**Crisis Response Training**

**Critical Thinking and Why We Train**

When you are honest with yourself and can accurately assess your spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical skill set, you will know the appropriate confidence level you possess for any given situation. Add prudence and due caution to the mix and you will have the requisite position from which to make wise decisions as you come upon situations needing your action.

You bring with you to this training all of your life experiences up to this point in time. Your Reticular Activating System (RAS) will help you benefit from everything your brain has stored away from what you have heard, smelled, touched, saw, and tasted. Images, word pictures, experiences, and messages of all kinds have been filed away for future use.

This is where training becomes invaluable in focusing the RAS so that it prioritizes what it stores. Example: One of the first words to which you learned to respond was your name. It is also why Lt. Col. Dagarin now sees and hears every motorcycle, because his RAS knows he likes to ride. How does it know he likes to ride? Because he keeps doing it!

When we repeat a physical activity like starting a fire the RAS assists us in memorizing the sequence of our actions. Some call this “muscle memory.” Whether we are talking about memorizing multiplication tables or starting a fire, repetition impresses upon the RAS that all the steps associated with the activity are important. This is why we train. The results of our sequencing become the foundation for our critical thinking.

Let’s look at this another way. In our fallen world most of our wisdom comes from trial and error. Remember Thomas Edison who discovered almost 2,000 ways not to make a lightbulb? When we find ourselves in the dark we want to have already discovered the lightbulb. When we find ourselves in a life-threatening emergency we want to have already discovered what not to do so that we do not lose valuable time and/or compound the emergency.