

THE VIGOR

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The Victim Inventory of Goals, Options, & Risks

147 Protective Strategies that May Help in Safety Planning

**These examples are intended to
accompany the VIGOR Safety
Planning Tool**



***From Battered Women's Protective Strategies:
Stronger Than You Know***

**By: Sherry Hamby, 2014,
Oxford University Press**

147 Protective Strategies Identified by Participants in the VIGOR studies

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These are all of the options identified by the women who participated in the VIGOR studies. Some of these may be helpful for other victims who are making safety plans or may suggest new ideas to people trying to cope with violence.

Housing

Go to shelter

Stay in their own home/fortunate because lease is in their name (can ask partner to leave)

Get a roommate

Stay with family

Stay with friends

Put children in safe housing

Apply for subsidized or public housing (such as Section 8)

Move to another house or apartment, buy or rent new housing

Stay in a hotel

Seek assistance with getting a down payment for a new home

Stay and fight

Financial and employment related

Keep current job

Seek new full-time or part-time work

Get a second job

Get job training

Establish a retirement account

Pay down debt

Save money

Develop a budget

Sell or pawn extra items

Borrow money

Declare bankruptcy

Open new account and/or get separate bank accounts

Apply for "welfare" (TANF, food stamps, or other public assistance)

Save to buy a car

Use only cash

Change insurance

Apply for Medicaid

Continue education (apply for college funding such as Pell Grant)

Take GED exam (earn certificate of high school equivalency)

Stash money with family or otherwise hide money from partner

Have family help with finances

Get financial help from friends at work

Pay his bills so easier to divide property

Apply for disability (SSDI)
 Keep bank statements and other financial records
 Put all financial assets in own name (remove spouse's name)
 Apply for church assistance
 Learn from past financial mistakes
 Vocational rehabilitation
 Cook own meals (eat out less)

Legal and law enforcement

Call the police
 Notify police/sheriff if Protection/Restraining order not being followed
 Ask police to drive by home frequently
 Don't be afraid to reach out to police/sheriff for help
 Apply for Orders of Protection/Restraining order
 Obtain a divorce or separation
 Petition for custody of children
 Petition for child support
 Pursue alimony
 Seek help from Legal Aid
 Get a private attorney or lawyer
 Get a gun permit
 Report partner's abuse to child protective services
 Document all abuse (pictures, save texts, phone messages, pictures)
 Make sure keep all identifying documents in possession (for example, birth certificate, social security card and licenses)

Social and Personal

Rely on support of friends
 Make new acquaintances, expand social circle
 Rely on family as social support
 Attend church more frequently
 Visit with pastor, minister, reverend, or other religious figure
 Rely on God as a counselor
 Pray
 Seek a new relationship
 Seek a trusting relationship
 Exercise
 Spend time outside with children
 Keep a journal
 Stay clean (no drugs or alcohol)
 Share testimony/share story (tell other people their story to help others)
 Get social support and advice from advocates at shelter
 Take a vacation
 Believe in yourself
 Look to your children for strength
 A new look, a new outlook

Don't look back
 Stop thinking he will change
 Stay committed to school
 Find a hobby
 Focus on self and children
 Volunteer in community
 Volunteer at children's school
 Help others

Community resources

Seek domestic violence advocate or social worker
 Rely on church community
 Research domestic violence resources available in area
 Look for all types of help can obtain from the community
 Use food bank
 Use Goodwill or Habitat for Humanity or other thrift stores
 Find daycare for children
 Join Al-Anon (group for family and friends of alcoholics)
 Use community resources to obtain food, clothing and help with prescriptions
 Rely on sheriff's department (ask them to drive by home frequently to make a presence)
 Live near a police station
 Participate in single mom programs
 Participate in meal program
 Look for job training
 Develop safety plan with social services
 Take a self-defense class or firearm safety class
 Campus ministry
 Seek counseling/therapy
 Seek psychotropic medication
 Seek information about domestic violence
 Seek community mental health services
 Seek therapy with partner
 Attend support groups

Cyber protection/guarding against identity theft

Get a private phone number
 Have two phones (don't give second number to partner)
 Increase Facebook privacy
 Avoid Facebook/ do not use social media
 Change MySpace account
 Change password for phone
 Change password for email
 Keep personal information private (in general)
 Get a PO Box instead of having mail sent to home
 Put a lock on mail box
 Change accounts

Change passwords on various accounts
 Increase internet security (general)
 Don't use a computer
 Only use computer at work to access personal information

Other Safety Steps

Leave town (relocate)
 Hide—stay away from abuser and hide
 Get a gun
 Keep knife under mattress
 Get mace
 Get a dog
 Change locks and/or add new or stronger locks to home (dead bolts)
 Avoid unnecessary alone contact with spouse or use a mediator for necessary contact
 Change routines to avoid abuser
 Never go out alone—always bring a friend or family member
 Home security/alarm system
 Carry cell phone at all times
 Be more cautious, be more aware of surroundings
 Create a safety plan and share with kids
 Change last name
 Get a prepaid phone
 Alert neighborhood/community watch
 Install outdoor lights all around the house
 Use a rotary phone (always on, no caller id)
 Use a daycare with security cameras installed
 Provide daycares and childcare workers with a list of safe people who can pick up your kids
 Use code words
 Continue promoting strong, healthy relationships with family, friends, and boyfriend
 Become acquainted with law enforcement officers
 Request record checks for potential romantic interests
 Change vehicle (so partner won't recognize)

Note: These are options generated by women in the VIGOR studies. As with other protective strategies in this book, this list is not intended as an endorsement of any particular strategy for any particular person. As a psychologist, I would not personally recommend getting a gun or keeping a knife under the mattress, for example. Those options and others, though, do show how much battered women are doing to protect themselves and how much consideration they are giving to the possibilities for protection. It is an impressive list longer than any other existing safety plan.