

Podcast #227 Transcription – NRA Home Invasion Lessons

Jeff Anderson: Hey there, welcome back. It's Jeff Anderson, Editor of Modern Combat and Survival Magazine and executive director of the New World Patriot Alliance with another podcast to help you better prepare for any threat you may face in your role as a protector and a patriot. If you're a member of the NRA and you received last month's issue of America's First Freedom Magazine, you probably saw an article in there detailing how Richard Childress and his wife repelled a home invasion by three attackers. Now, I love these kinds of stories because it really gives us a chance to kind of armchair quarterback and learn from things that were done right, as well as avoid the things that were done wrong. So what I want to do is go ahead and give you the story real quick, and then we can dissect it because there really are some good lessons in here for you.

First to introduce you to who we're talking about here, Richard Childress is the vice-president and co-chair of the NRA's Hunter Leadership forum, and that's kind of interesting as it is right there because you would think that somebody within the NRA would be not just a dedicated gun owner, but also really have it all figured out and really have it together when it comes to personal protection, right? That's why I found this story to be really kind of intriguing in some of the things that were done here. Actually at the very end, I'll go over ... my very last tip is kind of a little bit of a ... I've got some problems with the NRA sometimes, right, and the final lesson that I have here I think really just brings it all home and why we need to really think outside the box and outside of just where our information is packaged from.

But for those of you that maybe follow the NRA and who's in leadership positions, you might know Richard, but if you're into NASCAR, you probably know him better because he's a Hall of Famer in NASCAR with over 200 wins and 15 championships under his belt. He's done really well for himself and he has this really big home, this estate in North Carolina, and it's in a small town in North Carolina where he and his wife live.

He's no stranger to firearms. He's hunted all of his life from the time he was just a young kid, but had recently started to carry his Smith and Wesson .40 caliber concealed, and even started carrying it at home. In fact, a week before the attack that I'm going to tell you about, Richard's wife had asked him why he was carrying his pistol even in the house, and his response back to her made a lot of sense, right? This time of year, which this was during the Christmas season, people do crazy things, and you just don't know what people are going to do or try to do. That was his response to his wife, and he continued to carry his .40 caliber in the home.

Well, as it would happen, on one Sunday evening right after he had been asked that by his wife and replied to her, Richard and his wife were both in bed. They were in bed by about 10 p.m. They had turned on the home's alarm system and Richard had put his .40 cal on a table in the couple's dressing room. But what

they didn't realize is that there were three men dressed in black wearing masks who had climbed over their property fence, had broken a security camera, and they were hiding out on the property waiting until they had gone to bed, and then they started looking for a way to get into the home.

This was not a random hit for these guys. This was really planned out. They had everything. They had the GPS coordinates for the home. They had even attempted to hack into the alarm system to disable it. They had brought things to be able to tie up him and his wife. They were armed. They even knew how to get Richard and his wife's security dog to stop barking. They had two rifles. They had a shotgun with them. They were coming, as Richard put it, they came to do bad things to my wife and me, right, and it's very obvious when they bring those kinds of things, and it was this thought out.

Now, the three men decided to break through a basement door, and ultimately this noise was what woke Richard up out of his sleep. He looked out the window and he saw these guys trying to break through the door. What's kind of funny here is that at first when he told his wife that someone was trying to break in, she told him to go back to sleep, which I think is pretty funny because it's usually the other way around, right? Honey, I hear a noise. Ah, just go back to sleep. Fortunately instead, he took action. He immediately armed himself and he was well armed. He had his .40 caliber handgun in the dressing room. He had two handguns in his bedside table. He had an AR-15 at the door. Again, this was a person who knew firearms, had firearms, and had them ready to go, but he was still groggy from being woken up out of his deep sleep, so instead of grabbing the closest weapon that he had, he made a beeline straight to his .40 cal Smith and Wesson inside of the dressing room in his bedroom.

Now, the attackers were still outside. They were looking for an easier way in, so Richard ran out the back door and around the corner of the house where he had seen them last, and by that time, the three guys had retreated about 50 yards or so away. No one really knows if they were giving up or just regrouping to figure out what to do next or whatever, but Richard just unloaded the entire magazine in their direction because, as he put it, he didn't know if they were going to come back and break into the house, start shooting back or whatever. Now, after he unloaded the entire magazine, he ran back into the house, ran back up to his bedroom, he grabbed the .45 that he had stashed in his bedside table, and he went back out the front door to confront the home invaders again. Now this time he didn't see them at all, so he just shot two warning shots up in the air, and he kept four rounds back in the magazine in reserve just in case.

Then Richard ran back into his home, and he and his wife called the police, who, since they're in a small town, were a good 22 minutes away before they were able to show up. By then, the criminals were gone, but fortunately the Childresses' security camera had caught the three men on the property on camera, and it was a really good starting point for finding them, which they were found. They were found several days later when they tried to pawn some stolen firearms that they had and some other goods that they had. The pawn

shop owner, their description fit what people were looking for, called them in, and they were taken off into custody and they were charged. So the story does fortunately have a happy ending, and not only were all three of the men ultimately convicted and they're now servicing sentences, but of course, the best part is that Richard and his wife were alive and unharmed.

When you really look at their experience, luck had a lot to do with this happy ending. As some of you may know if you have been listening to our podcasts for a while, I sometimes have a beef with the NRA, and just so you know, I'm a lifetime member of the NRA and our company, my company is a member of the NRA's business alliance. We've been a proud member of that for several years. Now, here's the thing. As I've come to expect, the NRA's lessons learned from the article that they published in their own magazine are all about how great it is that we live in a country where fine upstanding folks have the freedom to own a firearm in order to be able to protect themselves, so the article was a lot of rah rah liberal tree-hugger stuff. It was that kind of rhetoric, and really nothing about how people should be protecting themselves, but that's what we're for, all right?

So I have nine critical lessons that I want to share with you so that you can be better prepared than Childress and his wife if you're ever faced with the threat of a violent home invasion. So let's go ahead and dig into these now, starting with what Childress did right, because there were some things that he did right.

Number one, he had an alarm system and he had cameras. Now I've sometimes talked about on the podcasts when it comes to home defense or really any kind of defense, the military axiom that we've always used, detect, delay, and defend. You detect a threat, find a way to delay them to be able to respond, and then defend where you have to. That starts with detect, and that's what alarm systems and cameras allow you to do. Now, not only does that give you the reaction time that you need because look, you don't want to find out there's home invaders when they're right at your bedroom door right next to your bed, right, with a shotgun pointing in your face. You need to be able to detect as quickly as you possibly can. That's what an alarm system does. That's what an alarm system does, but not only does it give you that reaction time, but because he had cameras, he never would have been able to identify these attackers without the CC TV cameras that he had. They may have always been wondering if those guys were still out there, were they ever going to come back?

Having a home invasion, having any sort of attack like this can be very traumatic emotionally for your entire family, so fortunately ... I mean, he didn't know what these guys looked like because it was dark outside, it was late at night, these guys were all dressed in black, but the cameras are what allowed them to be able to say yes, these are the guys. They were able to catch them there. You need to make sure that you do have an alarm system. Cameras now are so inexpensive. They are wireless now. You don't have to be all wired up for it and everything. There's a lot that you can do there with wireless cameras very, very

inexpensively, and it's always good to be able to record that, not just be able to detect something early, but also to be able to use it as evidence later on.

Lesson number two here in what he did right also was that Richard carried his weapon at home. Now, a recent survey that I've told people about found that 47% of those people who are licensed concealed carry gun owners only carry occasionally or not at all. That's almost half. Almost half of people who are licensed to conceal a gun in public barely ever even carry their weapon, and a few of the reasons stated were I only carry when I think I need to and our neighborhood is more secure than most. Now, I live a small town in Texas, and it's a very safe town. It's a town where you meet people at the local grocery store that you know. It's hard to get out of the grocery store because you know so many people and you get into so many conversations. The same thing with Richard Childress and his wife. They live in a small North Carolina town and it's very nice. They have a very nice home, so it's very easy to think well, we're safe. We have cameras. We have an alarm system. We've got fencing. We have a security dog. They have all these things in place. It would be very easy to say well, I can just keep my weapon up in its safe or whatever because who's going to break through any of these defenses, right?

Well, as we see, defenses can be overwhelmed. They can be hacked. There's a lot of things that can go wrong there, so having a weapon and carrying a weapon everywhere is part of the concealed carry lifestyle. So even if you don't have a concealed carry license, you can still carry your weapon within your home on your belt or wherever you want to carry it for concealment purposes, but you can still carry it at home.

Listen, this is a lifestyle. You never know when you're going to be attacked. The criminals always have the upper hand because they're the ones who are looking for a victim, and when they find someone, you still have to go through that whole process of detecting a threat, trying to orient yourself. There's all those things that you have to go through when you're surprised with an ambush. The criminals always have that upper hand, so you need to be prepared all the time. That means carrying even when you're at home.

Lesson number three here was to really trust your gut. Listen, it was 10 o'clock at night, or actually it was after 10 o'clock at night. They were in bed at about 10 o'clock, but they were in a dead sleep when all of a sudden Richard heard a noise. That's it, a noise. Now, I'm sure you've woken up in the middle of the night. There's lots of noises that happen in a house, and again, it's really easy for ... you know, his wife tried to tell him to go back to sleep, but he heard a noise, he investigated it, and he saw three men trying to break in. It's real easy to just think well, I'm sure it's nothing and just go back to sleep, or if your spouse, in this case, your spouse says honey, I heard a noise, don't just immediately say oh, I'm sure it's just your imagination and go back to sleep. Trust your gut. It's better to trust your gut and be able to go and investigate something and just make sure it is what it is rather than just going back to sleep and finding out it really is what you didn't think it was, and now you're in a world of hurt. So

always trust your gut. It doesn't do any harm just to go and investigate the right way, right, the right way, and we'll get into that here more in a little bit too.

Okay, lesson number four is to know your rules of engagement. Now Richard knew his rules of engagement. He wasn't charged with any crime because he lives in a state that has a castle doctrine law in place. Does your state have castle doctrine law in place? Do you even understand what castle doctrine is? Do you even understand what the implications are of castle doctrine? I can tell you it's one of the most misunderstood laws out there, and it really can just be very specific to where you live, so you've got to be very knowledgeable about what you can do. When can you shoot and when can't you shoot? Don't think that you know.

I mean, there's a real big difference here between the mindset of a hunter, which Richard Childress was a hunter. That was his upbringing. That was his role within the NRA, so he was an avid hunter and he knew guns and he had guns, but there's a big difference between the mindset of a hunter, a soldier, a police officer, the average gun carrying Joe and Jane out there. The rules of engagement are different for all of those people, right, so treating a threat like you're a soldier may not stand up in court even with a castle doctrine law in place. You have to really know what your rules of engagement are, what the legal ramifications are for your actions because you are responsible for every round that comes out of that gun. Know your rules of engagement.

All of this leads me to some of things that Childress could have done better, and here are some of the lessons based on what happened before the actual attack. So we're on tip number five here really, which is to have all of your weapons staged and ready to go. Right now, when Childress, when he notices there was an attack, he had a .40 caliber in his dressing room, he had two handguns in his bedside table, and next to a door, it doesn't say which door, but he had an AR-15 next to a door. What did he do? He woke up and he went and grabbed the .40 cal inside of the dressing room. Most likely it was because that was his concealed carry weapon and he remembers taking it off. I mean, that was the last thing he did before he went to bed, so he knew where it was. It was the last thing, and went to it.

Now, he would have been better prepared for that startled wake up out of a dead sleep if he really had his one weapon that he was going to use for nighttime home invasion, and he had it staged and ready to go. You need to be able to choose your weapon, you need to have it ready, and you do this same thing every night so you're not wandering around looking for it like it's your lost keys somewhere. Where did I put my gun? Which gun should I use? Now, I have an admission here because I learned this lesson the hard way myself.

Listen, I live out in the country in Texas, as I said, and my office is on my property and I still get up super early in the morning. I usually get up about 4:30 in the morning. It's typically very dark outside, and usually I carry my weapon. As soon as I get out of bed, I put it on, walk over to my office, because I never

know what critters are running around here. We have hogs out here. We have mountain lions. We have coyotes. We have all kinds of critters out here, so I never know when I'm going to need my weapon, but I didn't have it one morning, and I went outside. I started to go up the stairs on my property to go over to my office, and I looked down, and I thought my son had left a towel from the pool onto the stairs. So I reached down to go pick it up, and I'll be damned if that towel didn't coil up and start rattling, and I would say it was about a three and a half, four-foot long gigantic freaking rattlesnake. This thing was super ... it looked like it was the size of my thigh, and it was just probably just, I'm probably still tired or whatever, but it was a big ass snake.

Of course, I didn't have my handgun on me, so I run back into the house, hoping that that snake is going to stay right there. I run back in. I didn't remember where I had left my weapon, so I went in and I was going to go grab my ... my wife is still in bed asleep. I was going to go grab my AR-15. It was in my safe, and I couldn't get into my safe. It was all dark. My wife didn't want me to turn the lights on and everything, so I'm wandering around. Where the hell's my gun? Where's my other gun? I finally found my gun. I went outside and the snake was all gone, so I wasn't prepared. Now, I learned a lesson right there, the same lesson I just gave you. Have your weapons staged, ready to go at a moment's notice because when you're startled, when you wake up, when you need it, it needs to be there for you, so I learned my lesson that time. Learn from my mistakes as well.

Okay, tip number six here is to have a home defense plan with a capital P. Richard Childress didn't have a home defense plan. He had an alarm system, he had guns, but he had no plan. Now listen, when there is a home invasion, especially if somebody is inside of your home and they're already ambushing you, there's going to be chaos. Your adrenaline is going to be surging. You are going to be in state of trying to figure out what the hell's going on and what you're going to do to respond, so you need a very simple response plan that you can follow even if you are groggy and surprised. If you don't personally have a home defense plan, and just owning a gun is not a home defense plan, if you don't have a plan for what you're going to do when an attack happens, then you don't know what you're going to do.

You need something that is very simple that you can follow, something like you need to have your safe room in place. I'll be talking more about that at the very end here, okay, and some other resources that you can have available to you here. So make sure you have a plan, and part of that plan brings us to number seven here, which is to create layers within your home to give you time to react. So the good measure that Richard had in place here allowed him to detect the threat before they got into the house. They were trying to break down a door, he heard the noise, he got up. His alarm system wasn't helping him out there, right? They had broken into a window before they were trying to break down the door. The window didn't have a sensor on it.

There are those kind of factors that you need to take into account that you might not have the best perimeter defense system there to be able to detect a threat, but you need to make sure that you're looking at your home with layers. Now, I did another podcast episode on this, I'll go ahead and put a link to it in the resources sections here, but you need to look at your home from that standpoint of that detect and deter, and then delay and defend. You need to be able to do all of that within your home looking at layers.

Lock your doors and windows even when you're at home, okay, because listen, if you're at home and you think it's safe during the day, you're just putzing around the house and everything, well, somebody could just come right through your front door. If it's not locked, they can just come straight in or come in the back door, and this is the biggest thing I think ... the hardest thing to get across to people is that they might have all these alarm systems, if you have an alarm system, it's because you know that there's a possibility of a threat, so make sure that you're doing everything that you can when your alarm system isn't set by making sure all your windows and your doors are locked. Lock doors and windows. Have a way to answer the door without opening it.

At night, keep your bedroom door locked. This is something I actually learned from one of our listeners a long, long, long time ago. I had never really thought of it, but even if somebody does get into your home, if they get to your bedroom door and you're still fast asleep because you didn't hear them until they're right there at your door, then them trying to get through the door and be able to open it up with the handle, that might wake you up. Don't use just the regular screws that come with the hinges. Make sure that your bedroom door is fortified. It shouldn't be a hollow core door. It should be a solid door. You should have two and a half-inch, three-inch screws that you put into the frame with the hinges there so it can't be easily broken off the frame if somebody is trying to break through that door. That at night for a nighttime invasion is going to be one of your best barriers that you're going to have because that is going to really give you ... that's your fail-safe right there to be able to react in time and get into the fight there, okay? Make sure that you do have that and you are able to respond even out of a dead sleep.

All right, tip number eight is to maximize your ammunition. Now, when Richard went out there the first time, he went out to confront the attackers, the adrenaline was going. There's three armed guys out there. He's just got a handgun. They have long guns. They have a shotgun. They outnumber him. They outarm him, so in fear, he went out there and he unloaded an entire magazine into thin air. Right? Just spray and pray, and then he had another two bullets from his second weapon. Now, those three armed criminals could have decided to shoot back at him after those first wild shots that he unloaded, in which case he'd have been outside, outnumbered, outgunned, and no ammo left to fight back, so that's not maximizing your ammunition.

I'll tell you, anybody that's out there that's a combat veteran, any time we're in combat, your ammunition is like, that might be all you have. You don't want to

be out in the middle of the battlefield and all of sudden it's like you pull the trigger, and that's the last round you have, and now you're just hunkered down in the middle of a battle zone there. That's not where you want to be, so you need to maximize your ammunition.

Now, as Richard later said in his interview, his AR would have been a better choice than grabbing his .40 cal or even the .45 that he had next to his bedside table, so the AR-15 that he had would have been a better choice. One, it's more accurate. If he's going to get in a shootout, he's going to be far more accurate with an AR than he would have been with his handgun, plus he has a 30-round magazine in there. Let's just call it a 30-round magazine, so he's going to have more rounds, he's going to be more accurate, and he's going to have better stopping power with the AR than he would with his handguns, so in a much better position to have the right weapon for the job. If you listen to other podcasts that I've done here, you know the AR-15 is my weapon of choice when it comes to home defense. I've done a whole podcast on that. I'll go ahead and put a link to that one as well back to that old podcast in the resources in the notes on the blog post for this episode, okay?

Now even if he didn't have the AR, when you go outside, an extra magazine should be a part of everyday carry gear as well as your home defense plan, so especially if you are relying on a pistol for home defense, you want to make sure that you do have an extra magazine or magazines that you have available if you do have to fight, because those rounds can go very, very quickly, especially when the adrenaline's going and you're in fear for your life. As Richard found, he just kept pulling that trigger into thin air. Maximize your ammunition.

Okay, the final tip that I have here is really kind of like the ultimate lesson here because look, Richard and his wife only called the police after he had already grabbed one gun, went outside, shot off the entire magazine, ran back inside, grabbed another gun, went back outside, shot off two more rounds, and then ran back to the bedroom again with his wife. They called the police from there. Now, fortunately North Carolina put in place a castle doctrine law that didn't require Childress to have the duty to retreat in order to legally defend themselves. Actually a lot of the NRA article focused in on this wonderful fact because in another state without castle doctrine protection, Richard's shots may have been an illegal act since he would have had to show that he did everything he could to not pull the trigger and that he tried to retreat, but he was forced to defend himself. Well, in this case, he wasn't forced to defend himself. He went out there and started shooting.

Now, again, this is where I have the beef with the NRA because they were all about how wonderful castle doctrine law is. Well, this is where my biggest frustration with the NRA is because they spend so much energy on cheering on the law to my fellow members that they blow right past the real lesson, which is what I refer to as the Spandex doctrine, which states just because you can wear Spandex doesn't mean you should wear Spandex, all right? So yes, I could prance around town in my skintight Spandex leotards with my little marble bag

showing, but I'm going to guess this probably isn't something that you want to see, right? Even though I just burned this image into your brain, it's probably not something that you want to see. It's not something that my local townsfolk want to see. It's nothing that I want to see.

In fact, the right move for Richard and his wife would have been just to retreat to another room and call the police, so he trusted his gut, he got up, there's three armed men outside, call the police. Go back into the dressing room if that's where your weapon is, if that's your safe room. Again, having a home defense plan, meaning having a safe room available for you, so you retreat to the safe room with your spouse or whoever's in your family and then call the police from there. Then wait there until the police arrive. Have the doors locked, so bedroom door locked, dressing room door locked, however it would have been situated here, but let the police show up. Now, if they'd done that, they may have even caught the home invaders right there on the property before they did any other harm to anyone else, so they could have left that property and gone and broken into somebody else's house that wasn't as prepared as Richard was. They could have killed somebody. So if you can catch them right there, then let them be caught, but let the police do their job.

So when you look at all the things that could have gone wrong here, Richard and his wife are pretty damn lucky, and I never advise relying on luck to help you survive a home invasion, so all of the things that he did wrong there, any one of those could have been real trouble for he and his wife. He could have been easily shot. He could have easily been ambushed in the dark. He didn't know where these people were. The list goes on and on. We just went all over the things that could have been done, could have been much better there, okay? So think about your own home defense plan, and learn from Richard and his wife's experience, and really fine tune your own plan there.

I'd also advise you to take a look at our Extreme Home Defense Tactics guide which is over at www.homedefensetactics.com because we cover a lot of additional training and advice in there, and it's very, when I say extreme, it is pretty extreme because I look at home ... I mean, home invaders are a totally different kind of criminal. They are not your typical burglar. Home invaders, especially ... I mean, look, these guys were coming in at night. They were going to take them hostage. There's no telling what they would have done. It's not uncommon for a home invader to set up, if they know that the police aren't coming, to be in there to hold your family hostage, and you can let your imagination run of the things that home invaders will do because it's a power trip. When they invade your home, they want you to be home. They're not there just to take the television set. They know you're there. They want you to be there. That's what makes them dangerous because you don't know what they want to do with you when they have you hostage there, okay? So our Extreme Home Defense Tactics guide really covers that hard-core reality of what you need to know and kind of the dirty tricks that you need to be able to survive that type of a home invasion, so go check it out over at homedefensetactics.com.

Now it's time for you to sound off, because I'd love to hear from you and your own feedback on things that Richard did right and those things that he could have done better as well, so make sure that you go on over to our blog and leave a comment there, okay, and until our next Modern Combat and Survival broadcast, this is Jeff Anderson saying prepare, train, and survive.