THE

VIGOR

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

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147 Protective Strategies Identified by Participants in the VIGOR studies

From *Battered Women's Protective Strategies: Stronger Than You Know*
*By Sherry Hamby, 2014, Oxford University Press*

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.