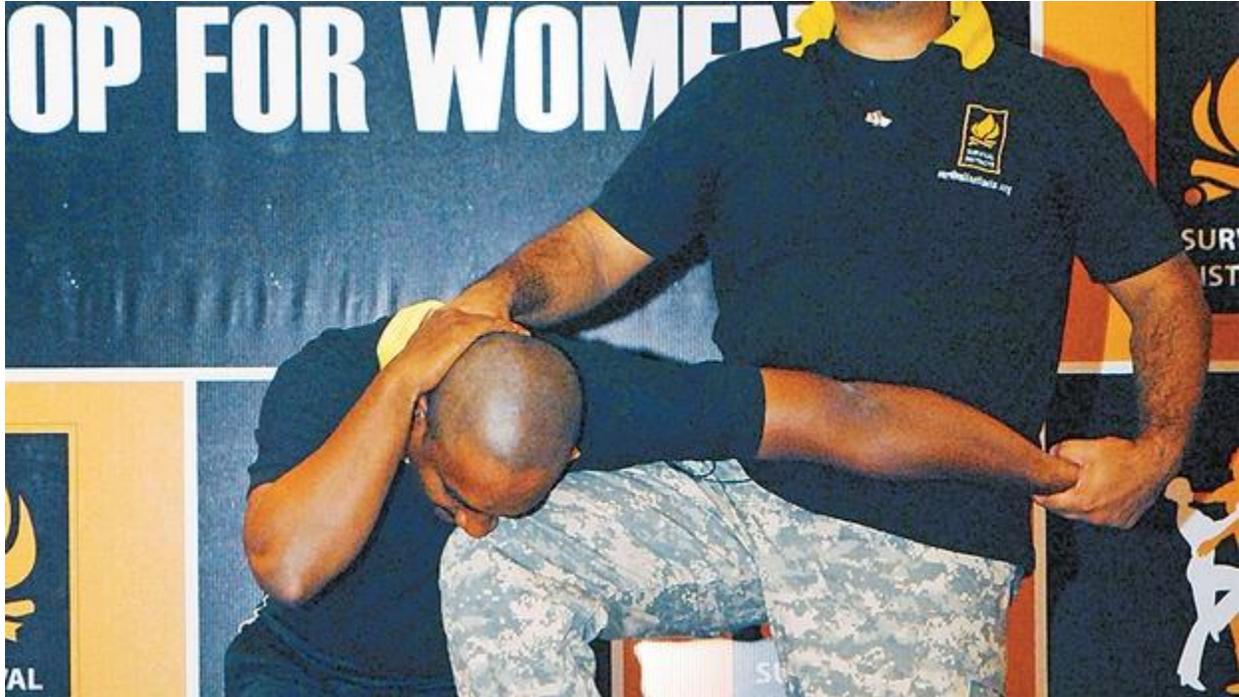


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'Trust your gut instinct – it is always right'

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Demonstrations at the self-defence workshop organised by Survival Instincts | R Satish Babu

Here's news for all colleges with a no-jeans dress code for their girl students – jeans and tight clothing deter rapists, rather than 'invite' rape. And, in an acid attack, the first thing to do even before rushing to hospital, is to wash the acid burn for at least 20 minutes with clean, cool water. This prevents the acid from eating into the victim's skin, and advancing to a third degree burn.

Over 300 working women from across the city gleaned such useful nuggets of information, and more at a self-defence workshop conducted by 'Survival Instincts' on Women's Day.

Survival Instincts is a Chennai-based, non-profit organisation that trains people to respond to medical emergencies, natural disasters, crime and other survival situations.

At the 2-hour camp, Anoop Madhavan, founder of Survival Instincts explained the psychology of a rapist or assailant, busting a few popular misconceptions. "An assailant looks for a soft target, a woman who looks vulnerable and diffident, someone who is distracted. Your job is to make things difficult for him – do not cow down. Do not think that fighting him, or making a noise would 'enrage' him and make it worse for you; you have to fight mercilessly, if the

situation calls for it,” he stressed. “When in public, it your body language is very important. Stand straight and confident, with your head up and shoulders back. Make eye contact with people around you. When your body exudes confidence, an assailant will think twice before messing with you,” he said, demonstrating the best fighting stance when under attack – legs apart and arms raised and fisted in front of your face. Quickly going through a few basic self-defense moves, Anoop demonstrated the importance of striking the ‘pressure points’ on the assailants body in order to incapacitate him and buy time to get away.

However, applying these moves in a real-life situation would need plenty of practice, he warned. Moves like the ‘groin-kick’ and the ‘neck chop’ invited oooh’s and aaaahs’s of appreciation from the jam-packed hall of young women. “It does not matter if the assailant is bigger than you, or stronger than you. By practicing a few simple maneuvers, and being psychologically prepared to fight, any woman can defend herself from an assailant,” said Anoop.

Self-defense training can teach you to defend yourself against upto four assailants, and even an attacker with a knife, said Anoop but added that when a single girl is faced with more than four men, like in the Delhi gangrape victim’s case, it is close to impossible to escape an attack. He stressed on the importance of staying vigilant and avoiding such situations. Quoting studies from across the world, Anoop noted that women are most likely to get raped in their own homes than anywhere else. “And always trust your gut instinct—if you feel something wrong about the place or a person, immediately get out of the situation. Your gut is always right,” he signed off.