



The 7 Things Predators Do to Turn People Into Prey.

There are more dangerous predators in the world for students than just lions and sharks. Our students, while often regarding themselves as rather savvy in the ways of the world, have been victimized on study abroad programs to varying degrees from minor thefts to rape. What follows below is from Nancy Newport, a consultant to the Peace Corps, who specializes in sexual assault counseling. It is derived from a book The Gift of Fear by Gavin De Becker. This may be used to create a handout or give a briefing:

SURVIVAL SIGNALS (the 7 things that predators do to turn people into prey)

Charm and Niceness

Charm is almost always a directed instrument which has motive. To charm is to compel, to control by allure or attraction. "He was so nice" is a comment often heard from people describing the man who moments or months after his niceness, attacked them. Niceness is a decision, a strategy of social interaction. Unsolicited niceness often has a discoverable motive.

Discounting the Word "No"

Declining to hear "no" is a signal that someone is either seeking control or refusing to relinquish it. The worst response to give to someone who refuses to accept "no" is to give ever weakening refusals and then give in. Negotiation is also a poor response. Negotiation is about possibilities. If you mean "no", don't negotiate. Refusing to accept "no" often starts with refusing to accept "no" to minor issues such as buying you a drink, asking you to dance, joining you uninvited at your table, touching you etc.

Loan sharking

The predator generously offers assistance or gifts, but is always calculating the debt. Buying drinks, inviting you to do fun things, etc. may simply be a way of expressing interest in you. However, it may be on some level a very basic effort to exercise some control over you and to justify an insistence that you repay the debt.

Typecasting

A man labels a woman in some slightly (or not so slightly) critical way, hoping she'll feel compelled to prove that his opinion is not accurate. ("You are too racist to talk/dance/whatever with me,"- is one way this has played out on South Caicos). The typecaster doesn't even believe what he says is true. He just believes that it will work.

Too Many Details

People who want to deceive you will often use a simple technique called “too many details”. When people are telling the truth, they don’t feel doubted, so they don’t feel the need for additional support in the form of details. When people lie, however, even if what they say sounds credible to you, *it doesn’t sound credible to them*, so they keep talking. If you are invited to a party with a description of the food and the people and “my mother will be cooking and would love to meet you...” you might pause for a moment to think about it.

Forced Teaming

Forced teaming is a way to establish premature trust because a *were-all- in-the same-boat* attitude is hard to rebuff without feeling rude. The detectable signal of forced teaming is the projection of a shared purpose or experience where none exists. “How are we going to handle this?”, etc.

The Unsolicited Promise

Promises are used to convince us of an intention. The reason a person promises you something is that he can see that you are unconvinced. When someone promises you something, it tells you that you are doubtful. Then you need to listen to your doubts and ask where they are coming from, and then decide to suppress them or to listen to them.

Be smart and keep your wits about you.