

# The science of luck



## Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

over 1,000 participants. Wiseman concluded that people could actually change their luck. Luck is not something paranormal in nature. It is something that we are creating by our thoughts and behavior. To prove the results of his study were accurate, Wiseman created what he dubbed “Luck School.”

In Luck School, he taught unlucky people how to act more like lucky people do. The results were impressive. In total, 80% of the people who attended said their luck had increased. On average, those people estimated their luck had increased by 40%. Not only were the participants luckier, but they reported being happier as well. I can understand that one. There is nothing like a run of good luck to improve the mood.

In his book, “Luck Factor,” Wiseman noted that lucky people act upon opportunities and take more chances in their lives. He found that unlucky people suffered from paralysis by analysis.

I found that theory could relate very well to survival situations. People who are paralyzed by fear or indecision have a tendency to do nothing. That equates to sitting around and waiting for the end to come, and doing nothing to save you from the situation. Perhaps this relates to the old optimist versus pessimist dilemma.

Yours faithfully has always been, and probably always be, a pessimist. No, I did not mail in my Publisher’s Clearing House sweepstakes card, and I did not buy a lottery ticket. But, if you wish to improve your luck, perhaps optimism is the key.

In any life-threatening situation, the rules of three come into play. The first rule is nobody can survive



Snake eyes pretty well sums up my luck. Researchers have discovered there actually is some science to luck. (Mark Rackay/Special to the Montrose Daily Press)

more than three seconds without hope. When the grim reaper is at the door, and the bell is tolling, “giving up” as many do, rather than deciding to fight, is where that three seconds comes into play. There is no luck involved; it is a fight or die survival mindset.

Being an eternal pessimist, I probably see the world more accurately than someone who is an optimist. However, optimistic people will see more opportunities that the pessimist has already dismissed. This is a perfect reason one must remain positive in a survival situation.

We must learn to listen to our gut. You know those nagging hunches about “that’s a bad person” or

“we will never be able to climb that without falling.” Almost 90% of the people studied said that they trusted their intuition when it came to relationships, 80% in career choices, and at least 20 percent when it came to financial choices.

When intuition comes most heavily into play, is when you have expertise in an area, such as outdoor survival. The brain may detect a pattern you have not consciously seen before, and you get a gut feeling. The wise opportunist will stop and listen to those gut feelings.

Those nagging gut feelings are best described in a book by Gavin De Becker called “The Gift Of Fear.” I consider this book essential reading for any mem-

bers of law enforcement or first responders. Any person who is involved in the outdoor world would benefit from the knowledge contained in the pages of this book too.

De Becker teaches us that our life is driven by fear, as it has shaped our mind and personality, thusly determining how we will react to an emergency situation. Learning how to “listen” to your gut, and then “trust” your gut, is the basis to survive any desperate situation you may find yourself in.

We have all heard about, or owned one, of those special dogs that just love everyone; everyone except that one guy. The one guy makes the dog go crazy; growling, cowering and trying to stay away from this person. We say the dog “just does not like this guy.”

Later you find out this guy robbed a couple liquor stores at gunpoint, abused his wife and kids and fled the territory. Everyone is quick to say how great the dog’s perception was of that rotten person. That could not be further from the truth.

That beloved dog has no ability to detect a character flaw in someone it just met, nor be able to sense evil. What that dog can sense is fear. It sensed the fear on the one person the dog knows better than anyone else in the whole world; you. Your gut was sending out that “fear signal” and your dog sensed it.

De Becker teaches us how to detect and listen to those gut instincts. Once you have learned how to capitalize on what your gut is telling you, you will learn how to act in accordance. This is one of the best survival skills you can learn on the way.

Never give into fear or panic. Examine the opportunities with an optimistic attitude, and carry forth, and you will probably find an increase in your “luck” in any outdoor survival situation.

Remember that if you encounter the erudite Mr. Murphy, he brings only bad luck and misfortune with him. If I were to attend that “Luck School,” it would be just my bad luck that Murph would be in the same class with me.

We all know that Murph does not really exist, and yet, he is always there. I know he is always with me when I am outdoors. If one of you would like to take him for a while, I could use the break.

Mark Rackay is a columnist for the Montrose Daily Press and avid hunter who travels across North and South America in search of adventure and serves as a director for the Montrose County Sheriff’s Posse. For information about the posse call 970-252-4033 (leave a message) or email info@mcspi.org.

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