

ACHIEVING A FAVOURABLE OUTCOME AT ZRP ROADBLOCK'S

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Here is some information for coping at roadblocks.

It is important first of all to understand that all human beings operate from learned behaviour. They do what works based on previous experience. Those in authority are adept at pushing the right buttons to elicit the response they are looking for in order to create the outcome they desire. Know this! Behaviour can be predictable and in the case of roadblock's, it usually is. Understand that the vulnerable amongst us can and are preyed upon. The first line of defence is to reduce any sign of vulnerability that you may be projecting. Remember that the way you are treated at a roadblock is not about you personally, so try not to internalize this. Do not make it about you. Remember also that if you get angry, you are losing control, giving away your power and immediately you lose any credibility. Look at the behaviour of those in authority at roadblocks as simply doing what they do to achieve the results they want. You can influence the outcome by the way you respond. If anger gets the best of you, you will simply wait longer, have bigger fines and achieve nothing more than making a bad situation worse. Be cognizant of this and you can influence the outcome and achieve the best-case scenario.

Tips

Be prepared. Carry provisions in your car. Water, wet towelettes, spray bottles - the current extreme heat contributes to irritation and frayed tempers!

Have a plan in place that if you are driving with children that there is someone you can call who can quickly come to you, collect your children and remove them from the situation. Women and mothers feel more vulnerable and therefore react badly when their children are present in a difficult situation. Remove the children from the equation if at all possible. This will free a mother up to focus on dealing with the situation more calmly.

If told to pull over, do so, switch off your car and ensure it is parked safely with handbrake applied. Only if safe and appropriate to do so, step out of the car non- confrontationally and calmly. The reason for this is that if you are sitting down and someone is hovering above you, you automatically feel intimidated. Standing up will shift the balance of power and enable you to feel more assertive.

Realise that there is a distinct difference in being aggressive and being assertive. Aggression is confrontational and angry. Assertiveness is the polite, calm knowledge of and speaking out of your rights. Don't confuse the two. It is vital to remain calm and polite no matter what is being said. Easier said than done, but necessary to increase the odds of a favourable outcome. Remember that the behaviour of the police is purposeful and often designed to get you to lose control. Maintain eye contact with the officer if possible and speak calmly, quietly and clearly. Eye contact makes a connection on a human level and very few are immune to this. Always greet pleasantly. It may make a difference and remaining calm and pleasant yourself will help to keep you in control of yourself.

Remember also that anger is a natural response to any feeling of threat or injury. Know that you may not be able to control what happens in life but you can always choose your response. Being aware of this can help.

Your aim when being stopped at a roadblock is to leave it having achieved the best possible scenario. Deep breathing reduces feelings of fear or panic. Affirming to yourself that staying calm is imperative, together with the knowledge that there are resources available to you and that behaving negatively yourself will only worsen the situation, should be helpful. Remain rational and calm and employ all the practical measures you can, so that when you are stopped, you have coping measures at hand.

The situation on the roads is unlikely to change. Coping measures are essential and it is up to each of us to learn what we can to help us feel more empowered. We hope that these tips will be helpful in helping the vulnerable among us to take back some control.

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