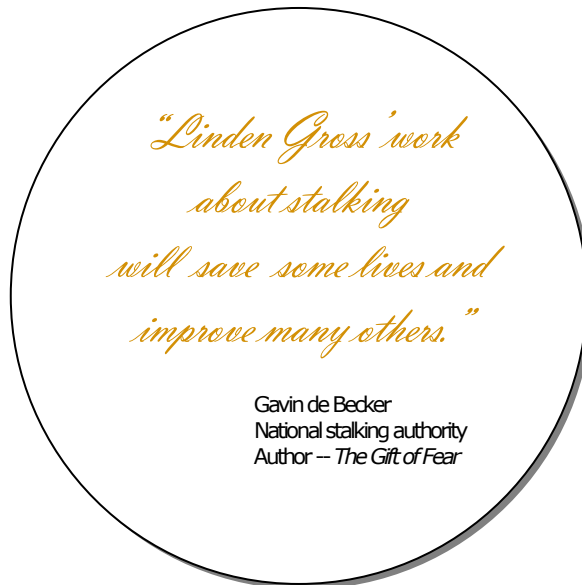


**T**ake stalking—and these vital precautions—seriously. Your life may depend on it. Anyone can be stalked by former mates or lovers, co-workers, neighbors, Internet contacts, or strangers . . . even you. So it's up to you to take responsibility for your safety. You simply can't assume that the police can make your stalking situation disappear or protect you around the clock.

These tips, however critical, are just a starting point. If you're being stalked, you'll need expert advice. You'll find information, resources and a survivors' discussion board at [www.stalkingvictims.com](http://www.stalkingvictims.com). Other places you can turn include the National Center for Victims of Crime at [www.ncvc.org](http://www.ncvc.org) (1-800-394-2255), your local domestic violence agency, or the National Domestic Violence hotline (1-800-799-7233).

Make sure you don't ignore your psychological and emotional welfare either. Counselors, psychologists and psychiatrists with knowledge about stalking and the toll it takes can help shore up your internal resources. You may also want to consider taking a self-defense class and participating in a stalking survivors' support group.



# IF YOU'RE BEING **S**TALKED



The information contained in this pamphlet comes from *Surviving a Stalker: Everything You Need to Know to Keep Yourself Safe* by Linden Gross (Marlowe & Co., 2000).



*Surviving a Stalker* can be purchased online at [www.stalkingvictims.com](http://www.stalkingvictims.com) or at:

**Stalking Survivors' Sanctuary & Solutions**  
**P.O. Box 400**  
**Angels Camp, CA 95222**

The book retails for \$14.95.  
The following discount schedule is available:

1 book	no discount
2-4 books	20% discount
5-99 books	30% discount
100-199 books	40% discount
200+ books	50% discount

## HERE ARE **10** MEASURES THAT MAY SAVE YOUR LIFE

*Log onto:*

[stalkingvictims.com](http://stalkingvictims.com)

*Discussion board*

*Information*

*Resources*

**1 Avoid all contact.** Clearly, directly and explicitly advise the pursuer that you're not interested in a relationship, and then avoid all contact. Handle any unexpected meetings or unavoidable phone calls calmly so as not to escalate the situation.

**2 Don't react to the stalker,** no matter how frightened or angry you are. Stalkers thrive on your energy. They want to elicit attention, positive or negative, from you. It's up to you not to feed the obsessive interaction.

**3 Withdraw gently.** When confronted with inescapable contact in person or on the phone, try to curb any actions or words that might provoke an angry reaction. Speak gently and slowly and say only one sentence before excusing yourself forcefully and totally. Your fallback sentence might be: "Please find someone else on whom to focus your attention as I have no interest in you at all." Then shut the door, locking it, or hang up the phone. Don't re-open the door or re-answer the phone. No matter what, allow the stalker to maintain his/her dignity. A stalker has nothing left to lose once that's stripped away, which will mean nothing but misery and danger for you.

**4 Get a new unlisted phone number & private P.O. box.** Use a private post office box for all mail, and file a change-of-address card with your local post office. Mail should be kept as documentation should arrest and prosecution become necessary. Get a new unlisted phone number and keep the old one hooked up to an answering machine. Never pick up that line. Don't erase the stalker's messages left on your answering machine. You may need proof of the harassment. Avoid cordless phones during this dangerous time, as these conversations can be easily monitored.

**5 Carry a cell phone with you for safety.** If you can't afford to buy one, many women's agencies provide them for free. You don't even have to pay for a cell phone plan, since you can call 911 from any cell phone at no cost. Keep your cell phone plugged in and charged so it always has power, and keep it within reach at all times.

**6 Protect your house** to keep yourself and your loved ones safe:

- Install a tiny glass peep hole in your door to identify callers.
- Install deadbolt locks on all doors making sure doors can't be kicked in.
- Keep your doors, windows and garage locked.
- Install motion detector lights outside your home, especially in dark areas.
- Trim the shrubbery near your doors and consider planting thorny shrubs under your windows.
- Install curtains or blinds that make it impossible to see movement or people in your house.
- Prepare an evacuation route just in case, providing ladders or a rope if you live in a two-story building.

**7 Change your routes & routines.** Vary the daily routes you take, whether by car or on foot, as well as your routines and social habits. This may mean finding new health clubs, bars, supermarkets or places of worship to frequent. Avoid going out alone, especially at night. Keep your car locked, and park in well-lit areas. Don't go into any parking structures unless you're on high alert. At airport garages and many other garages, security guards will escort you to your car.

**8 Inform others.** Let people around you, including family, friends, neighbors, household staff, co-workers, school officials (yours or your children's) and police, know what's going on and enlist their help. Describe the threatening person, as well as any vehicle(s) he/she may drive. Photos work even better.

**9 Paper never stops bullets.** Understand that there is no protective, restraining or legal order of any kind that can protect you. Indeed, these orders often prove inflammatory and downright dangerous. Your best defense is to refuse to play the stalker's game by his/her rules, in the hope that eventually he/she will get tired of pitching into a black hole. So do your best to cut off the stalker's access to you, as well as the energy he/she will try to elicit from you.

**10 Consider moving—it might just save your life.** In particularly hostile cases, sidestepping the danger a stalker poses may require moving near or far. Should you decide you need to relocate, make sure there's *no* way for the stalker to track you down. Avoid using well-known moving trucks with easily remembered names on the side of the truck. Then don't pick up your mail at a former neighbor's home, or visit favorite haunts. Moving doesn't help if your activities still make you a target.