddy, buy a gymnastics mat and a \$20 training gun on Amazon and practice a lot.

Go out and buy medical gear. You can't do any of that stuff if you don't train it, if you don't practice it, if you don't prepare for it.

Again, **can I train somebody to break fear? Absolutely.**

There's a gentleman by the name of **Tony Blauer**, and literally his entire career has been about understanding how we respond to fear and then learning how to break through that and take action to it. He's got tons of resources available online.

There's books. Lieutenant Colonel Grossman has books on what it's like to have somebody try to kill you, what it's like to have to kill somebody, and you can understand the psychology behind that.

Applying that stuff to those aspects of firearms, you can find guys like **Rob Pincus** that apply psychological and intuitive responses to actual firearms. The same thing when we get into fighting back unarmed. Those things are there. It's possible. We've decided that it's not. A lot of people assume they can't fight because, "I'm small," or this or that, but **the reality of it is we all have a potential to survive and defend ourselves.**

We just don't understand it because we don't take the time to understand the situation, try understand the situation, and we don't take that time to train, which is unfortunate and what we're trying to educate people on.

Scott Iardella:

I know I asked you this the other day, but *why did you write this book?*

The book title is "**How to Survive an Active Killer.**" I mentioned this the other day, I saw your book somewhere on social media, and even if the events didn't happen here in Parkland, seeing that title would just jump out at me. It's uncomfortable. Why did you decide to write this book?

Aaron Jannetti:

This is the conversation that you and I had, but like I said, in 2016, we were traveling all over teaching this in a lot of states, and I started to realize that I'm not the only one teaching it, and there's a lot of fantastic programs out there. Active Killer Defense with Ryan Hoover. Rob Pincus has a program

SARC, Spree Attacker Response Course, there's people like Daniel Shaw locally. There's a lot of great information and training on this, but I started to sit down and realize even if I taught every single day, 365 days a year, and I had 100 people in class, I would barely scratch the surface of my hometown.

I think I did the numbers. I think I actually wrote it in that book, but if all 10 of my head self-defense instructors taught every day, 365 days a year, and they each taught 100 people individually, we wouldn't even hit a quarter of Columbus, Ohio's population.

That really got me thinking because people are looking for answers and they are looking for training, and they might not like what I have to say, but the information needs to be out there, and so we were batting around the idea of ways we could get that done, and I just started writing, putting my thoughts down, drills we had worked with, and trying, like the title says, **trying to be honest about it.**

One of the things you run into is you have false bravado with a lot of trainers. Do this, do this and it's going to work, and it's not true.

Some of the stuff like the emotional complexity that we talk about throughout the book, in the middle of these things, the first thing that's going to run through 99.9% of the human population's mind is **survival in their own personal best interest**, and you have people on either side of the fence where the bravado comes in where it's like be a hero, run towards gunfire, but it's how do you survive?

Start at one position. Let's look at an individual application of it. **What is the most tactical thing for me to survive this situation?**

We break that down and then we talk about the emotional complexity to it. How does that change? If I am out in public by myself then me responding and taking care of myself is pretty easy. If I'm out in public with my wife, how does that change? How does my plan change?

Obviously it's a lot easier for me to run by myself than it is for me to have to run with one other person. **If I'm out with my wife and kids, how does that change the plan?**

Now we go back to the shooting around you and now you're a teacher. Your intuitive baseline instinctual response is going to be to care for yourself,

and then when you get in those situations, now the accountability to your students and the love and passion and drive for your students is going to step in. How does that step in? Does it cause you to take action and get in front of the door? Do you ignore those things? How does it change? How does your accountability change? You have to respect both sides of that. Again, it's really easy to sit back and judge people.

The first reports were again that there was one officer outside that wasn't making entry, and then it turned into there might have been three or four, but everybody wanted to trash that guy. He was 54 years-old. He was an SRO. He loved these kids. He probably hasn't seen a lot of action in a little while. Yeah, it's his job to go in there. Yeah, you can pull that card and I understand the responses from both sides where some people were hurt by it, some people were blatantly calling him a coward, I get it, but now understand that it's a human fighting human response, trying to run towards gunfire in a situation where he's most likely outgunned, doesn't know where it's out, kids are running and screaming, he's freaking out a little bit, and I'm not saying that's an excuse.

I'm saying we can't have a conversation about this if we don't **respect the emotional components and the psychological components** that go into it. That's complicated. It sucks.

When you're getting into this stuff, how do we reach people, and the book just made sense, and keeping it as honest as possible, and keeping it at a level where people can understand it. I'm not talking in 'gun jargon' or 'fight jargon' or trying to say anything specific.

I purposely wrote the entire thing so that it's at a nine to ten grade level, so that everybody understands this. It's very clear. It's very cut.

With that, the hope is not that the people pick the book up and go, "I'm good to go." That's not it. It's actually the opposite. **I want people to pick the book up and go, "There's a lot I still need to learn about this. How do I find training?"**

And then you have the training section in the back, and it's to help people realize what goes into it so they know what to train. It's to help them find out, to guide through training because there's some bad training out there. There really is. It's unfortunate to say it, but it's true. What's the difference between bad training and good training?

And, then to encourage them to then take the steps. How do I find this training? And here are some options to get that done. The goal was to get people to go, "*Let's understand these situations and let's find out how to get better at preparing ourselves individually about it and sharing that information.*"

Scott Iardella:

If you think about an ideal person that you'd like to get the book into their hands, who is that person?

Aaron Jannetti:

Yeah. When we were writing it, because I'm a self-defense guy, everybody assumed I was writing it for the self-defense people, but it's actually the opposite.

We might not have completely great conversations. Not all the conversations are great inside the self-defense community, but at least the conversations are being had.

The goal of the book was to get it into the hands of people that aren't having it, or have questions but aren't pursuing it. The people that don't train.

It's to get in the hands of the 30 year-old teacher from the last eight years that's scared to death and just wants some answers on how to get it. The mother or the father or the high school student.

The real demographic, the real idea was to get in the hands of people that don't think they have a chance, or don't have a plan in place, and to get them to understand how they can build a plan and what's the best way to do that.

The secondary goal was then to have people that are in the self-defense community read it, and either give legitimate honest feedback, I asked everybody for legitimate honest feedback like, "Hey, this is how you can make it better," or for them to take an honest look at the book and go, "I might have missed this or maybe I was saying this wrong or he makes a really great point there," and again as a group, we can take care of this, because again, not to beat a dead horse, but my stuff here in Columbus, we can't do enough.

We're trying to, but we can't do it all. I know that's a two-part answer to that, but the primary goal is to get it in the hands of people that don't have a plan yet, and haven't really thought about the fact that maybe they could take care of themselves.

Scott Iardella:

And then when they put the book down, they've read the entire book cover to cover and put the book down, what do you hope that their next step is? What do you hope that they do after reading?

Aaron Jannetti:

In a perfect world, train two to three times a week nonstop forever.

I have been doing this nonstop, literally my 10-year anniversary of doing this full-time was at the beginning of this month, so I've been doing a little over a decade now full-time, and remember what we said earlier, my chances of surviving may be higher because I've been doing this for 10 years, but they can always be better and better and better, so it's continual training. As you get older, things change.

When I was 20 and 21, when I was 21 when I started this full-time, I didn't have any responsibility. I was a bachelor. I lived on my own so my plan was around my own. I was 21. I was in really good shape, very flexible, didn't get injured.

10 years later, I've got a family, two kids to worry about.

I've got separated shoulders and busted hips.

The plan changes, so continually training would be my absolute goal for everybody. Three hours a week, and a little bit of everything.

Do a little medical, do a little fights, do a little firearms, again, whether you want to shoot them or not, but realistically, is for people to take a step.

Start to take these things seriously, so you put the book down and you go, "Okay. How do I start doing this? I need to take this seriously. If I think it's going to cost \$100 a month because there's a gym locally that costs \$100 a month that can teach me how to fight, then how do I figure that out?" Take the actual steps to do it.

The first thing you got to do when you put the book down is take action, no matter what that is.

If it's just medical, it's just medical.

If you've made a moral, ethical, psychological, emotional decision that you're never going to jump on a gunman, it's not possible in any way, shape, or form, but there's ways that, the other areas of it you can get better at, then focus on that, but take action.

Don't put the book down and think it's enough.

Don't put the book down and be like, "Yeah, I already knew all of that," because you don't. You have to keep training. You have to keep moving. You have to actually put your body in those places.

Scott Iardella:

Do you think that the education alone in the book would help people? What I mean is the person that you just described, they have no interest in confronting a gunman, they're petrified of that, but maybe the knowledge, just the insights in the book, would that help people just knowing really what you know about this topic, and maybe helping them psychologically prepare for the worst case scenario?

Aaron Jannetti:

Yeah. Not anything, but any education, good, effective, appropriate education is good.

Like I said earlier, **the book increases your chance of survival a little bit, in my mind not enough, and you need to keep going** and keep trying to do that, but yeah, any time you educate yourself on it, you can change the way you think about it, is going to be a good thing, and if I get into this and I start looking through it and it makes me change my awareness, or I start doing some of the mindset drills that I did in there, then yeah, you're taking steps, you're training, you're doing things properly, and so the book, yes, made a direct positive impact on you.

Maybe it changes where you drive, how you set things up. Maybe it makes you look at a fire evacuation route and just understand where all the exits are in a building. That's going to increase your chances of getting out. Do I think that's enough? No.

Remember, and I can't stress this enough, **the book isn't just about fighting. It's about learning how to evade properly.**

It's about what does an actual barricade look like? What does cover and concealment look like? Yes, there's a lot in there about fighting, both unarmed and armed potentially, and again, being honest about what that fight would look like.

It's about **medical training**. There's not a person in the world above the age of, I don't know, 12 or 13, that shouldn't know how to **apply a tourniquet** and possibly **plug traumatic bleeding**, and again, that's not even just for active shooter stuff. That's for life.

Bad things happen, but again, interacting with law enforcement, we talk about calling 911 and what that looks like. We talk about if you're in a violent encounter and law enforcement shows up, what does that look like?

We're talking about a lot of it in the context of active shooter, but the reality of it is, it's **any violent encounter**. How do I make myself not look like a bad guy? How do I make the jobs of the law enforcement officers a little bit easier when they get there so they can get their job done faster?

Again, what is the psychological, legal, financial, medical, what are those long-term issues and how do I prepare for that? Even if you don't think, you've decided you're never going to even attempt, and if a gunman comes through the door, you're going to be that person that just stops and accepts it, okay, maybe you've made that decision, but that doesn't mean you can't go learn how to put a tourniquet on.

It doesn't mean you don't sit down with your family and look up the resources for dealing with long-term aftermath. That doesn't mean you don't get better at picking out the evacuation routes out of a building and understanding where all the available exits are. There's still a lot that can be done that doesn't involve fighting the bad guy, even though fighting the bad guy should be a part of everybody's training.

Scott Iardella:

I haven't gotten to this part in the book yet. I really haven't immersed myself in this book, which I plan to do over the next couple of days. Can you talk about specific resources that may be available in most communities? Maybe in the areas that you just talked about. Maybe it's medical. Maybe

it's signing up for a local self-defense class. What are things in the community that people can consider as part of your approach and to confront the unimaginable?

Aaron Jannetti:

There's a lot of different areas. Self-defense gyms, they're not all created equal, but there's self-defense being taught in some form or fashion in most areas, even physical interaction is going to increase that ability, so you can find a place to do self-defense.

We usually say that **Krav Maga** are usually a good place. Anybody that runs, or at least understands the SPEAR system, which is Tony Blauer's system, is going to be a pretty good place.

The guys in Charlotte again, I keep mentioning Ryan Hoover and Tony Blauer, but Ryan Hoover's program is heavily based on Krav Maga, but it's a little different. You find a place like that.

All those are great, but even finding a jujitsu gym, or finding a wrestling gym, or finding a boxing gym, something that makes you fight and makes you interact with another human being and learn what those pressures can look like, that's a really good resource and one that most people could find.

As far as medical goes, that's becoming easier and easier and easier to find in larger communities. I don't know the exact date and this is going to curse me. I think it's March 25th, but I'd have to double check that, is *National Stop the Bleed Day*, and so you are going to have fire departments, tactical businesses, medical businesses, I believe maybe the Red Cross and things like that involved, but they're going to be putting on a lot of **free traumatic blood loss courses** in all different kinds of communities.

Stop the Bleed is again, like I said earlier, it's like the attempt at CPR where you can go anywhere and find CPR training in your community, and everybody can find it. Stop the Bleed is getting there. We participate in that.

We teach medical training. There's a gentleman by the name of John Grabo here that does all of our medical stuff. He's participating in *Stop the Bleed Day*. He puts on courses locally here.

Then you're looking for courses that are commonly referred to as **tactical medicine** or **combat medicine**, but that's just because up until now, it

hasn't been seen as needed in civilian life, however that's changing, but there's a course called TCCC, so literally TCCC, or TECC, so both of those are things you can look into that you can commonly find in places.

Companies like *Dark Angel Medical*, *Lone Star Medics*, *Intermediate Casualty Care*. They teach around the nation.

They teach courses like this. So those are great things you might be able to find in your community, or at least within an acceptable drive, a one or a two hour drive.

That's a really good option for medical, dealing with the traumatic stuff afterwards. Running and barricading is stuff you can do on your own. Those are resources you can find information on that and how to do it online in the book that I put out. Other places there you can practice.

Find a place and literally go, "Hey, let's see how long it takes us to shut this door and make it impossible for somebody to get through." You can do that all on your own.

All of that requires **physical fitness**. Everything. Running, fighting, moving bodies, talking to things. Again, this is a hard pill to swallow for a lot of people, but if you're 20, 30, 40 pounds overweight, voluntarily and willingly, that is one area that if you fix that, you're automatically going to be more likely to do things properly, and that's not just my fitness pitch because this is technically a fitness podcast, this is true.

If you're athletic, you will run better, you will barricade better, you will find cover better, you will fight better, you can move loved ones to safe places better, and we joke around, but **you're harder to kill**.

"If you athletic, you're harder to kill." - Aaron Janetti

You have a higher likelihood of survivability. Physical fitness can be done by anybody at any time. You can take jugs of water and use them as weights. You can fill a bag up with sand and use it as weights. You don't need a gym to do that stuff, so that's all stuff that anybody can do inside of their community right now, and then with the long-term, and this is an area I've been diving into a lot more, the long-term effects, having plans in place and understanding the resources available to you in the long run.

If you get in one of these situations and you're in the hospital for a month, two months, three months, having surgeries and things like that, do you have a plan in place for somebody to take care of your children because if you and your spouse are out in public and you both get injured, or one of you God forbid dies or both of you God forbid dies, do you have a plan in place for care of your children long-term if you can't do it?

From a psychological standpoint, do you understand that nobody leaves these events unchanged, and what are the resources locally to me?

What counseling, what counselors are local, a therapist that I can talk to? Suicide hotlines if things get really bad. There's a lot of survivor's guilt that takes place with a lot of people.

How do we deal with that?

The responding law enforcement officers that have to go in and see the bodies and move kids, the resources available to them through their unions.

If something happens in a workplace, does your work have a system set up to deal with it? Most people don't know that their local FBI, wherever their FBI headquarters is locally, is going to have somebody that is a victim specialist, that deals with these things, and you might not work with them directly, but they could be a liaison to find you the local resources to take care of it.

There can be financial things both federally and on a state level where if I'm hard up for money because I've been injured and I'm out and I haven't been able to work in three months, how do we access that? Does your workplace have options for that? If you were to be part of workplace violence, what is that setup if the business is closed for two months? Is there a financial backing there?

So understanding all of those pieces can be very beneficial, and again, we're talking about the context of an active shooter, but if my wife and I go on a trip, on a vacation, and we leave our kids with my mother and we both die or get injured and we can't get back and things like that, do we have long-term things in place to take care of them?

These are things that we want to make sure that we understand and we know, and it's things that a lot of us don't want to do, because like you said earlier, this is not a comfortable topic to address.

It's not comfortable to sit back and for me to think, "Oh my God, if my wife and I both died, what would my two children do?"

That's not fun to think about. **It's not comfortable to think about, but it needs to be thought about**, it needs to be done, and you get a sense of relief and a sense of comfort knowing that it's in place and takes care of it, because again, we addressed it.

Scott Iardella:

I'm glad you talked about that because I was going to ask you about the aftermath, and really how to deal with that, and you just gave a lot of great resources.

I do want to go back to something you said about looking at the, I think you said the number of exits or where the exits are, and maybe, I think this is important...*situational awareness*.

Do you talk about that in the book or in your workshop? I'm sure you do, and what are things that people can really magnify their awareness in public settings? What do they need to know?

Aaron Jannetti:

We do talk about awareness in the book. You have to watch because a lot of people want to, in situations like this where they discuss self-defense and things, they essentially want to use situational awareness as a cop out.

"Well, if you're situationally aware, you can get out of this."

Keep in mind, again, if we're having an honest conversation, it is physically impossible to be aware of everything going on around you 24/7, 365. It's impossible.

You wouldn't be able to order food off of a menu. You wouldn't be able to look at somebody with direct eye contact. You wouldn't be able to check your phone, which God knows we all do too much of. You can't always be aware. There are things I can do to be better prepared and be better aware and look at some things.

Scott Iardella:

When you go into a movie theater or a restaurant, and I don't even know if I should take it at that level, but do we need to think about, when we go in, where are the exits, where can I go to get behind something that could possibly shield me from a bullet?

Are these the things that we should think about? Kind of what I talked about earlier - is this a new standard in today's world?

Aaron Jannetti:

Here's where I would say there's a caveat to that. It's not a new standard.

How long have we had emergency exits and fire evacuation routes? It's because that, at one point in time, was an issue, and by doing that and preparing people and having them understand where to go if a fire takes place and what that looks like, we've saved lives.

Every time you get on a plane, the first thing you learn when you get on a plane is what to do when the freaking thing crashes, and yet, we all get on planes.

Nobody, I shouldn't say nobody, a lot of people are terrified of flying, but the general population, the vast majority, we're not. Technically in the long run, statistically, you're less likely to die in a plane than you are in a car, and we drive cars all the time, but the very first thing we talk about when you get on a plane is what happens if the plane crashes.

So, this isn't a new standard. It's a new subject, and so all we're doing is learning. How to evacuate has always been a thing.

Any large corporation when you walk in, one of the first things you're going to see on a wall is a fire evacuation map. We love that stuff. Fire code is great. Doors in schools are specifically, in most schools that are following fire code, all the classrooms push out because if there is a fire, it's significantly harder for a crowd to pull a door open than to push a door out and to go into the hallway.

We're good at that, and we've prepared for all of those things. This isn't a new standard, it's just a different subject, and I think that's really important to address and to point out because people look at it as, "Okay, if I go into a movie theater and I do these things, I'm paranoid," and that's not true because if you know where the exits are on a plane, that doesn't make you

paranoid. If you know where the exits are from a fire, that doesn't make you paranoid.

It's not paranoia. It's just preparedness. It's just understanding. One of the things that I've made reference to a couple of times in this conversation now is mind-setting, and that's pretty much what you're doing with awareness and preparedness, and one of the drills that I point out in the book is what I refer to as **the 10-second rule**, and that's just when you enter a new facility, take 10 seconds and you do a quick checklist.

What are the available exits?

What are some things I could maybe use as a weapon?

What are some things I could maybe hide, or I should say cover behind, find concealment behind?

What are, I hate to say it and people will give pushback for this, but look around the room.

Who looks a little bit out of place?

Who looks like they're doing things weird?

It's a touchy subject because we don't want to quote unquote scapegoat or stereotype, but the fact of the matter is if you feel something is off, it's a good thing to heighten awareness.

There was a shooting at a party at an outdoor pool, and the guy who did the shooting was sitting at the pool on a hot day in a trench coat, not talking to anybody, so how many people at that party said, "That guy is really weird. That's a little off," and how many people thought it but didn't say it because that's rude?

That's an issue because if I'm at a pool and you're sitting in a trench coat, I'm taking my kids and leaving, and I might be wrong, but we bury that down, and it's understandable because we don't want to have prejudice, and just because a kid wears baggy clothes and sags his pants and acts like a thug doesn't mean he's actually a thug, but it's a safe bet if I see three or four thugs in there or people that look like it, that maybe I should be thinking about it or at least paying attention.

So taking a second, looking around the room, what looks out of place, who looks out of place, and one of the things I add on there is, is there anybody in there that you might think would jump in to help in some form or fashion?

That's the 10-second rule, and any place you walk into you do that.

If you do that every time you walk into work or places you frequent, then you can expand on that 10-second rule because I've already done the initial one. It's all basic.

Now places that I frequent I can start taking in a couple other directions. Now I'm sitting in my office. Let's say I have a cubicle. I'm sitting in a cubicle. Where are my best routes?

What's the fastest point of escape?

Is there a place I can barricade?

If I were to barricade, what does a barricade look like?

And yeah, earlier I said you can do physical drills and actually barricade, but even just sitting in a room and going, "What's the door made out of? Is it a wood door? Is it a metal door? Does it swing in? Does it swing out? How is the handle made? Do I think it's a solid door? Is it a solid wood door? Is it a hollow wood door? Is the wall made of drywall that it maybe could be shot through or kicked through, or is it cinder block or metal or God forbid it's glass?"

Just by sitting in there, you start to realize what is the likelihood of being able to barricade in this facility, and then if I were in here, how strong is that?

You take it then a couple steps further and start doing what we refer to as the what if game, and I sit down and I go to a local Chipotle, and I sit down and I'm eating my food and I just take two seconds and go, "*What if somebody came through the door and started shooting? What would I do?*"

I go through that and I make a plan and I come up with a really simple blueprint. I'm not freaking out, but I do that and now I have a plan.

It doesn't mean it's the best plan in the world, but I have a plan, and so if somebody were to come in and start doing something active, at least the thought that it was possible is on your mind, and you've linked your brain to have something to attach it to, where now if something violent happens, I have a plan of escape, and now I combine that with my earlier 10-second rule, and not only do I have a plan of escape, but maybe I have some improvised weapons or I have places where I can get to to secure myself and things like that, but it's not like a 12-minute drill.

It's a 10-second drill.

You go in, take it your thought, make your brain understand that things can happen, set a couple of plans in place and go, but the more you do that, you start picking up on things.

The more I sit and look at doorways and I say, "What is the door made out of? How does it operate? How do I barricade it?"

The better I'm going to get at I've thought about this doorway before, I already have a plan, and it's going to get a little bit easier that way, but that's a continual drill. You do it over and over again.

My wife makes fun of me all the time because I do that stuff every time I walk. I'm looking around and she knows what I'm doing.

Scott Iardella:

That's good. Good information there. With your workshops, are your workshops nationally or only locally where you are?

Aaron Jannetti:

No, nationally. I haven't run the numbers in a little while, but I believe we've taught it in the last two years in like 25 or 26 states now.

In March, I'm in Virginia in two different dates, back in Ohio, up in Indiana, in Pennsylvania, Michigan. We have a course pending in New Orleans, a course pending in Arizona, a course pending in California.

Once we finalize those dates, we'll get those up as well, but so far we've taught it in Oregon, California, Nevada, Utah, Texas, all up and down the east coast, pretty much hit all of that, pretty much every state in the Midwest, and so yeah, we've gotten to a lot of the areas. It is national. It is

possible. This year we're working on finding a meaningful way to train other instructors to do it and not a come in for two days and all of a sudden you're an expert, kind of doing an apprenticeship with them over maybe a three or a four month span in which they're required to train with us and then go teach and then train with us and then go teach.

Hopefully we'll be able to expand that network. Active Killer Defense. They do some regionally. That's another one you can look into. Their program is similar, a little different but similar, still good stuff. Daniel Shaw has some stuff around the gun. **Rob Pincus** has some stuff around the gun and a little bit unarmed, as well. There's a lot of different resources. We do travel. I travel a lot.

The majority of my time, fortunately because it allows me the opportunity to share this information, but unfortunately because it's a terrible thing to have to be busy with, but the majority of my time now is spent traveling and teaching community seminars and teaching self defense and consulting on security.

Scott Iardella:

Where do people go to find out about your workshops? Where's the best place?

Aaron Jannetti:

I have a personal website where they can follow along with the book videos, articles and things like that I've written, which is just my name, aaronjannetti.com. A-A-R-O-N J-A-N-N-E-T-T-I.com. Our company website, endeavordcf.com, so that's E-N-D-E-A-V-O-R D-C-F, as in dog, cat fish, .com, and then backslash active shooter, that will take you to our free resource page, so we have a mailing list there.

EndeavorDCF.com/activeshooter

Aaron-Jannetti.com

We have a bunch of videos up, research studies and articles, media reports. We have access to the book on there, access to our training, and then we have a full schedule that stays updated there, so they can click through and see where we're going to be at, what states we're going to be at, and what dates. The majority of our seminars are open to the public.

We do a few private seminars where people contract us to come in and work, but anywhere we go, we try to have a community event where everybody can come in and do that training.

Scott Iardella:

What are the ideal steps? Someone again reads the book, they want to move along, and the next step after reading your book might depend on the individual, right?

Aaron Jannetti:

It's almost certainly going to depend on the individual.

I would say the biggest impact that you could make, and it's not just for active shooter stuff, but the biggest impact that could change things tomorrow you're most likely to do is almost always needed in these events and other events and things like that, is the medical side of things.

Carry a trauma kit right now. Go buy one.

You can buy prebuilt trauma kits and things like that. There's ones you can carry in your purse. There's simple ones you can carry on you.

For instance, I always have one, so it's literally a pocket medkit that were made by one of the guys, John Grabo, like I said, that runs our medical stuff, but I've got medkits in my bag, I've got a medkit I carry in my pocket, and I've got a medkit I carry in my truck.

If you don't have medical resources, not first aid kits, there's a big difference between trauma care kits and first aid kits, but if I don't have resources, then I'm a step behind on that as well.

Medical training is something that everybody can do. They have a lot of access to it. In most cases, it's very good training, at least on the same regards to stopping blood loss, dealing with basic chest seals, things like that, and that's something that can happen immediately. If you're looking for what's a big impact I can make now, that's a very good step that I almost guarantee that 99% of listeners right now don't carry a simple trauma kit, and all it really is is some form of gauze, some form of a tourniquet, and some form of a way to apply a chest seal on somebody, where you get shot on the chest and it not be obviously a lethal shot.

Preventative deaths is something that shouldn't happen, but it usually happens because of the timeline that it takes for EMS to get to them. If you think of Pulse Nightclub and how long it took for them to officially get in there, clear the scene, and resolve that situation, there were absolutely people who bled out in that bathroom that could've been saved, and that's been statistically proven, so it's something that we could do now to fix it.

Past that, training. Whatever makes you the most uncomfortable, go out and do it. Whatever you have the easiest access to, go out and do it, whatever it is, but start taking steps to start filling in the gaps that you might have.

Scott Iardella:

When you say train, a little bit more specific in terms of...do you mean physical defense training?

Aaron Jannetti:

Everything you do should be ... Again, there are plenty of mind-setting drills and stuff you can do, but **physically going through motions is what I refer to as training.**

Whether that is physically going to the firing range and understanding how guns work, whether that is physically going in and learning self-defense, whether that is physically learning to apply tourniquets and pack wounds, whether that is physically practicing obviously with a dead phone, but how to call 911 and what the most pertinent information is. You have to actually do it so when we say training, we're referring to taking your body and actually performing the tasks. *That is physical training.*

Running.

If you know basic evacuation routes, how fast can you make it from point A to point B, so if you know that you're in your cubicle and you believe that the closest exit to safety is going to be this specific exit, how fast can you get there?

Actually physically doing that stuff. And then remember what I said earlier, if you know that you're out of shape, overweight, and this is something that can actually be fixed, then physically fix your diet, fix your nutrition, start eating better, start sleeping better, go out, run some sprints, pick up some

rocks in some handbags. **Buy some kettlebells**, but you have to physically train.

All of this stuff, you have to physically train. You have to actually do it.

Scott Iardella:

Yeah. That's great. I usually ask when I wrap up the podcast, what's the number one take-away action. I think you really just said that as far as the tourniquet kit, the medical training, I think that's something that every single listener can go out and take action with today, tomorrow.

As we wrap this up, and this has been a fantastic discussion, I certainly didn't ask everything, but I think we accomplished a lot, I think we accomplished the goal that we set out to do in this interview session, I think it's been hugely valuable.

What do you hope that every listener can walk away with after hearing this?

What's the big thing that the listener can take away from everything that we've discussed here today?

Aaron Jannetti:

I think the biggest thing right out of the gate is no matter what it is, even when we were talking earlier about preventative measures, and we're talking now about survivability and things like that, is that you're actually in control of a lot more than you give yourself credit for, and that it's your responsibility as an individual to take care of those things.

Don't wait on congress to pass laws.

Don't wait on law enforcement to show up and save you.

Don't wait for EMS to show up and plug your gunshot wounds.

It's our responsibility to care for ourselves, care for our family, and I think **that's the biggest thing**, and that's not necessarily beating people down for not doing it, it's just understand that you are capable of a lot, and we've convinced ourselves that we're not, and that's very unfortunate no matter what it is, so you have an individual responsibility to take care of yourself, you are the last line of defense, and you're in control

of a lot more than people give themselves credit. I think that's the biggest message in anything that we do.

You can take actual legitimate action to make your community better, to prepare yourself better, to protect your kids, protect your parents, protect your students, whatever it is in that, and I think that's **the biggest thing is individual responsibility going forward**, and then actually taking those actions.

Scott Iardella:

Aaron, again, I want to thank you.

I reached out to you a couple of days after the events here.

You were incredibly receptive with email. We spoke before we did this interview. I'm really looking forward to reading your book. I think in some sense it's kind of unfortunate that I have to read a book about this, but I think it's necessary, it's helpful, and like you said, it is about taking control and the more knowledge I have, I think will better help me, and I have kids and these are things that I think about a lot, and so I just really appreciate you taking the time.

The little bit the last couple days that I've known you, I can tell that you have high character and I really appreciate it, and I can see that you're doing incredible work in the industry, so thank you so much for everything and taking all this time on a Saturday afternoon to do this interview, man.

Aaron Jannetti:

Like I told you, Scott, I appreciate you taking the time to actually get this message out and to share it.

One person at a time, one podcast at a time, one video at a time, we just try to help everybody that we possibly can, so I appreciate all the kind words, but **it's going to be a group effort**.

It's not me and my crew. It's going to be you getting involved. It's going to be all the other guys pulling their weight, too. We do it as a group and get things done, so I thank you for taking the time and doing this as well.

Scott Iardella:

I think it's unfortunate circumstances that connected us, but again, I think this information will impact people for sure, so thank you so much again.

Aaron Jannetti:

Absolutely. Thank you, Scott.

RESOURCES AND LINKS:

The OFFICIAL Marjorie Stoneman Douglas Go Fund Me Page by Broward Education Foundation

Please consider a donation to those who were impacted by the tragedy on February 14, 2018 at MSD High School in Parkland, FL.

*Individual family funds are also organized on [GoFundMe.com](https://www.gofundme.com), as well.

Scott Iardella can be found at:

RdellaTraining.com

[Instagram: @rdellatraining](https://www.instagram.com/rdellatraining)

Aaron Jannetti can be found at:

AaronJannetti.com

EndeavorCF.com/activeshooter

[Instagram: @jannetiaaron](https://www.instagram.com/jannetiaaron)

The Book:

[How To Survive An Active Killer, An Honest Look At Your Role In The Age of Mass Violence](#)

THANK YOU for you for interest in this important information and learning how we can all make a difference and make a change to STOP the violence.

Please help in educating others with this interview by sharing this link:

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