

Here are some things to look for when searching for a combat Martial Arts school

“Don’t teach the student what to think but HOW to think...”

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Why listen to me? Don't. Don't trust anyone, this is too important. Think for yourself.

To start, I have studied many different martial arts and done ungodly amounts of research to find the best there is in the martial arts world. I grew up in a law enforcement family; my father was an FBI agent under J. Edgar Hoover. I have studied at one time or another: Kyokushin [Mas Oyama], hard style Okinawan Karate, various other Karate, Kali, Escrima, Aikido, Judo, JKD, and Wing Chun under multiple Sifus. I am only qualified to teach the last art I learned, Wing Chun, under Sifu Bill Graves in Jacksonville Florida. The reason I chose Wing Chun is because it was the only art that made sense, was efficient, and had real world fighting functionality. Our line is through Leung Sheung, Ip Man's Number One student. My second longest art studied was Mas Oyama Karate, where I was working on my Black. All the rest were for shorter periods of time. Those arts I have not trained in, I have fought against many times. I am a doctor by trade, a Chiropractor, so I know how the human body works down to the molecule. I am obsessive compulsive when I get fixated on something; I am all in, body, mind, and soul. I read everything I can get my hands on, train compulsively, talk to everyone I can; I have given and accepted challenges for over 25 years to test my skills and theories to refine them. I think about fighting constantly. I have studied how people learn, theories of effective teaching and communication, including Neuro linguistic programming [NLP]. I have been in more real fights than anyone I have ever met from running security in the graveyard shift in a welfare hotel just outside the Bronx in New York City. The bus from Rikers Island and Sing Sing prison let off on our corner. I was also head of security for a very large Live rock / Biker bar in Florida, lots of fights every night. After retiring for Chiropractic I ran security for 3 bars in Dallas Texas.

I teach my students to THINK and how to LEARN. Once they can do that, fighting is easy.

A box of tools with no idea how or when to use them is just slightly more useful than having no tools at all.

Even so, this is still my opinion. There are others. The best advice I can give is think for yourself, ask questions and don't trust anyone trying to sell you something. Let the teachers prove themselves or move on with your search. By prove, I do not mean smack you around. Plenty of teachers will be able to smack you around. What I mean is, do they understand what they teach and how the HUMAN body functions? Most teachers have no idea how the body functions, but pretend they do. You don't have to be a Physician to teach martial arts, but it sure helps sort out the B.S.

Most teachers just regurgitate the information and ask the wrong questions.

The correct question is, is it logical? Is it based on human's biomechanics, science and math? Most important, is the KISS principle and scientific method applied to everything taught in the school?

I hope this is helpful and I wish someone wrote this for me long ago, it would have saved me YEARS of time, unbelievable frustration, confusion and self doubt, and an unreasonable amount of money.

The illusion of knowledge is the greatest impediment to learning.

Before reading, it is recommended to look up and understand the basis and presentation of human psychological Bias. I have added some of the more important for one's understanding of the challenges in teaching and learning martial arts.

General thoughts:

- Almost all martial arts ask the wrong questions and contain illogical / mythological ideas that will get you killed. Asking the right questions should be 90% of life. They ask, how do I want to fight? I want to fight like a dragon, a tiger, etc. These are simply the wrong questions / ideas / myths. You are neither a tiger, nor a dragon. You CANNOT fight like them, your body is all wrong. The correct question is, **how is the human body designed to fight efficiently?** Good martial arts should be based on human biomechanics, not animals. They should be about structure and function, timing and positioning, not myth. Think about it.
- Beware of iron body / hand training done too fast or incorrectly taught. It can cripple you.
- Beware of any "FAD" martial arts. I assure you that in the 1980's, you couldn't swing a stick without hitting a NINJA school. I haven't seen any lately. Perhaps they got better at being Ninjas, or maybe the fad just faded away. MMA has replaced Ninjas, but the principle is the same, they too shall pass.
- Good, well taught, well thought-out martial arts last for hundreds of years, not tens.
- Not to pick on them, but just as an example, Ninjitsu. What are the odds that a white guy teaches actual, non-broken lineage Ninjitsu? (Very small). He learned Ninjitsu from a secret society in one of the most xenophobic communities on the planet. Really. It is also considered funny to teach the barbarians

(westerners) wrong. Is it possible? Maybe, anything is possible, but I'm a scientist and the odds rarely fail you. Look at Las Vegas, it was built by odds.

- Should you train with the best you can find locally or travel far for superior training? My opinion is, if you have the means, move to the city with the best or travel. I traveled 1.5 hours, each way, multiple times per month to see my teacher for over a year until I moved there. This was after I searched for a teacher for a number of years.
- Trained reflexes take 8-12 times as long to unlearn as they do to learn. Some you can NEVER get rid of. Train with the best or you will **lower your martial arts potential** and waste time and money. Lots of it. It is better to take 2-3 times as long to do it correctly. Find an excellent teacher so you don't have to unlearn a bunch of information and USELESS or DANGEROUS reflexes.
- Leave your ego at the door, it will impede your learning. EVERYONE gets hit, even me. Anyone who says they don't is a damn liar. Run, don't walk, out of that school. Please send me their contact info; I'd like to chat with these teachers about their magical nature. By talking it usually ends with me punching someone through a wall, in the name of science...
- Remember, the **truth** is independent of how we FEEL about it.
- Never theorize before you have data. Invariably, you end up twisting facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts. Most martial art teachers look for facts to support their art instead of facts to disprove their art either partially or as a whole. Sounds similar, but in reality, it is vastly different. If your teacher does not know the difference or why, it's important to run.
- Never forget, cognitive dissonance is always in effect. Remember, these teachers have invested a great deal of time, money, sweat, pain and **EGO** into the art they teach. They can and do get **VERY** irate if you question them or their art. It is exceptionally bad if you are right or they can't answer your questions. This is great if you want a challenge match that's close to real combat, not so good if you are just looking for information or witty repartee.
- For those who teach, never forget that just because you can successfully do a technique does not mean your students can or ever will be able to perform those techniques, even after years of practice. This is even more of a problem if you are unaware of your genetic and physiological makeup and you are a physical adept. Physical adepts tend to float to the top of physical activities. This is great for you, not so much your students.
- Again for those who teach, teaching is its own art and takes experience and thought. Just because you can do something well has no connection to whether or not you can teach.

Guns and knives are the fastest way to learn to protect yourself, but they have limitations. If guns are the best way to go, why train in martial arts? Situational awareness, for one. Unless they actually cut off your arms, you can't be disarmed. Your hands are the fastest weapon available to you, period. You can run out of bullets. Martial arts will allow fantastic gun / knife retention. Most people will only see the

barrel of your gun and miss that fist coming in from left field, so you may not need to kill anyone. Self-discipline and the ability to think on your feet while the adrenaline is pumping. Many more reasons that translate very well to gun / knife fighting.

To quote the movie V for Vendetta,

Creedy: Bollocks. We've swept this whole place. You've got nothing. Nothing but your bloody knives and your fancy karate gimmicks. We have guns.

V: No. What you have are bullets and the hope that when your guns are empty, I'm no longer standing, because if I am, you'll all be dead before you've reloaded.

- “Only practical application can support theory.” - Leung Sheung, Ip Man's number 1 student.
- Ask questions, trust your gut, but beware. There are many well-meaning, charming teachers that can't fight, can't teach, or both.
- Do they teach universal principles based on physics, math, efficiency, HUMAN physiology, Body mechanics, geometry and logic, etc? If so, where did they learn those principles? Did they teach themselves, read a book, watch a video, etc?
- Are the ideas / techniques tailored to work for YOU or do they teach “cookie cutter”, one-size-fits-all methods? It is much harder to teach to a specific person than to cookie cutter everything. You must also have extensive fighting experience to do so or you end up with an art that appears to work at less than full speed and power, but fails in real time with REAL power.
- Is self defense separate from the art you learn? If so, it's not a combat art and the self defense will usually be terrible. If I am learning a martial art, why is the self defense separate? This is usually a clear indication the martial art you chose is so far from practical usefulness that they had to add self defense to it. Why not just learn the self defense? I teach self defense but it is identical to my art. Most times the self defense is totally different from the art taught. Not a good sign.
- Does the instructor keep up with the latest information on teaching and how people learn new information and skills or do they regurgitate what their teacher taught them word for word with little or no thought year after year? Did they ever take classes on teaching or communication?
- Ask, “Is this a sport or a combat art?” If they say sport, walk away. If they say combat art, ask to see the rule book. If they have a rule book, it's a sport. Fights don't have rules and you fight like you train. No exceptions. I respect any teacher who is honorable enough to call their art a sport and tell their students the truth. I will help any honorable teacher who needs it with practical self defense.

- Ask how long on average until you will be able to defend yourself. If it's 20 years, walk. It should be 2 years or LESS.
- Watch out for teachers who do everything in slow motion. It is easy to think and act if everyone is moving slowly. It is much much harder to react if your opponent is moving even half speed. Try moving fast and see if the teacher can do what they claim, usually they can't.
- Watch for teachers who use the same student for all demonstrations; it can be and usually is choreographed. Even if not fully choreographed the teacher knows that student so well it might as well be.
- Look for an art not based on strength, size, speed, and aggression, because in those arts, the strongest, largest, fastest and most aggressive usually win. Do NOT Listen to the Teacher, they will lie or have misled themselves through cognitive dissonance. Watch a class. Can the small people hold their own, or are they out gunned time and time again by big or fast people? If so, walk away.
- Remember, someday you too will be old and frail. Will you still be able to do that hurricane kick or grapple a 20 year old on steroids? You should probably have studied something that keeps your feet on the ground most of the time and stresses correct timing and positioning.
- Your feet should stay on the ground if for no other reason you can run if the opportunity presents itself and is safe to do so.
- Injury. Does the martial art still function after serious injury, especially to the spine, legs, or shoulders? I have been run over by a Ford F-350 and had two serious car accidents after that and I can still outfight most people. I have taught blind people, people in wheelchairs, people with missing or massively repaired limbs, people with every kind of spinal injury known to man and they too can fight very well.
- Does the teacher or the senior students rule by intimidation and inflicting unnecessary pain? An excellent teacher need not hurt you to show you what he knows. You must accept when you are beat or you will learn nothing. I can't tell you the number of people who insist that my hand on their throat isn't important, but their scraping my chin while on their toes leaning forward a full 5 seconds after I grasp their throat, is a death touch.
- Trophies mean NOTHING; you can buy them with anything you want printed on them or on the internet in bulk. For this reason, they are worthless and only impressive to the ignorant. Even if they won the trophies, it was in a tournament with RULES, pads, good lighting, mats, people NOT trying to kill you in air-conditioned rooms with medics standing by, which does not help you really learn to fight very much.
- Do they have an ungodly amount of forms / [KATA] 10 or more? This is a common logical fallacy, the more forms you know, the more things you can defend against. The truth is, the more forms and techniques you know, the longer it takes to learn to use them well and to pick one to use effectively. Plus, forms are not combat, so there is little that crosses over effectively. Doing forms also wastes time you could use to do some hard sparring or challenges or useful training of various sorts.

- Remember, a technique is just a tool, but if you are given no instruction on how or when to use that tool, how useful is it really? Beware of non-specific instructions like, look for a hole in their defenses and strike. Really, a 3 year old could tell you that FOR FREE.
- The most important pieces of information of any martial art are the rules guiding the use of the Tools [techniques]. This is sorely lacking in almost all martial arts.
- Do the techniques in the forms seem unnatural, like yoga but with strikes? The further from natural movement you go, the longer it will take to master. Then it still may not work. By the time you figure this out, it's 20 years later. THIS HAPPENS ALL THE TIME. This is commonly seen when a teacher decides to fight in some way, for example like a tiger, with no understanding or consideration to how *people* move efficiently and naturally. If you were a tiger, you would not need Kung Fu.
- Do they spar full power, full speed, or close to full power, full speed regularly? Regularly is not twice a year! Look for 2 or 3 times a week or more.
- Remember, sparring too much and not thinking is also a bad idea, but it is better than not sparring at all.
- Remember, **sparring is NOT fighting** no matter how hard you hit each other. You must train with others outside your art. This will get you closer to real fighting, but it is still not identical to a real fight.
- Most teachers will refuse to touch new students or the curious visitor. Fear of one kind or another apparently. My school has a policy of **all challenges accepted**. This is for testing my theories and refining skill. The only rule is, I will not fight by anyone's rules. No protective gear is allowed and we fight on concrete. If you leave your eyes exposed, I will stick my thumb in them; leave your spine exposed, I will sever it; groin exposed, I will twist and pull like I'm starting a lawn mower. If by some miracle, you manage to cover all of those, I will bite.

This does not mean it HAS to be to the death. Under most circumstances, I fight to whatever level my opponent chooses and I generally give fair warning before I am forced to stop their irrational behavior. If you lose your temper and really are out to seriously hurt me, then I may have no choice. I have a good reputation as a polite boxer in most knowledgeable circles. Part of my problem roaming around looking for challenges to test my skill is, I was about 6'7", 290 pounds with very little body fat. I was built like a yield sign. I was also ridiculously fast and strong even for my size. I was also very tough, as my Karate school used me as a live kicking and punching dummy for years because of my size. I always respected the teachers who did spar with me regardless of my size.

- If the teacher will accept challenges, does he give you over to a young strong student, or 10 to tire you out so he can also observe how you fight, then step in? If so, not cool.
- Does the sparring look like the forms or **does it look almost exactly like kickboxing regardless of style taught?** If it is the latter, why learn that art and its forms at all? Money and time.
- Don't be impressed with a ridiculously fast teacher. The implication is you too can be that fast if only you study their brand of martial art. Wrong, a very small percentage of people are physical adepts and are very very fast

naturally; unless you were born that way, you will NEVER be as fast as your instructor. If the art is based on the instructor's speed, that would be very bad for most people.

- Don't be impressed with videos showing the teacher fighting 10 people. 99.99% of the time, they are his students and choreographed. Students by their nature hold back and fight slower (usually subconsciously) than others would.
- For the record, fighting two people is not twice as hard as fighting one. It's at least 4 times harder. For you math people, the curve is logarithmic, not linear. To be fair, it flattens out after 3-4 people, because more than 3 or 4 people and they will start getting in each other's way.
- Don't be impressed with videos; Remember, videos get infinite takes to get it right. In real life, you usually only get one. The best teachers I know have few, if any, public videos. There is actually a very logical reason for this. If you have videos, anyone can watch and learn how you fight. Not a good idea generally.
- Students will have inherited ALL their teachers' mistakes, bad ideas, and misunderstandings. So if you are making the same mistakes, how would you know? Who would tell you?
- If a student learns only 75% of what his teacher has to offer and leaves to open a school, then one of his students does the same, it is not very long before you have what I call an empty art. An empty art is a martial art that LOOKS like the art being sold, but the substance has been diluted to near uselessness. THIS IS VERY COMMON. This is especially bad in the internal arts where you can't see much of what is going on, like Wing Chun. This is Very common in Wing Chun unfortunately.
- No teacher ever has a problem beating their own students, if only by memorizing how they fight and using fear. Don't be that impressed. This is why you must test your skill outside of your school regularly. Many teachers will not allow their students to test their skill outside the school. Ask yourself WHY?
- Why can't students fight their teacher effectively? This is an example of learned helplessness, where the students can't effectively fight their teacher even after many years of training. An excellent teacher strives to have a student surpass him, this is how the art grows and refines.
- What about Martial arts halls of fame? Yes, halls. They are many and anyone can get in for cash. Students rarely check credentials or verify anything. Therefore you need to verify any teacher you consider training under, including a background check. Why a background check? There seems to be an inordinate number of sexual predators and felons teaching martial arts. Most teachers are fine and honest, but be careful.
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- Beware of people who use the term Science or its derivatives, especially in the art's name. Ask if they are a scientist, what is their training in science? Ask them to explain scientific method. Most just use it to market and wouldn't know science if it jumped up and bit them on the ass.
- Beware of the use of the word 'combat'. Many schools add this with little understanding of actual combat as a marketing tool.

- Do they over-use protective gear? The last I checked, street fights don't use gear. My school only uses mouth guards and cups, and sometimes eye protection in the beginning. Use any more than that and you become reliant on your safety gear. I can always tell the heavy gear users, because you tap them and they drop. Gear makes you LAZY! "Why go to all the effort to stop that punch? I've got three inches of foam over my head. It won't hurt." Even when you aren't wearing gear, you will react like you are because you fight like you train. Gear in my experience only moves the injury to a different body part.
- Beware of teachers who say things like "our art as you see it is impractical in the street, but we all know how to fight in a real fight" Wrong, you fight like you train.
- You have to feel **pain in training regularly** to learn to work through it in a real fight.
- Is the teacher fat? If so, this is not a good sign.
- Will the teacher spar with you, to see what you can do? Does he give you over to 20 something big, muscular and fast students to bludgeon you and show you how good their school is? Whoever you work with, it should not be a death match, but they should at least let you get close to your full speed. See how the teacher reacts. If he has to hurt you to shut you down, look elsewhere. One exception is if you are out of control and beyond reason.
- Do they have secret techniques? Martial arts should be physics, math, psychology, physiology, geometry etc. Secrets are just a carrot on a stick. Avoid schools that sell secrets.
- Do they have long binding contracts up to and past death, or can you leave if it's not for you? A year or two contract is reasonable. Remember, commercial leases are usually 3 - 5 years long and expensive; in Dallas, Texas the average is about \$ 18.00 to \$ 25.00 per square foot. A martial arts school needs a lot of square feet. Do the math.
- Do you pay exorbitant dues to a faraway grandmaster / teacher you will never meet, that are separate from tuition? Calculate this into monthly costs.
- Who is the Grandmaster? Many people make up their own martial art to avoid sharing the money with their teacher. They will usually then elect themselves grandmaster. Who made that person grandmaster anyway? My favorite is, "My students elected me Grandmaster." How democratic. It's also idiotic and self-delusional, but democratic maybe. My students elected me Grandpobah and King of the Winter Carnival. In my book, it's about equal. When I was in Karate, the old timers had second or third degree Black belts after a lifetime of dedication to ONE art. Today, everyone is a Grandmaster or eighth degree black belt in multiple arts. I call bullshit. I call this belt inflation.
- Beware of teachers who have more than two black belts and teachers who have anything above 4th degree black belts. This is especially true if the teacher is less than 60 years old. The younger the teacher, the less likely it is possible to honestly attain those high ranks, especially in multiple arts. Remember, you can buy any belt on the internet for about 8 bucks.

- Ask about belt test fees and requirements. The more belts, the more fees, and they are usually progressive. The belt itself is usually \$ 50.00 [costs us \$ 4.00]. Some black belt test fees are \$2,000.00 or more, lower belts are \$100-\$200. Calculate this into a monthly tuition.
- Beware of contracts to get your Black belt / red sash in X number of years. How do they know? You, my friend, are in a belt mill. Leave immediately.
- Beware of schools with 6-12 year old black belts. Trained in utero did they? Any school with any black belts under 20 years old is suspect, especially if there are a lot of them.
- Does the teacher teach more than one art? They are usually making up for lack of knowledge by adding other arts. Jack of all trades, master of none. This is important to understand, NOT ALL ARTS CAN BE COMBINED SUCESSFULLY! Sure it sounds great, "I took all the best parts of each martial art and combined them into one" This idea preys on ignorance. It is the martial arts equivalent of buy low, sell high in finance. Sounds great if you don't think it through. Did they learn all those arts completely or were they just students who got bored and wanted to be in charge [EGO] and collect all the money [Greed]? What makes them think they have the ability and knowledge base to do that in the first place?
- Can you talk to or e-mail your teacher's teacher, for a reference? What about his teacher's teacher, etc.? Many people claim ancestry to a famous teacher or teachers, but you will find gaps in their story or lineage. Beware. Occasionally, the teacher was dead before the student was born if you do the math. Check all the teachers' references, ask what kind of a student they were. If their teacher doesn't know or can't remember, it's not a good sign.
- How many years did he study? Was it public class only or was he a known private student, or both? Private students usually get better training faster. A rule of thumb is, a private student learns approximately 3-4 times faster and much more accurately than public class students, sometimes more.
- Is he an officially recognized Sifu / Sensei in his line? He may just be an experienced student. Many schools purposely cloud this issue by issuing 'Grades' or 'Levels' or calling students 'assistant instructor' to open more schools faster. Ask, are you a Sifu / Sensei in your line, yes or no? If the answer is no, walk away. If yes, then ask how long they trained. Some arts will make people a "Sifu or Sensei" in 3 years or less. Not good.
- Has the instructor in the school you are considering ever been in an actual fight? If so, how many? Any police reports? If not, why does he talk at length on how fights happen, the psychology of fights, etc.?
- Does he speak of anatomy and physiology to support his theory or style of fighting? Ask him where he learned them. Has he ever taken any classes on them, can he provide any transcripts from college for you to look at? Most martial artists speak VERY convincingly about things they know nothing about. I'm a doctor and it's funny to watch. (Painful and scary, but funny.) Just owning Gray's Anatomy does not make you a doctor. Just reading it doesn't make you an anatomist. You must understand the **HUMAN** body in three dimensions, which is very difficult for most people and nearly impossible for anyone without a formal education and *years* of training and experience.
- Does he have a day job? It is VERY, VERY difficult to run a profitable school. The student to teacher ratio that is *best for learning is very bad for PROFIT*. If the school is his only source of income, then

most likely he'll take anyone who can pay the dues regardless of psychosis. This WILL ruin a school in short order and then the students will usually teach **everything due to overcrowding**, which is a very bad idea in most cases. This doesn't mean it can't be done, but it will be the exception, not the rule.

- On student teaching, the above statement does not mean students should not teach. Teaching is part of the learning process, as you never know what you do not know until you try to teach someone else, but the instructor should oversee **everything** personally.
- Don't be impressed with the training hall, because guess who pays for it? You. I learned in a garage and a warehouse, neither with A/C or heat, in Florida. I received better training than 99.99999 % of people in the world. If you want a large training hall with everything included, expect to pay a premium for it.
- Find a teacher that teaches in shoes and will let you train in your daily footwear and clothing. Grapplers, nobody wears thick burlap uniforms in the real world. Try that move on someone in a flimsy tee shirt. Kung Fu slippers and bare feet sure look cool, but you fight like you train. Oh, also my students and I will stomp on your toes if you are dumb enough to be shoeless. Try that spinning back kick in 5 inch heels and see how you do the first 100 times. Try to grapple with that tie on see how that works.

The issue of professional fighters

A strong, young, large, well-conditioned, fast, aggressive fighter who trains **4 -10** hours a day is a dangerous opponent in any situation, but this person is a professional fighter by most definitions, even if they do not compete. Trying to compare them to a person who studies or teaches self defense or for health a few hours a month is idiotic. This doesn't mean you can't overcome a pro fighter if you have to, but you had better have a good teacher and understand anatomy and tactics for dealing with them. They usually have rules that they train to follow 4-10 hours a day that can be used to destroy them. Strength can be borrowed or redirected; conditioning should not matter because a fight to the death should be over in 10 seconds or less. Mass has inertia. Hours of training give hard-wired reflex arcs that can be exploited; their aggression can be used to increase the power of your strikes, etc etc..

General Martial art breakdown

- **Mixed Martial arts [MMA]**. A large muscular man comes screaming about ultimate fighting on your television.
AA
AAAAA!!!!!!

OK, take a deep breath and THINK. This man is probably in his early thirties, tops. He now teaches mixed martial arts. He presents you with a paragraph worth of different martial arts that he supposedly mastered or studied long enough to be qualified to teach some aspect of them. **Do the math!** Let's say he presents you with 5 martial arts he supposedly teaches. Let's say he started at 10 years old that is 4 years of training at most for each. I know **few** martial arts that let you teach after 4 years. If he did finish one or two, which one? Is he a recognized instructor in that art? This art is based on size, strength, aggression and conditioning. In short, he trains to be a professional fighter. This art can work against the untrained or poorly trained when you are young, but age, injury, and weakness from disease, injury, or hunger will lower its effectiveness considerably. See below about grappling for further info on the primary aspect of most MMA fighters. Most of these people are washed out by the time they are 30 with massive injuries, so they teach. I have also been told by multiple people these teachers encourage even children to accept broken limbs if it means you win. Insanity. In a fight for your life, I would trade a broken limb to kill my opponent, but not for a trophy.

Also see my explanation of professional fighters above to clear that mess up.

- **Grappling -Main component of Mixed Martial arts [MMA], jujitsu, wrestling, ground fighting etc.**
Is the art based on ground fighting? The teacher will say 90% of street fights end on the ground. Where is this info coming from? It may have some truth, but what if you actively train not to go to the ground? Even if true, how will learning how to fight on soft memory foam pads with springs underneath in a well-lighted and air-conditioned space with **Ridiculous** rules help you fight multiple opponents? These multiple opponents will usually be located in a urine soaked alley filled with AIDS needles and broken bottles and shivs. Look up the MMA Rule book online, it's funny, especially for an art that repeatedly calls itself a combat art. For the record, MMA is **not** a combat art, it is a **gladiatorial sport**. They actually have a rule about having to let your opponent hit you so you don't seem 'timid', wow. It's about the show, not survival. The MMA illegal rules are there because if you do these "illegal" things, wrestling would stop before it starts and be no fun to watch. That's why they are illegal. Nothing is illegal in a REAL fight.
- **Krav Maga -** Another mixed martial art. The originator of this art set out to combine the best aspects of multiple arts to make a perfect combat art. See above about my opinion of this idea. It is a reflex drill art and has drills for everything. See my explanation on why reflex drilled arts have major shortcomings. They use some Wing Chun Principles which increase its effectiveness in a limited scope but mostly it is lost in the drills. This is another strength and conditioning art. It can function if practiced for extended periods of time and used on the poorly trained. At least they have tried to simplify things. No real understanding of how the body works, just shuffling martial arts techniques and drills to keep you busy and feel like you are learning.
- **Western Boxing -** Derivative of bare knuckle boxing. One of the better choices if you don't have others. Again, remember this is now a **gladiatorial sport** with **detrimental rules**. There is much wasted time and energy. Strength and conditioning are very important. They train to **not** protect the groin. They have a hard time against grapplers, trappers and kickers again it goes back to how they train and the rules. A

good boxer will take out most martial artists because they fight all the time. If they can learn to keep their feet and protect their groin and negate kicks.

- **Muay Tai** - Boxing and leg destruction. This another Strength and conditioning art. Very hard on your body. Look at the 30 year old teachers, they all limp and hunch over due to leg and spine damage. They have good leg destruction, so watch out for their low kicks. They fight all the time, which is good.
- **Joint locking arts - Aikido, Aikijutsu, etc.** Can be effective if well taught. Very defensive art as taught in modern times. It unfortunately relies on muscular resistance to base most of their locks and throws. It's not a bad assumption, as most people will resist with strength unless trained not to. Too defensive in modern teaching, few strikes for the most part, this art relies mostly on throwing people to the ground. To be fair, falling to the ground does hurt and broken limbs are no fun either. It is based on circles and circles are mathematically less efficient than a straight line. Good art if well-taught and aggression added.
- **Kicking -Tae Kwon Do ,Tang Soo Do etc..** Is the art based on Kicking? When I studied Karate, I was told that you kick because YOUR LEGS ARE LONGER AND STRONGER THAN YOUR ARMS. Of course, once I thought about this, I realized that you don't have to stand on your arms. Also, if you lift your leg to kick, you IMMOBILIZE YOURSELF! If you are the smaller person in the fight, immobilizing yourself even temporarily is a very bad idea. It is also much harder to balance on one leg. You expose your groin to counterattack, you give your opponent a long lever to use against you, etc. I have a 10 minute lecture on how to stop people from kicking you and it works like a charm.
What if you learn to send the power of a kick out through your fist? If you do this, kicking most times makes little sense.
- **Pressure Points - Chin Na etc.** Does the teacher try to sell you on pressure points as the basis for their art? It sounds good until you learn that most 'pressure points' these people teach have no basis in anatomy. To confuse the issue, they will also rename "pressure points" to sound more deadly; for instance, death touch, Dim Mak, nerve destruction, etc. Most of these people wouldn't know a nerve if it bit them on the ass. The other issue is even if it **COULD** work, what you learn from actually dissecting people in medical school is **EVERYONE** is different. Their blood vessels are different, their NERVES are different, they are in different places **or missing altogether**; so much for your Dim Mak chart. Lastly, these people believe that they can hit tiny target with just the right force in real time against an opponent who is actively defending themselves and trying to kill them. Good luck with that. You only see these people on Youtube, working with willing volunteers [victims], usually their students, who either do not resist, poorly resist, or resist in a way that make their teachers technique work better. Sometimes, the guys supporting the "victim" actively push them INTO the incoming technique. One of my favorites is a pressure point technique that needs 3 or more contact points to work. You only have 2 hands. In real life, people also have varying pain tolerances and can be on mind altering drugs and feel little or NO pain even from multiple broken bones. Go ahead, try Dim Mak with a guy on PCP. I dare you.
- **Trapping and limb destruction - Wing Chun, Jeet Kune Do [JKD], Kali etc..** Beware of people basing their art on trapping and or limb destruction [Breaking limbs]. Trapping and limb destruction is

not a whole art, it is a small part of a larger art, usually Wing Chun among others. If the main focus is trapping, they have missed the important points of Wing Chun or never knew them in the first place. I have a 10 minute lecture on how to not be trapped or have your limbs broken, so why spend years learning it? Again, these teachers use willing and usually complicit volunteers who are not trying to gouge out their eyes or bite their nose off. Trapping and limb destruction, unlike most Wing Chun, is large and visible, and looks cool to the ignorant, therefore it is great for marketing and making money.

- **Kali, Escrima** - Good art for knife fighting and stick fighting. The empty hand is good with limitations. They fight relaxed, which is good. The problems arise in that much of their empty hand follows the weapon attacks and defense angles which do not translate perfectly to empty hand combat. Better than most. Hard to find a qualified teacher, thousands of different styles, hard to choose from.
- **Jeet Kune Do, Jun fan [Bruce Lee]**. This art is a derivative of Wing Chun by Bruce Lee. Bruce Lee only studied the rudiments of Wing Chun from Ip Man. He only studied regularly when he was 15 - 18 and then left for America. Once in America, he asked Ip Man permission to teach Kung Fu and was told he could teach only if he didn't teach Wing Chun. He could call it whatever he wanted, but not Wing Chun, as he was NOT a Sifu in Wing Chun, hence Jun Fan then JKD. Basic Wing Chun was mixed with various other martial arts to make JKD because Bruce only knew the basics of Wing Chun. Bruce used Wing Chun principles to improve other martial arts and their teachers, this is why most JKD looks very different from each other. If you were a western boxer, your JKD looked like modified boxing. If you were a wrestler, like modified wrestling, etc. Basic Wing Chun works and made the respective arts more functional in the real world. The problems arise from adding more and more techniques and the Wing Chun principles are diluted to near uselessness over time. Another issue is that Bruce Lee was what I call a **Physical adept**. He was young, strong, fast, and smart, with an inborn sense of timing and distance. This kind of person would be dangerous in a fight if they only learned badminton. Look out for Bruce Lee Wing Chun. I still don't understand how this is possible since it is well known that Bruce Lee was **not a Sifu** in Wing Chun by his own writings. He was just a famous actor.
- **Iron body arts** - You see on YouTube a guy surrounded by black belts simultaneously hitting the guy in the center of a circle in the throat. You will also see those black belts line up to kick him in the groin very hard. "Wow", you think, "this guy is Superman." Now think about this. First, why the hell would you train to LET people hit you? You fight like you train. But he got kicked hard in the groin. Actually he didn't. If you watch, they do kick hard, but the teacher rotates his pelvis back which raises the testicles and puts the ischial tuberosities [Butt bones] in line to take the main force of the kick. A student subconsciously does not hit with full power, even if they think they are. It is a magic trick. Remember Houdini, he let people hit him hard for years and he was NOT a martial artist. These people will not, unlike Houdini, allow anyone but their students or others in their art hit them in most cases. Don't be fooled.

Can you get better at taking hits? Yes you can. Your body will deposit more bone and connective tissue if you train that way to protect itself. You must train constantly and never stop or your body will remove unnecessary tissue, but your eyes and groin never really get better at taking hits. Your throat can be made to take hits better, but only up to a point. ***It is usually better to train to protect the eyes, throat, and groin than to hit them regularly.*** Arts based on Iron Body, iron hand, and breaking things. These

arts make you physically train your body to accept hits and toughen up your body to deliver hits. This can cripple you if done incorrectly or too quickly. Again, it's not bad to train this to some degree, but be careful and go slow. Make sure your teacher knows what he is doing.

- **Arts based on breaking things like boards, bricks, cinder blocks, Ice etc.**

Again, this is a magic trick to impress the ignorant. It looks impressive and sells memberships.

Medically *boards are not the same consistency as human bones*, breaking boards is **NOT** like breaking bones, bones have tensile strength similar to steel, not wood. Look closely at the stack of whatever they break, in between will be spacers and the wood grain will be arranged so the weakest point is hit. As for the spacers, spacers allow the top bricks or whatever to add their mass and falling weight [inertia] to the trick to help break the bricks below. Have them try it without the spacers. Many times, the bricks are pre-weakened by sawing through them to increase the number that can be broken.

In the words of Bruce Lee, boards don't hit back.

- **Wing Chun.** Finally Wing Chun. My personal art. Unfortunately to be fair, most Wing Chun has lost its way and has lost most of its combat aspect. Most teachers now emphasize the forms, the wooden dummy and especially Chi Sau [sticky hands]. They "play" Chi Sau instead of sparring hard regularly. The excuse is usually legal reasons of liability, but unfortunately many teachers NEVER sparred hard, nor did their teacher. etc. Excellent art if taught well. Hard to find a good teacher who still spars hard regularly, takes challenges and thinks. Rarely will you find some Wing Chun that has returned to sparring hard all the time, but usually they have lost most of the principles that make Wing Chun effective and efficient. Watch out for the various spellings and the associated B.S. to explain why the spelling is different. The main reason for the spelling differences is copyright and Product branding purposes. There are other lines than Ip Man's but his is by far the largest. Beware of teachers who teach one art then change when another becomes popular. I can't tell you the number of "Wing Chun" schools that opened after the Ip Man movies started. Most just read books and watched movies before beginning to teach, watch out. A few will train under a real Wing Chun teacher and not tell them that they turn around and regurgitate the lesson they just learned to their students. This is the musical equivalent of staying one piano lesson ahead of your students. You will hear many MMA people say Wing Chun is ineffective. This is equally true of guns. If you don't have bullets, they are also ineffective. In the MMA world, their rules effectively make illegal 95% of what I teach my students. Their illegal rules are an outline of what I teach. Remember, you fight like you train; they do not train to protect their eyes, throat, groin, or spine at all because nobody attacks them. If they did, they would lose the "match". In fact, they train not to protect themselves, relying on the rules to protect them. This is not a good idea outside of the ring.

Many martial arts can be effective with an excellent teacher and a dedicated student, especially if they ask questions, follow the KISS principle, spar hard regularly, dispense with rules, think, accept and give challenges. I have met a precious few excellent fighters in many different martial arts. I thank them for allowing me to refine my skill and test my theories against them.

Once you find a school: To help you know when to leave or stay.

- You should commit to at least to 1 year of training, to see if it's for you and it works.
- Does your teacher still train Himself or just teach? I visit my teacher, as my teacher visits his, to work out.
- Beware of the subconscious. Watch the students and teacher. Have you ever seen the student start to fall BEFORE the technique has even begun? This is a function of the student and teacher's subconscious. Be careful, the bad guys in the real world may not know they are supposed to fall or cry or explode in a real fight. When the teacher gets to you, DO NOT Cooperate. Do all you can to hit them and stop their attack and see what happens.
- Remember, the students you are with are all in the same metaphorical river as you, learning at approximately the same rate. You need to compare yourself with other people outside the training hall, in *other* martial arts including street fighters to gauge your progress. Wait six months. If it fails, ask yourself why. Did the art fail you or did you choke and panic, forgetting everything? Sometimes arts are too complicated and when adrenaline hits, you forget. Most of the time, the arts give you lots of tools [techniques], but little or no idea of how or when to use them. Try to remember the KISS principle. Regularly work out with people outside your art. This will keep the problems inherent in any art from overwhelming it.
- Beware of arts with too many techniques and little or no guidance on how and when to use them to their maximum effect.
- Beware of vague or very general principles. For instance, you are told to strike at holes in their defenses. No Sh*t. Make sure the principles are specific and can be used in real time, if not they are useless.
- Sometimes your teacher's strengths can become the student's weaknesses. An Idea that is simple to the teacher may not be simple to all students. That idea or ideas may then be under emphasized as being self explanatory. This is especially true if the teacher is a physical or mental adept.
- Beware; many teachers are physical adepts because physical skill comes easy to them. They are born with great timing, distance understanding; they are usually fast, strong, or both. Many are large, which increases their inertia and ability to take punishment. If 90% of their school can't perform their art like the teacher, then the teacher is probably a physical adept. Most physical adepts are unaware of this fact, which leads to confusion and frustration for both the students and the teacher.
- In a good school, 80% or more of the students should be able to perform their art proficiently. Observe a few classes, do the math. If it's less than that by a significant margin, there is something wrong. Move on.
- Does your teacher tell you to run away if possible, or always stay and fight? Don't fight unless absolutely necessary. Even the best martial artists have bad days and bad luck. Don't roll those dice, unless you have to.

Not to mention the legal problems associated with a confrontation, especially if someone is seriously injured or dies.

- Your teacher should teach you to fight like *you*, not him. This is one of the biggest mistakes I see repeatedly in teaching martial arts. Most high ranking students I have come in contact with fight just like their teacher. This is a bad idea and can be exploited by a thinking fighter. You fight one, you have fought them all.
- It is the teacher's job to explain things in multiple ways so that you have the best chance of understanding. Your teacher should show you [visual], tell you [auditory], and let you feel it [kinesthetic]. Most will only teach in the channel that THEY learn in; if you are on a different channel you are usually SOL.
- If you fail to understand, it is the TEACHER'S fault. If you do not let the teacher know you are lost ASAP, it is YOUR fault.
- Ask lots of questions. Remember, any question you ask, 5 people in class wanted to ask but did not. If your teacher can't answer your questions in a logical manner, walk away. Do not accept, "That's how I was taught." That may be true, but honestly, he never thought it through and never questioned anything. Not a good sign.
- Check and recheck your understanding. Ask questions about things *you think* you understand as you progress in your art. Your understanding will change as you grow in an art and some things you thought you knew are utterly wrong or misunderstood.
- Write questions down or you will forget them when away from class. DO Not abbreviate or use non standard acronyms. You may not remember what that meant next week.
- You will have bad days, weeks sometimes months. Everyone does. Stick with it, work through it, and understand that it's part of the learning curve. Push through it.
- **Have self-discipline.** Ask the teacher for homework and how to train when at home. Train at home regularly, it will help form questions and speed your learning.
- **Plateaus** - Take into consideration that you will learn in spurts. As you progress, you will hit plateaus where it **appears** you aren't learning anything. This is an illusion, it's the way the brain processes new skills and information. This sometimes lasts many months; push through, but understand it's all part of the learning process. You learn faster in the beginning, it slows through time following the LAW OF DIMINISHING RETURNS.
- Remember, all early training is repetitive and boring. No Kung Fu Montages in real life.
- Don't fight with any power until you gain control of your limbs. (About 6 months to 1 year for most)
- **Learn from failure.** It is no fun getting hit, but if you figure out why and correct it then it will happen progressively less.

- Remember, if you get hit, it is no one's fault but yours. Don't let getting hit discourage you, use it as part of your learning process.
- Don't let anger or fear control your decisions
- Learn from success. You landed a hit, great. Now ask why. Was it perfectly timed and executed or did your opponent screw up? Could it have been luck? **Analyze success and failure.**
- Generally you learn more from failure than success.
- Does the teacher encourage his students to learn from mistakes?
- Don't not fight. (yes - double negative, just seeing if you are still paying attention) For god's sake, PAY attention. YOUR LIFE and the lives of your family may depend on it someday. **If you want to be better at fighting, you must fight.** This is not rocket science, but it is somehow lost on the vast majority of martial arts teachers. They substitute drills, Chi Sau; hitting the heavy bag, etc, to make you think you are learning to fight. YOU ARE NOT, don't be fooled. This is why people who are 'good' martial artists get their asses kicked by a normal street fighter.
- Beware of things that seem illogical. Don't be afraid to ask for clarification. If it still doesn't make logical sense or violates the laws of physics, move on. For example, kicking a standing person in the head is idiotic.
- Beware of **movie Martial arts idiocy**; for instance kicking, to the head of your opponent [opponent standing]. I just pissed off 90% of the martial arts community. However, I can explain why you should not do this and prove it. I haven't been kicked in the head in about 20 years. I actually have about a 10 minute lecture on how not to let people kick you in the head, which is outside the scope of this paper. This does not mean I won't punt a person's head if they are on the ground or bent at the waist.
- Pure action / reaction training [Drills] will only go so far. **Drills have only limited value.** They are also very hard to get rid of if they don't work or were practiced incorrectly; about 8-12 times as long to unlearn something as it took to learn it. Ah, there's the other 9.5% pissed at me. I may never be elected King of the Winter Carnival at this rate.
- For the record, Chi Sau / "sticky hands" is a DRILL; that's the last .5%. Many schools have replaced any sparring at all even "light sparring" with "playing" Chi Sau for hours on end. Very big mistake.
- Many schools use chi sau as a metric of fighting skill. It is not, the only thing it means is you did the drill better than that guy. I have smacked around legions of people who are far better at Chi Sau than I.
- Prioritize your training. Why do some teachers have students do countless hours of Chi Sau or other drills even though the student cannot root [Connect to the ground] at all? Because they are more fun and less painful than training root and other important basics. Doing fun things instead of useful things helps keep students coming and increases profit for the school. Not great for turning out excellent fighters.
- An excellent teacher gives the students what **they need, not what they want.** Everybody wants to do the fun parts, unfortunately you need to work through the basics first which are usually both **boring and**

painful in large quantities. Any teacher who allows the students to dictate the class should get another job. Any student who thinks they know what should be learned, when and how it should be learned, should open their own school get out of mine and STFU. This is doubly true of parents.

- Train to the highest common denominator, not the lowest. Never underestimate your opponent. Assume he is bigger, longer arms, faster, stronger, tougher, meaner and better trained than you. If the art you've chosen can't handle that, find another that can. Another all time favorite statement is, "Doc you only beat me because you are huge, strong and have long arms." Almost all bigger people ***WILL have longer arms than you and be stronger***, unless their mom snorted thalidomide. To which my reply is, "So your art is ineffective against larger stronger opponents and people with longer arms? May I quote you on my web site?" No one has agreed to date, but I am ever the optimist.
- Beware choreography in Martial arts. Some schools have people essentially do two or more man fighting choreography. This sure looks cool and is good for selling memberships. This will not help you fight anyone but your partner.
- Beware of schools that fight too much without stopping to **think** about it. Fighting is great but you need to analyze **why things did or did not work**. To do this you need a teacher that has fought ***extensively*** to guide you. For example some things look and work great in sparring **but fail utterly in real combat**. You had better hope your teacher can sort that out for you correctly. Even so, fighting regularly is better than not fighting at all. Fighting experience is incredibly valuable.

General things to watch out for:

- Train with a human if possible, not books or videos, but humans. Beware of ads that say, "I'm a former bouncer, biker or Navy seal, etc." Think about this, what do these people usually have in common? THEY are large, strong, well trained [**not by video!!**] most likely fast and tough etc. Now, look in your mirror. If you are not those things, look elsewhere.
- One killer technique for all people / all situations? Again, think this through. Techniques should be kept to a minimum but one for every situation, come on.
- Secret techniques on video??? WHAT? Ancient Chinese secrets now on Blu Ray. Guess what, physics, geometry and human physiology are not secrets, just hard to understand for most people. I would avoid anyone who uses the word secret in their marketing or training.
- Is half of the class calisthenics? If so, why are you paying for martial arts? Moving your body is good, but you should train from being 'cold' regularly as you don't have time to warm up in real life. "Excuse me Mr. Murderer, I need to stretch my groin before you murder me, please wait 5 minutes."
- **Excuses** - For example, many teachers I have come in contact with will say that I used "tricks" to win. This implies I cheated in some way; see my paragraph on fighting fair. It also states if you think about it that this teacher or his art cannot handle "tricks" in a controlled environment. This is not a good sign.

You should also understand that tricks do not exist, they are excuses. Psychological warfare exists and should be practiced to confuse your opponent, frighten him or make him angry. All of this should be understood by a professional martial arts teacher. If it is not, look elsewhere. Another great one is stealing techniques. Many teachers excuse for losing a challenge or refusing a challenge is they don't want you to "steal" techniques. Think this through; I'm going to steal the techniques from someone I have beaten soundly or has so little faith in their art that they won't touch me. How the hell do you steal techniques anyway? **There are only so many ways the body can move efficiently and they are not secret.** When you say it that way, it sounds really stupid doesn't it? Again, it is an excuse to massage a bruised ego. These teachers don't learn from their mistakes nor will their students. Some more excuses are that you are not of sufficient level [by their standards]. If you were, what would be the point of cross training? Another good one, you are not from a famous enough teacher. Fame does not always translate to skill or excellence in teaching. Here is one of the silliest, "My techniques are too deadly." So you teach deadly techniques and can't control your power? How do you train then? How would you keep your students from dying? How did you survive your training? Not a good sign. Lastly, you are not from anyone in their line of teachers. These are excuses. Do these idiots think that some guy in the street will just walk away because of those stupid excuses? Nope. If you train with this type of teacher, you may never get to touch another fighter and you will be in real trouble the first time you do. These are just examples, there are many more. If you see excuses, then move on. These teachers are afraid of being called on their BS in front of their students. Please send me new excuses when you find them, I need a new hobby.

- Many teachers **THINK** they know what happens when you are in a fight for your life, because they think about it a great deal, as did their teachers. Thinking about something and it actually happening are two VERY different things. I too thought I knew what to expect, and the first time it happened, I realized how wrong I was. I also realized how wrong the teachers who filled my head with crap were, It almost got me killed. **The map is NOT the terrain!**

Rules of fighting:

1. There are no rules in fighting for your life, get that crap out of your head. This does not include training. Training by its nature must have rules, or chaos reigns and you learn nothing. They must make logical sense, use human biomechanics and the KISS principle [**Keep It Simple Stupid**].
2. Don't fight with your fists if you can avoid it. Guns & knives are the great equalizer and need far less training to kill. One of my all time favorites was when a guy said to me, "I know you know Kung Fu, but I have a gun!" I replied, "Yes, I know Kung Fu, but I also carry a gun. Where is your gun?" I ask. Guy answers, "In my truck." I ask, "How are you going to get to your truck?"
3. First rule of a gunfight is **HAVE A GUN.**

4. Okay, first rule, run away if you can!! If you can't run, then use a gun; if you have no gun, use a knife. No knife, use a pen. No pen, pick up a chair. No chair, find a rock or a stick. No rock or stick, throw dirt. No dirt, try throwing blood in his eyes. Don't forget to try to run if the opportunity arises.
5. Think. I know its hard, people are trying to kill you. Practice fighting regularly. I would put my money on an experienced street fighter to win against 99% of martial artists I've come in contact with, because natural selection has been taken out of most martial arts, but not a real street fight.
6. Practice makes perfect. If you can perform your art in class at full power and speed 90% correct for 90% of the time, then in a real fight it will be about 50%-60% at best. Does your art have enough redundancy to function at 50%? If you are only 50% correct during class, you will only function at 10% to 20% at best in a real fight.
7. Murphy's Law is always in effect! Plan for it. Train for it. Don't be surprised when it happens. Keep moving, use cover, adapt, etc. This is a really good opportunity to work on tactical real time fixes.
8. Learn to ADAPT to mistakes and unexpected problems without missing a beat, learn, work around them in real time and keep fighting. DON'T stop fighting when you make a mistake. Learn to correct mistakes under fire in REAL TIME.
9. WHAT about fighting fair? The only unfair fight is the one you lose!! LIFE IS NOT FAIR. Sing it with me; groin, throat, eyes and bite, bite, bite. In a fight for your life, you must be willing to do anything to survive. Nice people have a disastrous idea implanted in them from childhood, the need to be fair at all times. I have seen this happen even when people are trying to kill them, truly astonishing.
10. Another disastrous idea that is implanted since birth is keeping up appearances. For example, a person decides to walk through a park at night with a group of young thugs present and does not deviate from their course because they do not want to appear prejudiced.

A word about the trend of very large teachers:

If you are a large person and/or muscular and teach martial arts, there are some very basic problems. First, you are not small. You may have never been small and fought in your life, what makes you think you can teach small, weak people? If you are large and strong, you may have never learned to do without strength in order to win. Well, you probably won a lot, but you lost the war if you teach. If you add pads and lots of protective gear [or protective rules], or both, it is even worse for small people. I would have had the same issues, but fate took my strength away and I had to fight without it. That was no fun. I am sure you believe you don't over use strength, but you do. Keep it in mind.

About training yourself:

In law, there is a saying that a lawyer who defends himself has a fool for a client. The same applies in martial arts. A person who tries to train themselves has a moron for a student. Some of the external arts you can get reasonably proficient with because most things are obvious and need little explanation. You will never be the best, but with hard work, self-discipline, and a lot of videos, you may become mediocre in a few decades. For the internal arts, it is much harder to see what's going on. Even with an experienced teacher, sometimes it is hard to determine where the breakdown is if the student is right in front of you. The problem is, few of the top people in their art care to put their information to video. This is to avoid having bad students use their name. That leaves the dregs of martial arts to proliferate. The best usually don't need the money because they are the best, people will pay what they ask. For many I have met, they keep a day job so as to not be forced to teach idiots who have money. So now the problem is a mediocre teacher at best, teaching through video. The Blind leading the blind.

To be fair I considered this myself long ago. I thought, "I'm a reasonably intelligent person, I'm a hard worker, I will just train myself because I can't find a teacher." I'm really, really glad I chose not to do that.

About the author:

The good doctor is a semi-retired Chiropractor near Dallas, Texas. He has a Doctorate in Chiropractic and a Bachelor's of Science, Chemistry, and Biology. Chiropractors are the masters of human structure and biomechanics, bar none. Long before that, he was a bouncer in a live rock / biker bar and a personal trainer. He was also security in a welfare hotel during graveyard shift just outside the Bronx in New York City. Due to this bizarre confluence of circumstances, he has had a few hundred random people trying to kill him for more than 20 years. This includes many ex convicts from Rikers Island / Sing Sing Prison and one person on PCP (not recommended). He is reasonably certain that coming across as an arrogant, know-it-all, sarcastic SOB didn't help things any. He is married to his lovely, intelligent, and forgiving wife Deirdre (a mix of Wonder Woman and Tomb Raider), has 5 rescue dogs and one 22 year-old stepson, who thankfully knows ALL.

Please adopt rescue dogs and not Puppy mill dogs from pet stores!

Okay so you are thinking, "Doc, why did you write all this?" Because it is the right thing to do. Many people are lead down the martial arts path thinking it will take them to self defense prowess, but it

doesn't. Many teachers don't tell their students to run if they can and to shoot people if they can't. This KILLS people every day. It wastes time and money and actually takes you farther away from being able to defend yourself most of the time. Then, people like myself have to correct all the BS stuffed into their heads. Remember, it takes about 8-12 times longer to UNLEARN something as it does to learn it. Sometimes you can never unlearn a hard-drilled reflex arc. Too many people put faith in colored belts without testing those ideas on the battlefield. Then they teach someone else and so it goes on down the line. This is a classic example of the blind leading the blind.

This feeling was crystallized by the massive ice storm and blackout North Texas experienced in 2010. Standing outside in the dark, cold, and silence, I thought of the huddled masses with their iPhones, iPads, but no training in martial arts, no survival gear, and no firearms. I felt their terror wash over me, primal and terrible. I realized this was TRUE NIGHT. Man had been winning, temporarily, the battle with the darkness, but nothing lasts forever. This is for you, get off your ass. Move your body, train in martial arts and firearms, get in shape. In short, prepare! You never know when the party will be over.

Thanks for reading,

Dr. Scott M. MULLEN BS DC

Author:

Dr. Scott Mullen B.S. D.C. - Sifu Wing Chun Kung Fu

TexasWingChun.com

LeungSheung.com - Our lines main web page to check teacher's credentials.

Charity:

Our school offers discounts for people who help abandoned animals.

To help a rescue dog - Petfinder.com

Almost all breeds of dog have their own rescue group, just Google the breed and rescue with the city you live in and you will find one. For example, type 'Dallas Cocker spaniel rescue' and it will find DFW Cocker Spaniel rescue group.

The rescue groups are great; they rehab the dogs, get them to the vet, give them all their shots, check for heart worm, etc. They also help abused animals re-socialize after their abuse. Great people. If you can't adopt a dog, they always need volunteers and donations. Donations need not be money, they need many things: old blankets, towels, soap, help grooming, etc. They will have a donation needs list on their respective Web Pages.

The pound is also good, they are in the greatest need. Most dogs **only have 48 hours to live at best** in this economy.

Please help them!

I strive to help as many animals as I can. Last year, my Kung Fu students, through their tuition, donations, and volunteer work, helped save over 188 dogs and found them good loving homes.

I know we can't help them all and that brings to mind the parable of the star fish:

The Parable of the Starfish

One day, an old man was walking along a beach that was littered with thousands of starfish that had been washed ashore by the high tide. As he walked, he came upon a young boy who was eagerly throwing the starfish back into the ocean, one by one.

Puzzled, the man looked at the boy and asked what he was doing. Without looking up from his task, the boy simply replied, "I'm saving these starfish, sir."

The old man chuckled aloud, "Son, there are thousands of starfish and only one of you. What difference can you make?"

The boy picked up a starfish, gently tossed it into the water and turning to the man, said, "It made a difference to that one!"

Keep up the good work.

Dr. S. Mullen B.S, D.C. - vetted Medical expert witness

Challenges:

I'm more than happy to explain my position to anyone curious. What I get sick of are people on the internet with little or no education in Martial arts and not even a basic understanding how the body works threatening all kinds of silly things. I prefer the simple solution. Feel free to visit a class and ask your questions in person. Make your threats in person. Unfortunately, even this will not get through to many. I'm always looking to find a better explanation or a more refined theory.

I am always looking for teachers and schools of any martial art or none that are willing to spar HARD. Please contact me to discuss it.

To save some time, NO PADS allowed. To be clear, *bare knuckles only*. Mouth guard, cup and eye protections will be the only gear allowed. This is non negotiable.

Hold harmless waiver must be signed as well as limited power of attorney to get you medical care in the event you can't communicate for yourself.

If you make an official challenge then the challenge sheet must be filled out completely for my records.

My filled out challenge sheet is available on the web site.

This is for the purpose of testing theory and refining skill.

V56 - June 2018

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