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Radford University has been undergoing all sorts of attacks this semester. The Tartan has written articles in the past about ways to prevent yourself from being a victim, but that may not be enough.

It's hard to tell exactly what an attacker's motives are or what kind of person they're looking to go for. Any situation and location has the potential to turn into a crime scene. I know everybody has, at some point in their lives, watched a cop show or criminal case show and has some mental image of potentially dangerous scenarios.

To better understand how to truly prevent becoming a victim, there's a web page that's based off interviews with captured rapists. Their answers were then compiled into a list. According to "Through a Rapist's Eyes (www.ripleycounty.com/sheriff/rape.htm). "What better understanding of potential targets than to take some advice from the attackers themselves?

The way you dress and carry yourself could land you a big target on your back. Braids, ponytails and compiled hair are all easy to grab a hold of and easy to take control of. Rapists look for women who wear articles of clothing with easier access or areas of removal. For students who jog around campus during the evenings, be cautious of what you wear.

People on the phone, searching through their bag or doing any other distracting activities while walking are the perfect victims because they'll be so caught off guard and will have a lesser reaction time. Have your keys out and ready when walking and have your phone handy but not necessarily in hand. Carrying pepper spray wouldn't be objective; "If you carry pepper spray, yell 'I have pepper spray!' and holding it out will be a deterrent."

Some students are taught to walk around with keys between their fingers almost like a spiky silver knuckle contraption. An umbrella's main purpose is to protect you from rain, key word: protection. Don't be afraid to use it as a weapon if needed! The little handheld ones could be useful and would give you that 'light saber stretch effect' when whipping it out, but just as easily could collapse on you as well. Try using the old-fashioned umbrella with the curved handle and the pointy tip.

If you find yourself without an item and haven't the slightest idea on how to defend yourself, don't panic. They'll be expecting you to swing big or flail, but there are simple ways to get yourself out of the arms of an attacker. Pinching an attacker is one of the least expected ways to break free. Depending on the amount of exposed skin, try aiming for the upper under arm or top of the inner thigh. When I say pinch I don't mean the little nip you give

someone because they failed to wear green on St. Patrick's Day. Literally break their skin. You're fighting for freedom and potentially you're life.

If an attacker should put his hands on you, grabbing two of their fingers and bending them as far back as possible is a smart and easy way to also bring an attacker to their knees. Because these could cause anger in the attacker my next suggestion would be go for the groin.

Don't hesitate and act fast. Man or woman, one empowered kick in that region will have an attacker on their knees unable to move for quite some time.

"If someone is coming toward you, hold out your hands in front of you and yell 'Stop!' or 'Stay back!' Most rapists said they'd leave a woman alone if she yelled or showed that she would not be afraid to fight back." Most attackers will not go for a victim if they look like they can put up a fight. It's discouraging because it would just be a waste of time and effort, and end in failure.

One useful tip has the ability to outsmart an attacker and could work if being followed. If you notice someone is following you or you're in close distance with an individual who looks suspicious, look at their face and study it. Not only look them in the face but also ask them a question and get some voice recognition. Making small talk and also looking at them studying their face leaves you a less potential target because you'll be able to match them in a line-up.

I'm not a black belt or any kind of self-defense expert, but these tips have come from locked away rapists who may have personally felt this kind of pain through failed attempts. I feel like these might be the most useful. Don't disregard all of the commonly known tips, like don't walk alone, walk in well lit areas and be aware of your surroundings. Occasionally RU will host self-defense classes, but this upcoming fall semester a three-credit course is being offered, "Principles of Self Defense." This would be the perfect class to fill some of those elective credit hours and could be majorly beneficial and could end up saving your life.

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