

## Personal Safety and Empowerment

As we age, most of us experience feeling physically less sure of ourselves and feeling vulnerable in situations that we used to navigate easily. For some of us – especially women – behaviors learned long ago - be nice, don't speak up – might seem like useful coping mechanisms. I take a different approach. I believe that any age is a good time to figure out what empowerment means for us.

That's why I've been a self-defense instructor for the past fifteen years.

In this class, we will learn simple and practical skills to help us negotiate our life with strangers and loved ones. You will learn

- to cultivate awareness in public and private situations
- to practice prevention to avoid becoming a target
- to recognize and enforce your personal boundaries
- to use de-escalation skills
- simple, effective physical techniques for self defense
- about bystander intervention

Each class will be a mix of discussion, journal writing, role-plays and simple movement. We will identify and address our fears and build on strategies we already use.

The class is appropriate for all levels of fitness and physical ability.

Christine Schoefer has been a self-defense instructor for 15 years, teaching classes and workshops at venues throughout the Bay Area and beyond (Oakland Family Services, Wells Fargo Bank, Claremont Resort, Berkeley Zen Center, a.o.) She's the co-director of the Self Defense Program at [Hand to Hand](#) in Oakland and has been teaching Personal Defense at Mills College since 2008.