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Full Episode Transcript

With Your Hosts

Dr. David Phelps and Evan Harris

You are listening to the *Dentist Freedom Blueprint* podcast, with David Phelps and Evan Harris. Navigating you through the uncharted waters of a turbulent economy with straight-forward advice to transform your practice into a self-sufficient cash machine, compound your net worth assets, and multiply, multiply, multiply your passive cash flow streams.

David: Hello everyone, this is Dr. David Phelps with the Freedom

Founders mastermind community and the Dentist

Freedom Blueprint podcast. Got a great, really fun, and I think a very insightful interview today with a gentleman who's become somewhat of a friend, certainly a mentor in the area and the topics we're going to talk about today. That is my friend, Mr. Jason Hanson. Jason, how are you

today, sir?

Jason: I'm fantastic, David.

David: So just a little bit of background on Jason. He's got quite

a resume. He spent six years with the Central Intelligence

Agency. Has moved, and now makes his home in

southern Utah. He's left the CIA just because of, I think, you'll tell us a little bit more, Jason, but family/personal reasons. You want to spend time with your family so you took what you learned there and you started a security business, a family-run business. You've been doing that

for a number of years now.

You've trained thousands of Americans in personal protection, conceal and carry, pistol, rifle, shotgun, escape and evasion courses. I'm happy to say that my wife and I have been a part of one of those courses and I'm a subscriber to the newsletter. I think you give really great tips for any person who is concerned about security and personal protection for themselves and their family.

Jason, anything you want to add to that? I want to make sure that people also know where they can go to find out more about you.

Sure, yeah, I think you did a good job. The only other Jason:

thing is they can go to our website which is

spyescape.com. That tells about all our training. It has a

bunch of free material on there for them.

Perfect. Yeah, there's videos, training, and a list of your

very good courses. As I said, my wife and I have taken them and a number of my good friends have also been a

part of what you've done.

What I'd like to do today, you speak about and you train in a lot of different areas of personal safety and protection. Let's focus on one of those areas today, Jason. Since it is the summer season right now, could we talk a little bit and focus on travel safety, both domestic and international? Let you just talk about some of the protection tips and checklists that people might want to consider before they head off on whatever kind of trip they're going to do this

season.

Jason: Sure. Let's start with domestically because it is different if

> you're going internationally. Here, domestically, a lot of it is common sense. One of the first things and one of the things that drives me crazy when I see it is my wife's friend, they travel all the time to Disneyland and they put on their Facebook page, you know, "July 3 through the 25" or whatever the real date is, "We're going to be in

Disneyland."

David: Right.

Jason: Obviously, don't announce to the world that your home is

going to be empty. When you're traveling, very important

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David:

that you're staying at decent hotels. I realize when all of us we're in college we'd stay at scummy places and have ten people to a bed and sleeping head to toe and all that stuff. But don't be cheap when you're getting hotels. There's a reason that you see the drug dealers or the prostitutes at some of those lower-end hotels, pony up the money to make sure your family is safe.

As far as hotels, probably one of the most important things is to stay between the third and the sixth floor when you're booking a room because criminals often target those first two floors since they can easily get into them and then run out to their getaway driver.

Then the reason you don't want to stay on the 85th floor is heaven forbid if there were a fire, that's obviously a lot of flights of stairs to go down. In the United States, fire truck ladders only go up to the sixth floor. So you can see why you don't want to stay higher than the sixth floor if something bad we're to happen. So that's just one of the hotel tips.

Taxis is another thing. I personally have never used Uber. I know people love it but I'm going to stick with a taxi or a town car or something that is just more legitimate because—not to bash Uber—but they claim they have background checks. As someone who runs a security company, I know there are various background checks.

The one they use I'm told costs about \$1.50, checks nothing, the guys don't have to be fingerprinted and it's kind of that goofy background check you see advertised online where it says, "Hey, know somebody's background for \$9.99."

Well a decent background check is going to set you about \$100 since our company does a ton of that. So stick with

something legitimate, safe. I realize its convenience but there are times when you want to place your personal safety over the convenience of getting an Uber and paying \$5 more.

Then last thing before I'll stop rambling and let you ask me any more questions I didn't touch on, is flights. I fly all the time. I travel doing teaching classes, speaking, and consulting. When it comes to airplanes, everybody used to think there was this magic seat. Like if you sat in 32B, you wouldn't die in a plane crash. Or if you were in 14C, you would survive. But the FAA after doing lots of studies found that as long as you're within five rows of an emergency exit, that's where you have the highest likelihood of survival.

So the beauty of the internet is we can book our flights, we can choose our seats. I personally always try and get into the exit aisle just because not only do I want to be near the exit, but I want the legroom. I mean after flying a long time, you really want to make sure you have that good legroom there.

When flying, keep your head up to the first three minutes and last eight minutes of a flight are the most dangerous. The first three minutes are when a plane is most likely to crash. Last eight minutes are when a plane is most likely to crash when you're going on the landing. So have your headphones off, be alert, be awake, keep your shoes on. Then of course, after that, go to sleep as I often do. You want to just put all the odds in your favor.

I don't walk around paranoid or thinking anything crazy but I'm like, hey, if anything is going to happen, I'm going to take the 30 seconds it takes to choose my seat within

five rows of an exit just to again always make sure that the odds are in my favor.

David:

Good stuff, Jason. Going back to hotels, sometimes in summer the more casual resort areas that are some of the older, but they've renovated them, they've kept them up, they're kind of more of a motel, maybe multi-story, three or four, and the entrances to the rooms are exterior. Would you just flat out stay away from that type of a lodging?

Jason:

Those ones are most likely to be burglarized or have a hotel invasion but it's not necessarily I would stay away from those. I would scout out the area just like everything else. So again, being on the internet I can get on TripAdvisor or whatever website, read people's reviews.

But if I drive up to the hotel and I'm like, whoa, I thought this was going to be a nice area so I didn't mind having an exterior entrance and I see that it just doesn't look good, it looks run down and it doesn't look safe, well then I'll definitely go to another hotel. I don't want to say that every time I see a hotel that is a few floors with an exterior entrance I'm going to run away. It's always going to be a case-by-case situation.

David:

You also have recommended and I think you still do a relatively inexpensive and easy to travel with product that people can use in a hotel on the door as a security device and kind of alarm, correct?

Jason:

Correct. It's called a doorstopper alarm. Actually I'm getting ready to head to DC tomorrow to do my spy course. I was just packing it up this afternoon. A doorstopper alarm, if you just Google it, you'll see what it is. It's a little wedge you put in front of a door. If somebody tries to open the door, not only does that

wedge stop them, but it sets off a very loud alarm. So you'll instantly snap up out of bed. That person will be scared away.

Since I travel a ton and I know you do too, David, I always have that in front of my door just because I think it costs \$10 to \$15, so it's not expensive. It's just something that will terrify somebody and get them to run away if they're trying to break into your room.

David:

Exactly. Jason, what else do you feel like is important for people to travel with? You just mentioned the door alarm. What else would you advise people to take with them at a bare minimum?

Jason:

At a bare minimum, cash. People rely on credit cards so much these days but I always believe in having \$300 in cash at an absolute minimum. Not that you have to use it. I mean, I hardly ever pay cash. I use my credit cards like everybody else but I have been in jams—I can't remember if I told you this story or not—where I was overseas once, got in a jam.

Some corrupt police were going to try and haul me and somebody else off to jail. I had to bribe them. There's a way you bribe the police. But if I didn't have cash, you know, I could have ended up in a foreign prison, which is not a good thing. So carry cash whether you're going domestic or internationally just because so many people I know and have worked with have gotten out of jams with it.

Then always have some type of protection device. I'm a gun guy. I certainly realize not everybody wants to carry guns but I carry a tactical pen, which is a regular writing pen made out of a much harder material so you could use it to break out a window. You could use it to stop an

attacker. I always believe, again, to each his own, that you should always have some way to defend yourself if the worst-case scenario occurs.

David:

As far as cash, do you carry that on your person all in one place or do you recommend a couple different places to keep the cash?

Jason:

If I'm traveling domestically and I'm going to a nice place and I'm not worried, I'll just have the cash in my pocket. So I'll have \$300 sitting there. I always have a \$100 bill too. So part of that \$300 is if you pull out a \$100 bill and you put it in someone's face and you need their help with something or you need to run through their house and escape through the backdoor in some crazy, bizarro situation. Not many people are going to refuse if you pull out a \$100 bill and they see it there. So that's one of the things I always recommend.

As far as traveling internationally, I always separate the cash. I always have it in two different places. I do not recommend wearing the neck wallets or the ones that you can just lift up your shirt because people see that string around your neck. Criminals are savvy enough that they work in teams and they can slash that. As it falls, they can grab it and run.

The two places I put my cash is, one, it's kind of a money clip thing, but you clip it inside your pants, right in front of your waistline, almost below your belly button. I clip that to my pants so it's inside the waistband and I'll put some cash there.

Then I also bought this—I can't even remember what it's called—this pocket, I guess they call it a pocket vault or pocket case. But it actually clips to my belt and, again, hangs inside my waistband and goes down to my leg. It's

such a pain in the butt for me to get out that I know no criminal is going to be in there and access it.

So I'll put some cash in there but that's also where I carry my passport. So my credit cards and other stuff may be in a pocket and then some may be in that small money clip that's easy to access. But the real important items are basically hanging down on the side of my leg inside my pants and are very difficult to get to.

David:

Okay, got it. TSA. Looks like they're undermanned and a lot of lines. Is there any workaround other than just to be involved with the TSA PreCheck or you just have to plan for that this summer?

Jason:

Yeah, unfortunately, besides a TSA PreCheck, you know not checking bags, that way you don't have to wait in the checked bag line, that always helps. Then I'm going to sound like the airport commercial, the TSA commercials, you've just got to get there early.

It drives me nuts because I travel so much, but you know sometimes you get there and you breeze right through and then you have time to work at the airport for an hour or two. Then other times, you're sitting there and you got there two hours early and it's like goodness gracious, I'm going to barely make my flight because of this line.

Use common sense too. Don't be that guy who has something in his suitcase you're not supposed to have that way you don't get pulled over to the side and you don't have to waste that time, which I see all the time. It drives me nuts. So don't check bags. Get TSA PreCheck and just be smart about what you have in your carry-ons.

David:

Got it. Jason, a lot of people like to get in the RV and take their family and take a big road trip across the country

and stay in the RV parks, the campgrounds, that kind of thing. Outside of what you've already said about hotels and just going to TripAdvisor and assessing the area when you get there, what other things could people investigate ahead of time to make sure they're in the right place? Anything else?

Jason:

The number one thing that comes to mind about this is a lot of sex offenders will use RV parks and camping spots. A lot of people may not know that. So the database, if you just Google it, it will pop up—the name, I'm drawing a blank on it—but just go to the sex offender database. If you type in an address or place you're looking to go, it will pop up all the sex offenders in that area. I've done that. My wife does it all the time. So if you see you're going to this RV campground and there are ten sex offenders in there, you may want to choose somewhere else.

David:

Yeah, exactly. A lot of people will take cruises. Can you talk a little bit about cruise ships and some additional precautions that one can take there?

Jason:

Cruise ships, the ship itself is fine. They usually have good security because obviously it's bad for business if the customers are falling off the ship or getting killed on the ship. You really got to be careful though when you go onto those ports. Because every con artist in the world knows that Americans with money are going to dock up here. They're going to go sit on the beach for a day or five hours before they have to board that cruise ship again.

So it's just really once you exit that boat, make sure you're paying attention. Make sure you're not walking down the street texting because they can tell you're that easy American. These guys, their living is made by standing there scouting out people to get off the cruise

ships and following them and seeing, okay, is this person going to be the easy person to rob or is this person?

I know people, actually a guy who was a secret service agent, he was able to carry a gun where he was going but they for some reason pegged him out. He drew his gun on a guy, the guy ran away and thankfully he didn't have to fire his gun. So just be very, very vigilant every time you get out of a cruise ship because there are people standing there who are looking for easy targets.

David:

Okay, so we're moving into a little bit of international now. Let's carry on with that a little bit. What about excursions or setting up some kind of a sightseeing type of tours? Should you always go through a known operator? Because sometimes people say you can get the best deals and find the real people if you just kind of get there and figure that out on your own. What are your suggestions there?

Jason:

I would recommend a known operator. Sometimes, I do a lot of consulting, and I'll have people tell me like, "Well I was doing an internet search and some guy on a home board or whatever forum recommend John Doe in Guatemala that he could be a taxi driver and show me around."

I'm like, "Well, it may be good, but why don't you actually pay for a legitimate company, do your research instead of trying to save a few bucks by going with some guy you don't know who you now want to drive you around this country and show it you." I highly recommend ponying up the extra money.

Then just something else is make sure you have your cell phone that works internationally. A lot of companies, you can just call them up and they'll switch it over. What I do

is I actually bought an international cell phone and the SIM card. So I've got my phone that I use all the time in the United States but when I travel internationally, I have a phone specifically for that. I can add minutes to the SIM card just like you add minutes to any prepaid phone. It works all over the world.

If I'm going to a real dangerous place, I have a satellite phone and most people are not going to need to do that. But if you are going to some scary, third world country, absolutely invest in a satellite phone because it's going to be worth your money. So at the very least, make sure you've got that international cell phone.

David:

Jason, how do you protect yourself from losing or maybe having stolen your travel documents, passport and credit cards and that kind of thing? What's your backup plan there?

Jason:

In addition to always making copies and storing the copies at various parts on my body. So as I mentioned, I may have one pouch on the front of my body and a pouch going down my leg. My passport may be down my leg but I'll have a copy in my pocket or a copy in the other pouch. But in addition to that, I use a USB drive, an encrypted one. A company that I use was IronKey. I think they've since been sold but you just go and Google "encrypted USB drive."

When I travel overseas, I'll have that encrypted USB drive with my passport, with my driver's license, with my health insurance information, with the consulate, with the embassy. So that's another important thing to look up. Make sure you know all the embassies' numbers.

Make sure also before you go international that you go to the Department of State website and you Google

whatever country you're going to. They'll tell you if there's any warnings or advisories. So I tell people to try and avoid Mexico if they can just because it's not the safest place in the world. Every time somebody goes to Mexico, there's usually some type of warning that says, hey, State Department says stay out of here. You're going to be beheaded or something.

Going back to that, I know your question was about the documents. Just get some type of encrypted USB drive. Put the documents on there. Carry it on your person but also have a backup one in your suitcase that you can hide somewhere. You don't want to put it on top of your suitcase, but hide it somewhere in your hotel room that somebody isn't most likely to look.

That way there's multiple backups because the last thing you want to have happen is have your stuff stolen in a foreign country and have to go through the long and bureaucratic process of getting a new passport.

David:

Yeah, that would be a nightmare. What about insurance for health, accident, or what's our liability if we're renting a car internationally and we have an accident? Is there sufficient coverage with the rental car agencies? That's kind of a big question with insurance in general but take it apart it there if you would for us a little bit, Jason.

Jason:

Sure. Most companies are not going to cover you and of course it's in the fine print. So you call somebody on the phone, they'll have no idea what they're talking about. They'll try and say, "Oh, you're going to be fine." But when you look, you're up the creek without a paddle. So what I recommend is, again, the same thing with health insurance.

The one I usually get just because it's easy, they put together a good program, is American Express. I'm an American Express member. They have their travel insurance. It's a couple hundred bucks, depending on where you're going in the world. It's absolutely worth it and it's just one of those—it's just like all insurance, you pray you never have to use it.

So I would never go overseas, especially to places I sometimes travel, without having some type of international travel that guarantees me a rescue out of the country. That guarantees me medical. It guarantees me travel coverage, all of that stuff. Again, I'm sounding like an American Express rep here. They're the ones I use but I'm sure there's a million and one companies out there who offer it.

David:

What about liability? You can think of things a lot faster than I can but if you just get in some kind an incident or something where local authorities, police are involved. Whether it was an accident or negligence or whatever, what are the steps that you need to be prepared to take to make sure you don't get incarcerated or something where it shouldn't happen. How do you deal with that?

Jason:

That's why you want to have on your person in addition to your USB encrypted drive is the embassy, the consulate, all those phone numbers. So by law, let's say you did something bad and got arrested or maybe you didn't do something bad in a foreign country. They have to let you see somebody from the American embassy or the consulate. So they've got to give you a meeting with someone from your country.

If something happens, you want to be able to dial the phone immediately or if somebody is around, say, "Hey,

tell them, dear, that I'm getting arrested. That they need to send somebody. I'm in Brazil, in Rio. Send somebody to the jail because I need their help." So always have those phone numbers handy.

The U.S. government screws up a lot of stuff and is not good for a lot of things but when you're overseas, they do take good care of their citizens. So make sure you contact them quickly if you need to.

David:

Excellent. You talked a little bit about taxis versus Uber domestically. Internationally, are there additional precautionary steps that one needs to take before just jumping in a quote "taxi" and how does one assess that?

Jason:

Yes, absolutely. Here in the U.S., you can get away with being stupid but it's more likely to cost you your life overseas. Just because they see somebody gets in, you don't speak the language, they see an American, they thing you're rich and you're a target that they're going to want to do something bad to. What I recommend is only get taxis recommended by your hotel.

Assuming you're staying at a good hotel, not somewhere dumpy, you want the concierge or the hotel representative there to recommend a taxi company. To have them call you a taxi that pulls up to the front of the hotel. Then when you need a ride back, you can say, "Can you please give me that number? Give me their card. That way I can call them."

In most countries, there are what are called ghost taxis. They'll pull up and they have no markings on the car. They say, "Listen, come with me. I'm a taxi. You'll save money. I'll give you a shortcut and you'll save \$5" or whatever it is. Avoid those temptations. Stay away from

ghost taxis. Make sure your hotel tells you what the legitimate ones are to use.

David: Okay. Tips for using public transportation like subways

and metro lines, things like that?

Jason: Most countries in the world are, again, unless you're

going to a third world country, very safe. Public

transportation is good. However, you don't want to look like that American who's got a target on their back. So don't walk up with that map out. Don't walk down the

subway with the map out.

The scam that is the least dangerous to you is somebody will come up, they'll offer to give you assistance, offer to give you directions. Another guy is going to come up from behind and pick your pocket or take out a knife, cut the purse strap, and then run away with the purse.

So have everything preplanned before you leave the hotel. If you've got to ask directions, that's fine, but go ask directions to the bus driver or to somebody who's actually running something. Don't go ask directions to a stranger just because criminals, and it's mostly pickpockets, they've got to make a living.

They know that these places are perfect tourist traps where they can rob you while they show you how to read a map. So just do everything, planning you need to while you're in your car, while you're in your hotel. That way you look as least tourist as possible as you're out and about.

David: Another thing that you really instilled in myself and

> Kandace when we took your Spy Escape and Evasion course was to, as you said, not look touristy. Don't look American. Don't wear a red, white, and blue t-shirt or a

cap. You talk about just being the grey man, just basically blending in to make yourself not a target, correct?

Jason:

Correct, yeah. You want to be the grey man, which also is called getting the baseline. So if you're going to a country and let's just say everybody is wearing shorts and t-shirts and you're walking around in jeans and a long-sleeve shirt, clearly you're not matching the baseline.

So probably the perfect example I can give you of this is last summer I went and ran with the bulls in Pamplona. It had been on my bucket list, something I had always wanted to do and before I got too old and chickened out, I said, "I'm going to run with the bulls now." So when you go to Pamplona and you see all the people on the TV and in the videos, everybody is in the outfit which is white pants, a white shirt, and that red scarf around their neck. Everybody is doing it.

Now, I felt absolutely ridiculous dressed like that. I probably looked ridiculous. But if you're walking around Pamplona during the running of the bulls and you're not in that outfit, you stand out and you don't look right.

So whatever country you're going to, try not to draw attention to yourself. Respect their culture and wear what they wear. Do what they do to blend in as necessary because if you don't, those are the people who criminals are looking for and they immediately single out, "That's a tourist. Let me go rob them or kidnap them or worse."

David:

Jason, what about events? Whether it's in our country or overseas, there's all kinds of events that one can go to and attend. Can you give us some tips on that because it seems like that's where if there's going to be terrorist activities, that's where they occur. It's almost impossible for us to be predictors of that, but anything there one can

safeguard themselves and their family when attending some event or where there's a lot of people concentrated in one area for whatever reason?

Jason:

It's funny you mention that. I actually had a guy just reach out to me about consulting about that. He's going to some Trump rally, or some political convention or political rally. He says, "Listen, I'm worried. There's going to be a ton of people there. I know there's going to be people who are fighting and this and that. What do I need to do?"

I told him, first, always make sure you can identify an exit. If you're at some outdoor rally, be closer to the exit where you can get out of that entrance quickly. You don't want to be in the middle surrounded by 10,000 people because you're not going anywhere. So hang close to an exit.

He was talking about bringing his kids too, I said, "If you're bringing your kids, your wife, take pictures of everyone so heaven forbid if nothing bad was happening but a child wandered away, you have a picture. You know what they're wearing. You know the exact color of their shirt. What they look like." So have every family member take pictures of themselves in case you get separated. That way people can help you, the police can help identify you.

Then if it feels wrong, always trust your gut. So if you're rolling up to this big event, this rock concert or whatever and it just seems like people are already mad, there's protesters and there's pushing, shoving, just don't go there. Always trust your gut. But if you do go in there, make sure you have at least two exits close by. Don't pin yourself in.

Probably the last thing I can tell you about events is don't follow the crowd. People have the herd mentality. They

start trampling, they start going crazy. So if you see 95 percent of people running one way, you probably want to go the opposite way.

Movie theaters is an example. People naturally go out the same entrance they came in. People run up those stairs because that's what their brain told them. Well if you go downstairs, there's usually an exit down below, that's where you want to go. So do not follow the herd.

David:

That's great advice. I think that goes with most things in life too. Just don't follow the herd. Listen, great stuff. Great tips. I kind of did this from a self-serving standpoint too, Jason, because I wanted the tips for myself but I know we're going to share this with a lot of people that I think will find a lot of value.

Last minute or two, any last tip or advice you can give that we left out that you think might be helpful?

Jason:

A lot of it is common sense. A buddy of mine who is former CIA too says a lot of it is common sense on steroids. It just goes back to don't think you're invisible. If something seems wrong, get out of there. Don't try and be a hero who says, "Nothing is going to happen here. Don't mess with me." If you see somebody walking into Walmart tomorrow and they look fishy, just walk out. Just get out of there in case something happens. You don't need to be a ninja or ex-CIA. Again, a lot of it, common sense on steroids. Always trust yourself.

David:

Good advice. I know you said you're getting ready to head out to DC to do your two-day Spy Escape and Evasion course, maybe just give people a little bit of an idea of what that's about. Again, that's the course I took and found it extremely valuable. Give people just a little bit of a feel of what you do in that two days.

Jason:

Sure. We cover some of the stuff we've already discussed here. We teach people some fun things such as how to pick locks. How to become a human lie detector. How to disappear without a trace. How to escape duct tape, rope. How to pick handcuffs using a hair barrette and a bobby pin.

We teach people survival gear that they need and the three different tiers and all the gear they should have to protect themselves at home, in their car, in their purse. It's a very fun two days. They'll learn some exciting spy skills but it's also very practical that if bad stuff happens, they'll know how to protect themselves.

David:

Yeah. One of the things that you showed us all how to do and I think everybody did it successfully is we were handcuffed behind our back and stuffed into the trunk of a car. We had to figure out how to get out.

Jason:

Yeah, exactly. I put people in situations they'll probably never in a million years be in, but if you can do that, and I remember, everybody in your class did very well, escaping the trunk sometimes in 30 seconds. It builds confidence and it empowers you to know that you can survive these types of things.

David:

I also, one of my events, just to let you know, I did the whole duct tape thing. I had somebody bind my wrists with duct tape and I came out. They think I just walk on water now.

[Laughter]

Jason: Good. Glad you're passing it along. Good deal.

David: Yeah, it was good stuff. Listen, Jason Hanson, thank you

so much for your time today. These are great tips. Again, you can find more about Jason and what he does in his

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. . .

training at www.spyescapeandevasion.com for all the information, materials, lots of great training is there.

I encourage people if you want more of what Jason offers to go there. He's a great guy, spent quite a bit of time with him and he knows his stuff. Jason, again, thank you so much for being with us today.

Jason: My pleasure. I'll be back any time you want me.

David: Perfect. Thank you, sir.

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