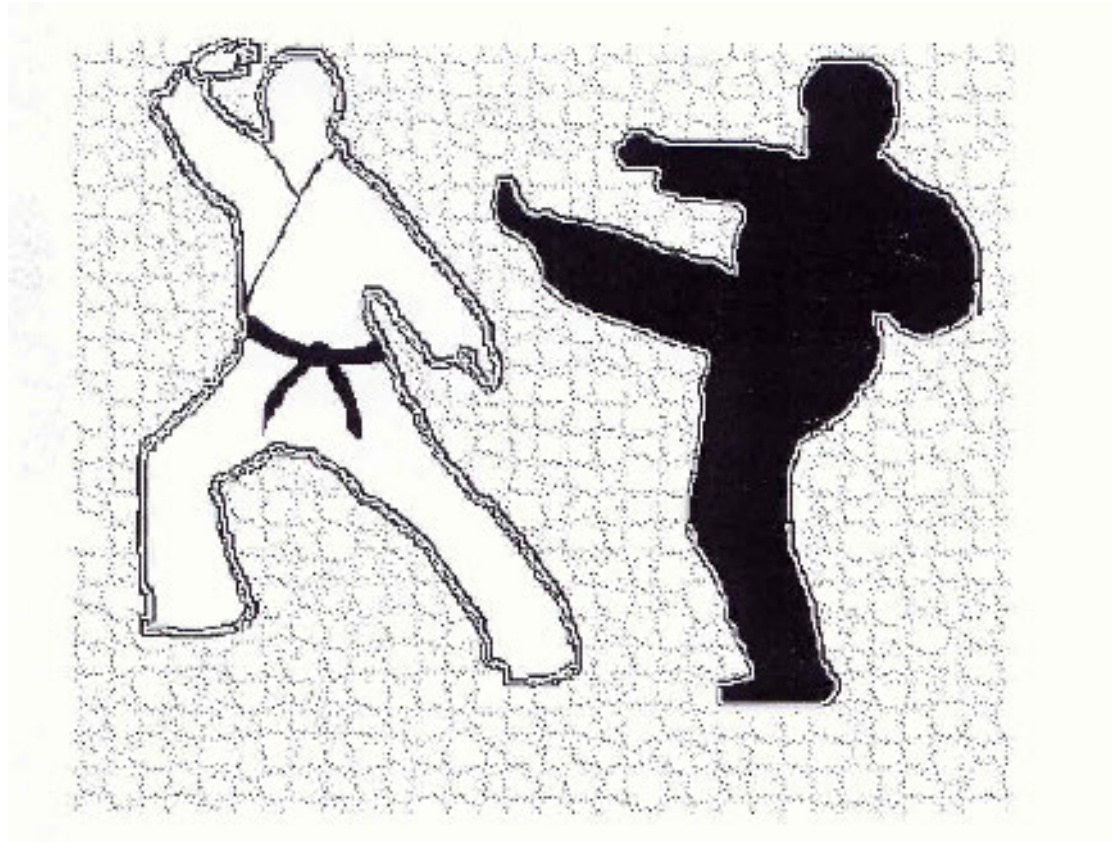


# "ADVANCED" FIGHTING TECHNIQUES



Based on the **Quan Li K'an** Style of Martial Arts

By Bruce Everett Miller

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# **ADVANCED FIGHTING TECHNIQUES**

By Bruce Everett Miller

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You either win

or

You risk coming home in a box

=====

There is no such thing as cheating ....  
Only excuses to lose

## WELCOME

If you are a QUAN LI K'AN student- this book has specifically been written for you.  
And you should already know to question EVERYTHING ...

But if you are not there yet or are not a QLK student then the following is for you

=====

The Problem with this book- ANY book like this is that it comes off as, the authors are projecting themselves to be an EXPERT. NO, I am NOT an Expert. I am still in the learning process and hope to be so until and including the Day I die!

SO...

In My humble opinion, there is no such thing as an EXPERT in combat! in the Street or war!

yes there are people that have experience - and I think they should be listened to.  
HOWEVER ALL they can give you is example of what has happened in the past

and the old adage that NO BATTLE PLAN ever survives contact with the enemy is  
VERY true!

Therefore I would encourage you to read not just the WHAT TO DO - but far more importantly [again in my opinion] the reasons why or why not to do something. IF and I do mean IF - they make sense to you then they MAY be worthwhile

It is my personal belief that I believe that you need to test out ALL ideas and determine if they work or are rubbish BEFORE you risk your life on them in battle.

In that viewpoint please take my tone of saying things NOT as pretending to be some sort of expert but instead merely relating things and idea that have worked for ME

If they should make sense for you then more the better... if not they can easily be discarded for what you consider a better idea ...but again IMHO examining what we do and why helps strengthen what we believe and helps us discard ideas that we have not really vetted

Anyway I hope this text provides some ideas that will help you in your journey

Please BE SAFE

Beginnings are hard.  
If they are not, then it is not really a beginning.

## INTRODUCTION

I must admit I started writing the really advanced part of this book first. Advanced Fighting Techniques was going to be designed to teach people who already understood the principles the advanced theories of sparring. I figured that this was a subject, which needed covering.

True, there is a lot of material out there on sparring, but none that [that I could find] that seem to even come close to teaching sparring from the scientific view point or complete view point which should be presented.

There is no collection that tells you the complete theory and the reasons behind why those theories work. There is no understanding of the principles given so that you can modify the theories to fit your particular needs.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on how you look at it, I happened to have attended a tournament (as a watcher this time). It was both very enlightening and very disheartening. The enlightenment came from watching first, second, third and fourth degree black belts spar, obviously without the faintest idea of the principles behind trying to stay alive.

I was disheartened because I realized that these people had never been taught the truth. They had just been taught techniques (and in many cases only partial techniques) and then been set out against each other and other tournament contestants to learn what they could while doing their best to stay alive. In my opinion, that is no way to learn. At best, it is a way to pick up marginal skills stacked with bad habits. Does that teach you how to fight? Yes, you learn the rough and tumble of the tournament circuit but what you don't even begin to comprehend, unless you have adequate theory behind it, is the way to adapt such skills to the street.

OK, maybe I am being a prude. I don't think snob is the right word. I will admit that there is a tremendous amount of difference between the tournaments and the street. So maybe I am being somewhat unfair. I'll admit that to a degree, but what I saw was people who should have known better violating every rule of sparring designed to keep you alive in real combat.

Perhaps those participants have two sets of techniques that they keep completely separate and they wouldn't do what I saw on the street. Somehow my gut feeling is that this isn't true. The responses were too fast and the sparring too heavy to be anything but highly practiced. The bottom line is that I have begun to believe that most schools do not really teach their beginning students the real principles behind sparring.

I believe that most people get their knowledge like I first did: the hard way, simply by competing against other classmates in their dojo. While I do not mean to speak ill of experience gained this way, I know from my own experience that until I learned the

theories behind what I should and should not do, all I had were a series of tricks to try on my opponents. I had to hope that one of them worked. If they didn't, I was back to trying to defend myself the best I could.

Therefore I have written this book; to teach you the real principles behind what works and why it does. To Hopefully, [at least in my opinion], teach you what not to do, and to explain the why of it.

I will try to explain the rules and principles behind sparring, not just against someone who has no fighting experience but how to stay alive and win against someone who is trained in martial arts. This book will try to be as complete as possible from the beginner to really advanced techniques. So somewhere along the line everybody should be able to find something they can use. Remember: the real purpose of sparring is to learn to defend yourself when you really need it. Unless you can make that happen, everything else is just an expensive game. I will close this opening with the statement that while I agree that theory is no substitute for experience neither is experience a substitute for theory. To be really good, one needs both!

# EXPLANATION

Please note that for completeness sake I will be covering material with which you may already be familiar. This is not being done to be insulting or to waste your time or mine. Instead, it is to cover the basics so that I am not leaving out vital information just because I might assume that anyone should know this stuff. Besides, if you already know the material, you can skip it or read it as a review. Who knows? There may be something in the chapter which sparks an idea or two which neither one of us has thought of before. You can always write me and help me move up the next step. As always, I welcome non-vulgar comments, including criticisms. [ I need to get better to!]

I will ATTEMPT to answer [valid] questions (time permitting) as best as I can.

I thank all of you who have helped me improve the quality of my books that I have written. if you have suggestions You can write to me at:

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or Email: [bemiller@cloudnet.com](mailto:bemiller@cloudnet.com)

Please make the hours of the calls in the early evening, Central Time, as otherwise all you will get to do is talk to my answering machine.

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Before you learn to run correctly, you must learn to walk correctly.

## Stances

The first subject we are going to explore is the subject of stances. In one of my earlier books I said that the only two legitimate stances were the side-on stance and the front-on stance. Let us explore that statement and you will see exactly what I mean and why.

The first stance option you have, and the one which most beginning students learn, is the side-on stance. This is where you face your opponent with one side of your body pointing towards them and the other side pointing directly away from them.

This stance may seem easier to do than the other stance. That is an illusion. In fact, it is actually very hard to get into correctly. The reason for this is that the toes of the front foot must be pointing towards your opponent. The problem with this is that many beginning students haven't yet limbered up enough to be able to rotate their feet outwards far enough. Females have a definite advantage over males in this regards, because of physiological make up (so just put up with it, guys).

NOTE: If you do not keep your toes pointing directly towards your opponent, you will be exposing the poison points of your leg and thigh. Poison points are locations which when struck cause your leg to refuse to function correctly. In other words, your leg won't be able to support your weight, let alone be usable to kick someone.

This makes you very vulnerable to be attacked! Be aware that the only way to really defend yourself from being struck in a poison point is to keep your toes pointed directly towards your opponent.

This is your ONLY defense as there are points all the way down to your feet and you can't possibly protect all the points with your hands. Neither should you even try. The weight distribution in the side-on stance should be 85 percent of your weight on the back foot and 15 percent of your weight on the front foot. You should be in what is called a back stance in most styles.

The reason for this is that you have to be able to move your weight off your front leg in a hurry to prevent a front leg sweep (something which you should really never do anyway), be able to kick quickly and move it out of the way so that someone doesn't break your knee with a well-placed kick.

We will talk about the front-on stance in a later chapter.

## Hand Placement

In the last chapter we talked about the proper fighting stances, stating that the full front on and the full side stances were the only acceptable stances for the street. Upcoming sections on efficiency and stances give in-depth reasons why.

This time we are going to talk about how to hold the hands. Now I realize that every martial artist thinks they hold their hands correctly. If you ask them, you will discover that most have never really thought about it. They just instinctively put their hands up, or remember what someone, probably an instructor, somewhere told them at some point in time.

The truth is that most people make horrendous mistakes in hand placement when they spar. Let me phrase that another way. They leave themselves open for attack! The purpose for keeping your hands in front of your body should be to prevent someone from striking you. Yes! Everything else is filtergarb.

Your opponent is not going to be impressed with how dangerous your fancy hand position is. He is only interested in if he can penetrate your defenses to do you damage or kill you.

So let's look at it in that perspective and you will see what I mean. The biggest mistake many beginners make is to hold their hands too high. They practically have to look over the top of their fist to be able to see their opponent. The second mistake, is they hold their hands too tight.

In most cases your opponent is not going to kick or hit where you have your hands but somewhere your hands are not. If you have to loosen up just to move, you are never going to make the block.

Another mistake made by even black belts is that they hold their backhand too far back and/or they leave a gap between their hands. When that happens, not only does your opponent have to target to shoot at, if he fires a strike exactly in the middle, your brain must take time to figure out with which hand to block. The alternative is to always block such a blow with the same hand, leading to a pattern, which can then set you up for a deadly fake.

The better action and the best positions I have found for the hand position in the full side-on stance is to place your forward elbow just ahead of your kidney area, and bring your fist up so that you are making about a 60 degree angle at the elbow with your front fist ending up in front of your chest slightly pointing toward your opponent.

Your backhand fist should be placed 1 to 2 inches off the chest so that the fist is placed evenly in between the angle created by the front arm and forearm. If you look in a mirror you will see that this position provides maximum protection of your chest area.

One thing of importance is that you should also get in to the habit of making your back hand move approximately the opposite of your front hand at least in the vertical plane. An example of what I mean in this case is that if you are blocking a punch or kick to the head, and then your backhand should move downward as your front hand moves up to make the block.

This way the section of your lower side is covered in case the movement is a fake. Yes, it does make more chest target area come open by such movement but two points are to be considered.

The chest has more bone protection than the lower abdominal side and 2) you will have ample time to move the distance (inches only) back up to complete the block (if you keep your mind clear - i.e., not in a panic state.)

A variation on the above, which I teach my black belts, is to drop their front hand down and place the fist 3 to 4 inches in front of the groin area. The hand should not touch the anterior thigh but there should be less than a two-inch gap between the thigh and the fist. The advantages of this position are that it is much easier to block strikes to the groin and even more importantly strikes aimed at thigh poison points. [If you don't understand why this is important then

- 1) You haven't been kicked in a poison point and
- 2) You won't live very long against someone who knows this trick.

HOWEVER: The disadvantages to this position are two-fold (nothing is ever free):

A) It makes it harder to use your front hand to block strikes to the head. However your main defense in these strikes should be movement anyway rather than stoically trying to block. Movement takes less time and is more instinctive and thus has less chance of failing.

B) It does make it easier to break the arm with a direct shot to the mid point of the arm. However, anyone trained adequately in dropping their front arm is going to roll their shoulder as their opponent strikes, nullifying the efficiency of the strike and putting the attacker in a very dangerous (i.e., good) position.

Their chest is exposed, you are on the inside range and neither of your hands are tied up but their striking hands is temporarily (at least for about 1/3 of a second) out of the threat picture. (In that 1/3 second you should be well on your way to striking if not already completed such.)

Overall, the advantage of blocking the most vulnerable poison point target areas is worth the added risk in my opinion. You are entitled to your own opinion. Proper hand position from full front-on position is to place your hands one on top of the other in front of and about 2 to 3 inches above your groin area.

Moving your hands up those 2 to 3 inches really doesn't alter the time significantly that it takes to move and cover your groin area. It does slightly decrease the distance to your abdominal area, but far more importantly it places a slight muscular tension on your hands and arms.

Now, I know that everyone is telling you to relax to improve your sparring. In general that is a true statement. What you don't want to do, however, is to be too relaxed. You need the proper balance between relaxation, so that you are free to move and tension so that your muscles are primed to move quickly.

Moving your hands that 2 to 3 inches proves just the right amount of tension without placing too much strain on the arms. With a little practice you can also maintain this position without looking as if you are in an "on guard" position. This can come in handy at certain times, like when you are trying not to alert your opponent or the rest of the world that you are ready. Why give away the element of surprise?

Remember: in both stances use your legs to block, or move them to avoid the lower strikes. Don't try reaching for them or you are certain to feed your face to the next blow! If you follow these simple rules for hand positioning, you will find yourself having less trouble blocking your opponent partly because they will have to work harder to find an opening and secondly because your hands will always be close to where you want to go to block.

Thus your chances of succeeding go up and those of your opponent goes down...which is exactly where they should be."

You are old and grown unreasonably fat. Yet you did a back flip as you came in through yonder door. How did you do that?" asked the youth.

"Why in my youth I kept myself quite limber," said the sage, "with use of this special liniment— one shilling a box. Allow me to sell you a couple."

## Basic Fighting Theory

The basic theory, of course, is to learn to hit your opponent so that they get hit and you don't get hit back. That sounds simple. Obviously it isn't. If it was, you could get a black belt in a couple of months from your local gym. Even if you do work out at your local gym, it is going to take you a lot longer and a lot more sweat than a couple of months. Still, if we can decide on what is important to work on and what can wait till later, we can accelerate the learning curve and thereby decrease the lump-taking factor by a significant degree.

The first word in sparring is defense. I will say it again. The first word in sparring is defense. It is also the last word and the most important! I don't care how fast or tough you think you are; a well-placed kick or punch is going to take the wind out of your sails. So therefore, the main job you have is not to give your opponent the chance to strike you someplace important. The word for that is defense.

In the last chapter we talked about proper hand placement. Now we are going to talk about proper attacking maneuvers.

First off, we are going to learn that when you attack you never, NEVER, NEVER attack with your back foot kicking forward.

I don't care what your friend, your best buddy or even your instructor told you. If you kick or punch off your backhand in a forward direction you are just asking to get hit in the chest, face, groin or wherever else your opponent wants to hit.

The truth is that it takes four times as long for your back hand to reach out and strike your opponent as it takes your opponent to reach out and block or strike that attack with their front hand.

Therefore, whenever you attack with your backhand or foot you are lighting a neon sign that yells, "HIT ME! I'M OPEN."

Unless you are against another beginner or sparring opponent who is there just to be nice and waste some time, you are going to get tagged. Even if they don't hit you they are going to be able to block what you throw.

The second thing I am going to stress is that you never punch forward off your backhand. Your backhand is there for defensive purposes. Later when we get to grabs and stuff you will get to use it, but for now leave it in position just in front of your chest.

Believe me, you will find that there it will do a marvelous job of blocking things that you didn't even see but you blocked them. They didn't get in and spoil your day. (You planned it that way. Right?)

The next thing we are going to work on is the fact that you should be practicing doing multiple techniques. We will deal with this in more detail in later chapters, but the fact is that if you launch your attack with three or more techniques, one right after the other, then your chances of succeeding are much higher.

In fact, the rule is never initiate an attack with less than three strikes. If you can add more into the attack group than that, it is better, but never use less than three. This is something, which you need to practice consciously. The best way is not while you are sparring but just practicing moving from one technique into the next and then the next smoothly and effectively.

In Quan Li K'AN, students spend their entire gold belt time doing these exercises before they are even allowed to do any sparring. While this may be frustrating, it really cuts down on the bad habits and in the long run advances the student more safely and quickly.

Remember the "don't give them an opening" rule. Don't do the techniques so that you are turning your front toward your opponent. Do that sidekick or what ever then the spin side but then turn back the way you came with another technique. (Your back should be facing your opponent for the brief period of time that you are turning.) Don't just give away a free shot at your vital organs just to get re-situated.

Next, be conscious of how long it takes to execute a technique. Don't do things that take a considerable time unless you have already executed a technique that has your opponent off guard or tied up wit

Both techniques take too much time to execute. On the other hand if you start out with a side kick or a front kick that is well aimed and then throw a side kick or a front kick while your opponent is still tied up from defending themselves, your chances of success go way up. You should get these fundamentals down fairly well before moving on to the next concepts.

Never call a man a fool. Borrow from him instead.

## Starting the Attack

Probably the most common problem students have when they are first starting to spar (besides the fear of getting their block knock off) is understanding when they should be doing something and when they should wait for their opponent.

When their opponent has launched an attack at them, unless they freeze up, it is very obvious what they should do: i.e., try to defend themselves. But beyond that there is generally an air of confusion. An obvious air of "What Do I Do Now?" "If I try anything I'm certain to get hit."

Probably this comes from the fact that they do not understand the proper fighting ranges and when they are in danger. Therefore things that they try don't work well and they wind up on the losing side of the majority of the exchanges they try.

To try and improve that situation we are going to work on the ranges where certain things should be done and, of course, where they shouldn't.

First off, I want you to visualize your opponent facing you. The length of their leg is approximately the distance away from their body that they are going to be able to kick. This is important information because it will affect the total strategy of how you fight. (You do want to win, don't you?) If their legs are longer than yours, then they will have a larger reach than you do. While this may seem obvious in print, most lower belt students do not pay attention to this and they only concentrate on getting themselves in range to kick or punch their opponent.

If the opponent is taller and smarter, they will never get in your range. They will move to keep themselves in their kicking range and the other person out. The difference between what you can reach and what they can reach is their free killing zone. Of course, if you are the taller person you should adopt this style of fighting. If you are smaller, then probably your initial best success is to wait until they throw a kick, block it or better yet move SLIGHTLY out of the way (we will deal with advanced techniques on this later) and then as they are recovering you should close the gap and attack. Again I caution you to use at least three attacking techniques so that you will get one to penetrate or you have taken a risk for nothing.

The biggest danger the shorter person has in the sudden closing of the gap is that of having the opponent ready for such. If their kick was just a fake maneuver, they were merely waiting for you to come charging in.

This is another reason why I am so adamant about always being prepared defensively. Now if your opponent is silly enough to punch forward off their backhand (you wouldn't do that, would you) you are guaranteed an opening, as we said earlier. An added advantage is that their weight shift, because of the twisting motion of their body,

causes both legs to be temporarily locked in place as far as balance goes. If you attack either leg, with even moderate force, they will go down hard. Since backhand (and foot) techniques are relatively slower than front ones, you should attempt to block this mistake and kick your opponent's legs as you block. Then as they are falling and/or retracting their punching hand, you should close in and finish the work you just started.

If you did as I said, there won't be much left to do, but do it anyway. If they were silly enough to kick forward off their back foot, then again you should block the strike and kick the other leg. (You know, the one that is all locked up, all by itself without any defense, supporting their entire weight.)

## Once YOU get in

Another classical problem exhibited by most students is that once they get inside their opponent's defense, they really don't take advantage of the situation. Sure, they may deliver one strike, or even occasionally two, but then their opponent gets away from them and once again they are faced with that dangerous gap to cross.

Granted, if they do the job perfectly their opponent will go down in those one or two strikes, but the truth of the matter is that you should be practicing like it happens on the street. On the street you can't afford to assume that your opponent will be overcome with one or two blows. Your life may depend on the outcome so it is best to ensure that you do it right.

Therefore, I recommend that once you get in, you practice staying with your opponent.

There is a SUB-style in Quan Li K'an that I teach to all my smaller people called mouse. (Even if you are not smaller it is best to understand the principles here.) Mouse is an excellent equalizer.

The principle in mouse is like a small mouse running around and around the legs of the elephant: Biting and clawing at every turn. In people terms, those bites are elbow and knee strikes, the claws are back fists and knife hands.

Just like the elephant though, the taller opponent is at a disadvantage because you are too close for them to use their weapons (size and strength) effectively and you are constantly moving so every time they try to block or respond to you, you have moved (in a rolling circular motion around and around them) and are striking somewhere else.

Developing these skills of mouse, however, REQUIRE that you learn to be able to stay **with** your opponent as they move. Otherwise they will quickly put some distance between you and them and you are back to the situation of their advantage.

An excellent exercise is to stand next to one of your classmates and practice staying with them as they move. Every time they take a step you take a corresponding step so that you are still in range. Now, I am going to add that after you get that technique



down, you can hold on to your opponent. While you may think this makes it easier, it really doesn't.

Which is why you had to practice without holding on first. The trouble with holding is that every time your opponent moves, they have a tendency to pull you off balance. Even if it is just a little bit, your body must fight that off balance before it will be comfortable moving.

Therefore, despite what you may think, holding on is not to prevent your opponent from going anywhere, it is instead a way for you to sense which way they are moving and when and easier than just having to watch those movements. The fact is that you will be able to feel their movements long before you see them.

When you get good, you will be able to strike a person and then just by leaving your hand or arm at the contact point (while you are getting ready to strike again you will be feeling how they are moving their body in response to your last hit and your up-coming attack. With this new information you will be better prepared to compensate for any attempted defense they may try.

One last comment and I will end this chapter. Whether you actually do a mouse style attack or you just attack, the real principle of success on the inside is to get a little crazy. The rule is that when you are inside elbow range (i.e., less than the distance from your Shoulder to your elbow away from your opponent) everything goes. There really are no other rules. Go for broke. Grab on with one hand if you want and throw everything you have as fast and as hard as you can.

Vary the attack sites so that you don't get into a repetition that they can predict and ATTACK, ATTACK, ATTACK. Don't stop until they are completely overwhelmed AND finished (not the same thing - you need to do BOTH).

The question is not if it can be done.  
The question is can you succeed without dying!

## When to Attack

(Behind the theory)

Much has been written on the angles on which you should attack. Even more has been written on when you should initiate the attack.

Frankly, I haven't read any of the books out there with titles pertaining to such topics and really don't plan to. The reason is that, well, almost none of those authors have had any training in physiology.

No, I don't mean to be egotistical, but the fact is that there are some pretty intricate changes in body position that tell you when it is safe to attack and what part of the body should be the target area. I personally believe that unless you understand how the body works, at least for some specific areas, then you are not going to have a theory which is going to hold true when it really important.

Meaning when you are up against someone who knows what they are doing. Anyone can learn to spar successfully against an amateur. That is not really tricky. A well-trained green belt can hold their own in these situations.

What you need to learn is how to handle yourself with finesse against the moderately high black belt with a bad attitude aimed in your direction and/or against multiple attackers. I really don't believe that you have to worry about being attacked a high degree black belt.

This type of person won't bother you unless you go specifically looking for them and then, well, too bad. Anyway back to the real issue of this chapter.

Too many people who don't understand the whole concept make grandiose or oversimplified statements like "attack when they step down."

Well, in general that is a good theory, but the fact of the matter is that any well trained martial artist, especially one who is used to using fakes are going to set you up to fail if you base your timing only on an understanding as simplistic as that. As long as we are on that point I will declare my point and show you the difference.

What I tell my students is that they should move in as soon as their opponent applies significant weight to their front foot. At that point you know that if they are going to attack with a kick it has to be from the back foot.

The question raised by the difference between the two statements above is what is significant weight. Significant weight is where enough weight has applied to an extremity that it is now stable enough for the body to use that extremity to help with balance and mobility.

In short, when the extremity can be used as more than just dead weight to effect the person's balance. Generally this occurs when between 15 to 20% of your weight has been applied to the extremity. The exact amount isn't the important fact here; the concept is.

When you apply more than a significant weight to an extremity, you can move off it without re-shifting your weight. That of course takes time and concentration by your brain (even if not on a conscious level), detracting from the ability to pay attention to the job at hand like staying alive. Note: This is part of what happens when you attack someone so vigorously they spend all their time retreating. They are so busy backing up they have no energy left to attack you.

This paragraph is for those who doubt this. Try an experiment. Try to step forward and kick at the same time. NO, I don't mean kick off your back foot and step down as you complete the kick. Simply try to kick off the front foot and move forward at the same time. It can't be done unless you jump. Either your foot is going to kick or it is going to step down and allow you to take a step. It can't do both at the same time, by pure definition of body mechanics.

Please note that because your hands are really not involved with your balance that much, you will be able to learn to initiate a hand attack at the same time as you are moving. This is not in doubt.

However, we are not talking here about techniques to use when you are already inside the strike range, we are talking about how to get there without getting your block knocked off.

So, how do you know when a person has applied enough pressure to their foot that they cannot quickly shift their weight and still kick? The trick is to pay attention to the hip. The hip will show a forward rotational movement as weight is applied to the foot. This is not a sign that can be faked. Try it yourself. If you try to rotate your hip forward, you involuntarily place pressure on the foot and an attempted fake fails!

Granted this sign will be hard to discover at first but if you watch people as they walk you will begin to learn to recognize the signs of hip rotation. The pay back is that once you learn to use this sign, you cannot be fooled into being faked that there is weight on the foot when there isn't.

An advanced technique is to watch the weight distribution that is applied to the foot. Pay attention to where the weight force is concentrated on the foot. Is it the toes or the heel or evenly distributed? The significance of watching the weight distribution is this:

- 1) No one can launch an attack off a foot with weight on the heel

and

- 2) Before attacking with a kick, the person will shift their weight onto the heel of the other foot. Thus, by paying attention, you can tell which foot they are going to attack from long before they even start their actual movement!

Yes, I can hear you saying that may be well and good but I can't watch the feet all the time. TRUE. But the fact is that once you learn to recognize the weight distribution in the foot you can then use those same signs to spot the changes in hip rotation and upper thigh motion which accompany shifts of weight in the foot.

These areas you can notice while keeping an eye on the person in total. You are watching the whole person, rather than just a specific area while you spar aren't you?

A very good trick which I use all the time is to step back, making my opponent move forward. I then launch the attack as they are trying to regain the proper fighting distance. Moving back-wards has a distinct advantage over moving towards your opponent. If you move towards them, you are entering their attack zone. Regardless of the angle, if they are ready you are going to get nailed.

The fact is that you are required to spend part of your energy and your brain will be spending some of its concentration on the physical acts of moving. While you are moving, you really aren't in a full attack mode. (The explanation above for placing weight on the foot applies here also.)

# TARGETING

I am not going to get into a long-winded discussion in what targets you should aim for when you are sparring. First off, there are too many variables. Are you fighting on the street or in a tournament? Is it full contact or just light touch? Some of the guidelines I will state are:

- 1) Don't shoot at random targets. Just kicking someone in the chest is a random target. Pick out the specific point on the chest. The more you focus on a specific point, (don't just pick out one) the more likely you are to make a significant strike.
- 2) Try to pick subsequent targets that are a considerable distance away in respect to your opponent's body. In earlier chapters we told you to do a minimum of three strikes when you attack. That was very true, but now let's add to it. Let's make sure that when you do those three strikes you attack three separate targets. Preferably these targets should be on opposite side of the body so that your opponent has to move their hands a significant distance to do a significant block. This is like tennis where you want to hit the ball to opposite sides of the court to make your opponent run after the ball.

They might get there in time but you sure make them work to do it. The likelihood is that you are going to be able to get your third strike in. Most people can keep up with one or two strikes (or a lot of them if they are placed in the same areas) but few people's brains can stay with for more than that. If they can stay with you, then increase the number to five and you will get the results you are after.

3) Especially on the street or in full contact situations, concentrate on part of their body (like their legs) which they are not used to protecting. Everyone has a particular way of holding their hands and weight which covers some areas and leaves other areas exposed. Attack the exposed targets. This may seem like an obvious statement but it isn't. For some reason people always want to throw their punches and kicks to the areas where their opponent already has their hands. Instead work on the areas like the poison points of the legs, the dorsal arch of the foot, etc. Even if they are successful in covering these areas, you will be upsetting their routine dramatically and causing them anxiety so that they make mistakes you can capitalize on.

4) Look strongly for the possibility of getting a kick off to the back leg. Especially the back knee. This is where the majority of their weight is and even if you just bobble it, you are going to disrupt their balance and allow you to follow up with another technique (more on this later).

Ignore that man over there behind the curtain.  
Pay attention over here to the smoke and mirrors.  
(Paraphrased from the wizard of Oz.)

## Waiting

A problem shared by all students which I can clearly identify but have trouble solving is that of teaching a student to wait before reacting.

Every student I have known begins to react, and of course block, the instant their opponent starts to move. This, of course, sets them up to fail against a student who either uses fakes or who doesn't complete their techniques (a very bad habit but one which is frequent in beginning students).

Obviously if you are trying to block an attack too soon and your opponent suddenly changes their line of attack, you will have to adjust your blocking before you can react to their attack.

Unfortunately most students also have the tendency to lean forward as they try to block so they also lock up their balance, meaning they have to readjust their balance as well as their hand position. In short there is not time to do all this and they get hit. Of course this make them more nervous and they try harder to block their opponent by reacting even quicker which sets them up to fail again.

The point is that you have to wait for your opponent to commit himself or herself. Remember they should have to spend the energy to cross the gap while you are waiting for them. That way if they leave an opening as they are crossing the gap you have a target at which to shoot. If your hands are in the correct position you should be able just about ignore their attack anyway and just shoot for the opening they have created.

I know that I have said that defense comes first, last and always, but there is sometimes too much of a good thing and if you spend all your energy on defense you are bound to overreact and create more opening than you cover. Besides there is the valid statement, that a good defense is a good offense. If nothing else, if you learn to attack fast and defend slow you will make a lot fewer mistakes than if you do it the other way around, despite what you may think.

You have the capacity to learn from your mistakes.  
You will learn a lot today.

## SLIPPING

Probably the greatest aid to survival in a sparring match is not being in the location where your opponent is trying to strike. Unfortunately sooner or later everyone gets lucky or runs out of steam. It comes down to the fact that if you give your opponent enough shots at you (even if you are just practicing defense) they are going to get you!

Therefore you must capitalize on your opponent's mistakes before they get enough shots. That, of course, means that you must get in and strike them. This is, of course, not that easy, especially if they are taller than you, which we have been discussing for the last several chapters.

There is a very useful concept that can help you survive the entry into their guarded space, however, called slipping. Slipping is somewhat as the name implies: a way of slipping off the force/blow aimed in your direction.

When someone strikes at you, you can move out of the way but then you will not be in position to be able to cross the gap very easily as they retract. Yes, I know we said earlier that that was the time to attempt the crossing but there is more to it than that. The truth of the matter is that the greater the distance you have to cross, the less your chances of making it are (unfortunately the chances are logarithmically inversely proportional to the distance). So if you back up too far trying to avoid the blow, you will also have too far to cross.

The solution to this is to lean your body backward just enough to miss the blow coming at you.

NOTE: You should attempt to have it miss you by inches not feet. With a little practice you will find that you can quickly move the upper part of your body 12 to 18 inches without seriously affecting your balance. Since your feet really haven't changed position, functionally you are as close to your opponent as you were before their attempt to impale you.

NOW, as they recover, you have a small distance to cross. As a matter of fact, many people who get good at this use the slipping technique to work their front leg into range while fooling their opponent that they are still not quite in range. Suddenly the front leg shoots up and reality occurs.

The best way to practice this exercise is with a partner who throws kicks at you. Use kicks because that is the first danger you are going to encounter as you try to cross the gap. You shouldn't respond except with the front foot. What you are trying to learn is just how far you can lean back without losing or affecting your balance, how quickly you can move. It should be very fast, even faster than taking a step. If this is not true then you are trying to bend too far!

# INSIDE SLIPPING

There is a version of slipping that starts out exactly like that described above. Then, when it gets you in close, keeps you at such a range that your opponent is not able to bring their legs up.

Mostly this is accomplished by double-hand grabs against the front of your opponent, pulling them in close and then attacking them from this close position with your knees, with an occasional elbow thrown in. This technique differs dramatically from mouse as it relies on your hand power to keep you close to your opponent so that they cannot generate any significant force in their blows (hands or feet).

Remember **you are not trying to pull them to you, but you to them**, so that despite their bigger size and strength, they can't keep you out. Personally I have seen this technique (and variations of it) work quite well.

The problem is if you come up against someone well versed in pressure points, they won't need but ounces of force to drop you. Therefore your attacks must be so ferocious and all encompassing that they have no chance but to try and defend themselves, and not counter attack.



Everything is not exactly as it seems.

## FOOT GRABS

Sooner or later at some point in your sparring career you are going to get your foot caught by your opponent. Everybody has had it happen to them. And as the saying goes, "it will all happen again".

The real problem is not that your foot is caught but that most people have this sense of total lack of ability to do anything at that point in time.

As soon as their foot gets caught, they seem to lose every concept of what they have been taught and go into an instant panic. This may be due to the fact that many people have not had proper instruction in falling. Maybe it is just a lack of understanding of what to do when someone catches your foot. Personally I think the problem is a little of both.

Unfortunately I cannot teach you to fall correctly in this book. Nor, for that matter, do I believe that any book can teach you that subject. If you do not know how to fall and tumble well, then I truly believe it is worth your time and money to seek out someone qualified to teach you this. And PRACTICE until you get it down instinctively. Some day your life may depend on doing it without time to think it out. It has happened to me and I am only alive because of training to the point it became a reflex

Probably the person who teaches you martial arts knows. Maybe they have taught you a little. Get them to teach you enough that you are comfortable with the concept of falling against a hard surface if you have to. (NO one said you have to be masochistic and like falling on hard surfaces, only that you need to be able to do it without getting more than minor bruises.)

As far as what to do if someone catches your foot, well the first thing to do is not to panic. The second thing to do is loosen up, and attack.

Given adequate time and knowledge, your opponent can turn a foot grab into a disadvantage for you. However, you can turn their grab into an advantage for you if you act quickly.

The truth of the matter is that in many cases I have created openings against a well-guarded opponent by deliberately making my kick slow enough to be caught.

Think about it a second before you respond. The foot is heavy, especially with a portion of your weight behind it. Therefore not only will they have to tie up a hand to hang on to the foot you have just given them, but they will also have to lock their stance for a moment.

At the moment that they lock their stance, ALL they have left is the single other hand to defend themselves with. I, on the other hand, have two hands and one foot. (One foot, you ask? HOW do I stand up if they are torque on my foot?) Well the answer is simple. At the time I give them my foot (or it gets caught if I really had not planned it that way) I have two choices.

1) I can twist into position pulling my leg slightly to increase the locking of their stance and then quickly execute a back kick. Since they are all locked up and the fact that most people catch your foot when it is right in front of their abdomen (specifically their solar plexus), I have been just given a free shot at the lights out button.

2) The other option I can use is to launch myself upward and towards my opponent, (as if I was) using their hold as a step and tell them how much they really mean to me with the other foot and both hands as I come downward into range of the hands. Unfortunately, my sparring partners never seem to want grab my foot, having seen that trick in action once too often.

That does bring up a point. In the next chapter we will describe a collection of techniques, some of which can be called "dirty" depending on what you consider fair. Personally that depends on whether you are sparring or fighting.

Sparring is a practice session and ideally NO ONE SHOULD EVER GET HURT. Fighting, on the other hand, is something that should NEVER occur unless you consider yourself (or your family) in danger.

Then it is a state of all out war and you do WHATEVER IS NECESSARY.

Back to the subject at hand.

Now, that I have discussed how to turn getting your foot grabbed into an advantage, let's work on how to turn grabbing your opponent's foot into an advantage. Hopefully they haven't read the previous sections of this chapter.

Actually, in theory, it is not hard to catch a foot. Reality, being much different than paper, it does seem to make things a little bit more difficult, however. Still, the principles do improve your odds dramatically.

The easiest objects for your brain to detect and track are objects that approach you in a consistent arcing motion. Since hand to eye coordination is directly related to tracking ability, the easier you can track an object, the easier it is for your hands to intercept and capture it.

Because of the way the brain and eye function, you can actually pick up and respond to motion paths better if you do not directly stare at an oncoming object. While a trained person can learn to be able to stare at an oncoming object, most people will have a tendency to freeze and not be able to make the small micro adjustments necessary at the last quarter seconds.

Therefore, I recommend that once again you try to look at everything and not focus on specific things.

Moving off to one side (best to step out at a 45 degree angle toward your opponent) as the person kicks will also increase the arc, which your eye sees. This is both because the foot will be passing by you in a natural arc and because the person will have a tendency to try and adjust the kick, already in motion, back towards its intended target.

Once you get your practice on tracking down, then what you have to do is practice capturing oncoming objects. Catching a softball with BOTH HANDS (not just one, and no glove) thrown (softly) at your mid section is a good practice. Also you should get a padded stick and have someone swing it at your mid section (again softly at first) and slowly increase speed and intensity as your proficiency increases.

Again use two hands. Try to catch the stick and the ball as they come towards your abdomen. Don't wait for them to bound against your abdomen and then trap them. That is a very poor grab. You get nailed and only as an after effect your opponent gets trapped. What if they knock you down with the kick? NO! Stop the kick/stick/ball on the way in. Use your hands to buffer or gradually absorb the force.

Once you get all that down then practice on catching someone's foot. Have your partner throw the same kick at you over and over until you can catch it every time. Then work with a new kick. Finally work on trying to catch a varied collection of kicks.

Realize that at best, you are probably only going to be able to catch 40 to 70 percent of the kicks thrown at you. If you are trying too hard to catch more than this, you are leaving yourself open to get yourself nailed by kicks you can't possibly catch. One advantage of this practice is that even if you decide not to capture a kick coming at you, the ability to track it also relates to better deflection techniques (like blocking but better, also called redirection) and a much easier time of finishing your opponent off so that they don't get another shot at you.

There are reasons for limits. Seldom are the real reasons told.

## **SWEEPS**

Personally I don't think much of sweeps (even worse for so-called levers). They take too far long compared with what you can do in the same time. If you must work on these techniques then I recommend you follow these basic rules.

When sweeping:

- 1) Try to sweep the back leg. More and more martial artists are adopting the cat stance as their preferred sparring position. Trying to sweep the front leg of someone in a cat stance will not work. There is not enough weight on the front leg to disrupt the balance. All it will do is get you kicked for your efforts.
- 2) Really exaggerate the sweeping movement. Retract your leg really hard and high. By bringing the leg up high enough you can disrupt the balance even if there wasn't significant weight there to begin with.
- 3) Try to do the sweep after you have accomplished a partial or complete grab on the person. When you apply pressure to a pressure point in a grab you can lock up their ability to shift their weight, even if it is but for a split second. That is all you need to start them heading in a downward position.

## **Neck Attacks**

In the last chapter we talked about grabs in general. How to avoid and how to practice so that you can do this. In this chapter we are going to talk about very specific type of grabbing attacks. Neck attacks. The reason I singled out this subject to spend an entire chapter is that the neck is definitely the most important area of the body to try to grab or capture.

Now when we first think of grabbing a person by the neck, most people either think of a throat grab (from the front or behind) or a collar grab. In this chapter I do not mean either. The fact is that even a moderately well trained person can protect against an attack on their throat.

The problem with throat attacks is that such requires you to expend enough resources in a small area that you are vulnerable in other areas. The real purpose of neck attacks is control of your opponent's balance. Therefore let us clarify what neck attacks mean. I am referring to the muscles and nerves of the neck rather than the throat.

The fact is that the neck is the second most powerful part of the body to effect in terms of controlling balance. Only moving the head has more profound effects on a person's balance.

Now I am not going to get into a long discussion of balance here except to say that if you control a person's balance, you control them. (We will get into this subject in-depth in a later chapter.) But the implications for sparring are obvious. So important is this area of the body that you need to be able to change your sparring objectives if the opportunity presents itself so that you can control your opponent's neck and thus the entire fight.

Now, as we already implied controlling the neck and the person is not by trying to shut off the trachea. Instead, control of the neck is by way of pressure points in the neck. It really doesn't matter what pressure points you attack.

Unfortunately, simple strikes (including punches, knife hands, and even kicks, etc.) will not have the same effect as striking a pressure point does. Fortunately, there are so many different pressure points in the neck that you really don't need a major course on pressure points to find them. The included picture shows a few of the points that can be attacked.

Now it is not as easy to attack the neck, as it seems on paper. The body instinctively protects this area. You don't need martial arts training to put your hand up when someone reaches for your neck or throat. This effective and natural instinct is why more people do not understand or use neck attacks in their fighting.

The other complicating factor in attacking the neck is that if you are going to spend the energy to attack the neck, a guarded part of the body, you should be able to benefit from this attack. The trick is that to control the neck for any length of time, you need to attack the neck from the back.

If you only control the neck for a short period of time then you are not going to be able to accomplish anything worth spending the energy on or worth taking the risk.

The reason for this is because while attacks from the front can easily strike very significant points, the person can also move away from these points easily. This not only removes the effect you are trying to accomplish but also sets you up for a very dangerous counterattack. On the other hand, if you attack the neck from the back, you can apply pressure in a controlling method that they cannot easily counter. People do not move backwards well, compared to moving forward, and their balance when you are forcing them backwards is usually less than what they would desire. In fact, you may affect the person's balance and pain responses to the point where they may not even be able to fight back at all.

Therefore in this chapter what I am advising is that you use the techniques discussed earlier in this book to close in on your opponent and then get behind them.

So, if we are trying to use these points to affect our opponent's balance, how do we do that? The secret of using neck points to cause changes in balance is twofold:

- 1) Stimulate points on the opposite side of the centerline,
- and

2) Push or pull on those points backwards towards the centerline. Please note that by stimulate, I do not mean you have to hit. The fact is, simple pressure from a well-placed fingertip can be more effective than a hit.

This means that if you are going to use your right hand to stimulate a muscle or nerve point, that point should be (for maximum effect) on your opponent's right side of the neck. If you practice this technique, you will see that you have two methods to get to your opponent's right side — from the front or the back.

While both work well if done correctly, I personally like stimulating the points by coming from behind as this technique causes increased effects. Therefore, I would wrap my attacking forearm around the back of my opponent's neck and then attack those points in the anterior (front) part of the neck with my fingertips.

The second point is to push or pull this point towards the centerline. This is crucial! The fact is, you can definitely effect your opponent's balance by pushing up or down on these points, but the truth of the matter is you usually will not effect your opponent's balance beyond the point where they can recover quickly. The goal of a neck attack is to take control of your opponent's balance (at least it should be your goal. There are by far more destructive techniques if you are just trying to hurt your opponent).

The best way to unsettle your opponent's balance is to move their weight across their centerline. Add to that movement a tendency for them to twist as they move backwards caused by the natural reflex of trying to move away from painful stimulus, and you quickly create a loss of balance.

Probably the site I like to attack the best when using a posterior approach is the anterior aspect of the sternocleidomastoid muscle. This muscle is relatively large and runs the entire length of the side of the neck, so it is easy to find and regardless of where on the side of the neck you place your hand, you will not be far from an attack point.

Therefore, based on the above example, I would wrap my right forearm around the back of my opponent's neck and grab the anterior aspect of the sternocleidomastoid muscle. Since the majority of the sternocleidomastoid muscle lies in the front part of the neck, it is easy to pull backwards angling towards the center of the neck mass.

This will cause the person to move major amounts of body weight across their centerline and also turn backwards, exactly the situation we wished to create. The net effect will be to cause loss of balance control with even the slightest amount of help. At this point you can make them fall or use them as a shield. (This is a very important concept that we will explore further when we discuss sparring against multiple attackers in the last chapter.)

**SOME GREAT TARGET  
AREAS ON THE NECK**



**Sternocleidomastoid  
muscle**

## Punching

What I am going to say in this very short segment is that you are probably punching wrong! Despite adequate training in many areas, one area that martial artists are severely lacking in is how to punch.

What I mean is that very few martial artists have ever been shown how to hold their hands so that they will inflict damage on their opponent instead of themselves when they punch. Martial artists have never been shown what types of punches they should use and when, and lastly they don't know how to use their legs when they are punching.

Now that I have raised these issues, I am going to cop out a little and tell you that if you don't know for certain about how to hold your hand, how to do a 3/4 or a 1/4 twist punch and when, then you should be reading a book I wrote earlier called SECRETS OF POWER: Technology Versus Magic.

For those people who have read the book, I won't waste your time or mine repeating previous material. For the answer to the third issue, we will get to that in a later chapter. The second part, what types of punches to use and when to use them we will cover here.

First off, let me reaffirm what I have said earlier. Unless you are doing a spinning technique, your backhand should stay in place, resting just in front of the upper quadrant of your chest facing your opponent. This leaves only your front hand for punching.

This also eliminates the boxer style of brawling! Which is exactly what you want to avoid. Boxers may have great ego's, but despite what they may think, they are in fact easy prey for anyone (martial artist or street trained person) who looks for openings and is willing to strike somewhere besides just the face and chest.

Also in boxing they wear padded gloves to prevent pressure point types of strikes. In the ring, this would ruin the game. No one would pay money to watch a match which lasted only seconds or minutes at best. On the street you do not have the boxers disadvantages, so why should you play by the boxer's rules.

The only things you should take from boxing are the quick jab punch done with the front hand and the stay on the toes and move philosophy. We will discuss the stay on the toes and move philosophy in a minute. We will discuss jabs first. Now, I don't care if you just throw short jabs or a combination of jabs and uppercuts with your front hand.



As long as you don't try to throw them with an arcing maneuver, you are not going to get into too much trouble (assuming that you know how to punch correctly).

Contrary to popular opinion, punching is not really going to be the major factor in winning or losing to your opponent compared with things like balance control, kicks and pressure points. Instead, you should use your punches to set up your opponent so that they respond to your punches and then use that response as an opening for a more serious attack.

For example, I like to sensitize my opponents by throwing a few jabs just to sting them a bit. Then I throw a moderately fast punch (fast enough so they think it is real but not so fast they can't block it), deliberately letting my opponent block it just ahead of themselves, so that they are reaching just a little and putting their weight on their front leg. Then I attack their knee. (No one fights with a ripped out knee.)

Another friend of mine likes to throw a series of jabs then deliberately does an arced punch for the ear, (facing his opponent's back) realizing it will be blocked. As soon as the punch is blocked, he brings up a round house from the other side aimed at their face. (Very effective! But not as efficient, in my personal opinion.

To each, their own.) As far as defense goes, I never put so much force into my punches that they will affect my balance if they are deflected or are grabbed. Secondly, the back hand stays put as we said earlier. Unless you are inside an elbow's distance, then the only appropriate place for your backhand is remaining in front of your chest. I can guarantee that this is the biggest mistake that the average boxer makes. They think that, their real power lies, in their backhand. Actually for them, that is true. For the rest of us that is wrong and a serious mistake.

Unfortunately, for them, that power can never be used if you are even moderately good because to throw that backhand, they have to give you a wide-open shot at their chest, abdomen, or face. It is impossible to cover this entire area with one hand no matter how good you are.

Since they are coming off their backhand, we have already said that you can beat their punch by coming off your front hand. The trick is this: all you have to do is hit them someplace where it hurts as they are coming in. Their body will instinctively change the direction of their travel and take all the force out their blow. It will not, however, take the momentum away which is to your advantage because generally they will be moving at a high rate of speed in a direction where you are not.

When you do get within an elbow range, you can now punch with your backhand. (At this range anything goes!) However, do not throw technique to the wind. Instead, keep your side towards your opponent and deliver your backhand strike without the dangerous twist that opens up your chest area. Yes, I know it seems clumsy at first. Yes,

I know that you don't have much reach. However, you will be extremely powerful at the close range while still maintaining your defensive posture, if you are in close enough. (You are closer than the length of your own elbow, to your opponent before you use your back hand, aren't you?)

I promised to talk about being on your toes. Well, just a little bit. The mobility of being on your toes is something that is hard to do for most people without completely blowing their stances. That is why I waited until now to bring up the subject. The fact is that you still should stay in a back stance (for the time being) and you still must keep less than 20% of your weight on the front foot. However, you can place your weight on the back foot, on the front part of the foot so that you will be able to move faster. If you just set yourself down you will be setting down like someone stuck in concrete.

The truth of the matter is this sort of position is only good for someone who out powers their (untrained!) opponent and doesn't mind taking a series of kicks and blows from a more mobile opponent.

The fact is, you have to learn to balance yourself as far forward on your toes as you can, without moving so far that you begin to lose your balance. Remember you cannot compensate by increasing the weight on the front foot or you will be setting yourself up for a broken knee or a poison points strike.

A whole universe of knowledge is yours for the asking, but first you must learn to ask the correct questions

Master Van Kiemp

## BEND IT

It never ceases to amaze me how much power people throw away. I was watching the other day as two of my students were practicing a version of push hands in class. Sure enough, within less than a minute the less experienced student, who happened to be bigger, reached out and tried to overpower the younger and smaller student.

Instead of slipping off the force as I assumed, the smaller student apparently had had enough of being pushed around by the larger student and assumed a fixed pushing stance and pushed back. To both their surprises the large student wound up on the floor, sitting on his butt. The look of surprise was worth the effort of instructing one more time the essentials of how to correctly apply force.

The mistake that the larger student made, and one which most people make, is that they incorrectly assume that the best way to get leverage on someone is to tower over them. While that technique may be of psychological advantage, I can assure you that it also places the larger towering person at a definite physical disadvantage.

Let me describe an exercise and you will be able to understand better what I am talking about. Face off with a friend in a face-to-face position. Now reach out with both hands and push against their chest. Notice how much force it takes to push your friend backwards, especially when they resist. Notice how most people lock their knees and lean forward to use their weight as part of their driving force. Wouldn't it be great to be able to multiply that force? Read on, MacBeth!

Now I want you to do the same push, but this time as you push forward I want you to bend your knees (about 2 to 4 inches) before you actually do any pushing. Now lean forward and push. You will notice that you are actually pushing upwards at an angle. You will also notice (if you do this correctly) that your friend has now moved backwards a considerable distance compared with your previous attempt.

The reason for this is that when you bend your knees and lean forward, you are bringing your legs into play and the force from your legs gives you more power. Now this doesn't seem to be an earth shattering revelation. Everyone knows that their legs are more powerful than their arms, but unfortunately very few people in martial arts seem to apply that knowledge. In fact, I want you to try something else at this point. I want you to just place your hands against your opponent's chest, this time and not push at all with your arms. Just press forward with your legs. Once again notice how easily that your friend moves backwards.

Another reason for your improved success is that the most efficient angle for your arms to push is at an upward 45-degree angle. When you lean your body forward, you are placing your arms in just that angle against your opponent's chest.

So what, you say? You are not really interested in pushing or wrestling contests? Well there is more to it than that or I wouldn't have wasted either of our time. There is a less-known Chinese martial art that uses this exact principle in their punches. In fact, some versions of this style don't even bother to use any force in their hands at all. They merely close their fists and use their leg power to propel themselves into their opponent. While this method of punching has the definite disadvantage of severely limiting striking range, it more than makes up for it when it comes to close range fighting and delivering power.

The other reason why they use their legs to deliver the punch is that when their hands are not concentrating on delivering punching force they can concentrate on delivering after strike effects. (See the chapter on after-strikes in this book.)

Another concept for consideration is that when you keep your hands down, placing your elbow against your side and punch by pushing off from your legs you are not creating an opening for your opponent to exploit as you reach out for a punch.

Now, I am not implying that there are not correct times to reach out and touch someone. I am implying that you should learn both kinds of punching techniques as that way you will have another powerful close range weapon when the time comes to take the fight to your opponent. Also, should you ever have the desire to propel someone backwards with your punch, the principles are the same and you will already be trained.

On the street there are no prizes for second best.

## **DIRTY ? TRICKS**

### **Kicking the Arm.**

We already mentioned poison points. You can also kick the arm itself in the flat center of it. A well-placed blow, especially when the arm is back against the rib cage may shatter the arm bone. At minimum it will definitely unnerve your opponent and tell him you are there. If the person is silly enough to assume a boxing stance with their fists in front of their face, then I routinely kick those fists right into their own face. Not only does it cause damage physically (to the face; the arm can move so it doesn't break), it humiliates them severely and half the battle is already won. This is a great trick to play on a boxer who isn't smart enough to leave a martial artist alone!

### **HALF CIRCLE KICKS**

The half circle kick is best described as a vertical roundhouse kick off the front leg. What you do is start out with a front kick aimed straight at the person moving in an upward direction of at least 45 degrees.

Then once you are reasonably close to your opponent, whip the foot back outward slightly, then upwards and then back in to its real target in a half circle. Because your opponent will still be trying to block your original perceived target they will be blocking low and miss your kick entirely. This is a great kick for delivering kicks to the face because an inexperienced opponent will tend to lean into their blocks, leaving an open shot at their face.

### **FOOT STOMPS**

Foot attacks are, for some reason, seldom thought of in most martial arts. Well, let me rephrase that. Every instructor of "self defense techniques" tells their non-martial arts students about foot stomps and the likes but then they seldom practice such in their own dojo sparring. Why? Mostly, because they are perceived as something which is so easy that they don't have to be practiced and that they are useful but not as important as other techniques.

Let me state outright that both concepts are WRONG! Only against an armature are foot stomps going to be that easy to do. Secondly, if done right they are one of the most effective techniques you can do.

Don't believe me? Well let me elaborate with a few points. Are you aware that if you step hard on some of the small muscles of the foot and then twist your foot in the correct direction so as to put even more pressure on these small muscles, you will cause your opponent to pass out? (i.e. Out cold before they even hit the ground.) That's a knock out from pain overload and that secret is worth the entire price of this book, by the way.

Secondly, you have to practice doing these stomps not only so that you can hit the right areas but also so that you can put enough pressure to stay on the points long enough to accomplish the twist without your opponent yanking their foot away from under you either nullifying your attack and/or upsetting your balance.

## **FAKES**

A fake is an excellent way to deliver a blow to your opponent. Unfortunately most people try fakes that actually increase their risk of getting themselves nailed -hard! The problem is that every time you do any technique you leave yourself open. To make things worse, most beginning students attempt fakes which are obvious fakes. This only tells their opponent that now is the time to strike.

The secret to doing a successful fake is to throw a technique that even you don't know whether it is a real technique or a fake until the very last split second. That way if you opponent ignores the technique thinking it is a fake you go ahead and nail them with it. If they try to block your technique then they have set themselves up to be open for the fake.

Another useful secret for accomplishing a fake is to attack with a technique at 90% of your speed. This is so that they will be able to see the technique and attempt to block it. (If you move so fast they can react, then they can't open up).

The third technique is to do a technique which is close to being able to strike a target, with the difference that you want them to block it. Then, when they are busy blocking that technique, you launch your real technique. When doing this technique you must realize that you can't put any effort into trying to resist what is happening to your first hand or foot. If you do, you will be spending so much energy that you will not be able to complete the supposed real blow. Therefore strike and abandon that extremity but launch an all out attack with the other extremities. (Personally, I like a combination of the last two methods.)

## **IN THE EFFICIENCY DEPARTMENT**

### **Small circle spin side kicks**

One of the things that most people don't realize is that you have to be able to track something before you can intercept it. You may fully realize that a kick is coming in your direction and you are going to get hit, but unless your brain can track the angle of approach, there is little or nothing that your brain will be able to do about it until it is too late.

Now I am not going to get long winded here. I am simply going to say that your brain cannot track the angle of approach very well of something coming straight at you. If you give it enough time, your brain can figure out the angle, but seldom do you have even close to enough time in a fight. Therefore the best thing you can do is to learn to do your kicks, especially your spin heel kicks so that the angle of approach is directly at your opponent. To do this you have to practice not throwing your spin heel kick until the last second.

Note: this works for all kicks but because your brain can also see the motion of you pulling your leg up to kick, this motion becomes part of the equation and the tracking solution is easier. With the spin heel, the turning motion of the body distracts the brain so that the "get ready" part of the kick is hidden, decreasing the information available to your opponent.

Couple this with a straight on kick and you will most likely deliver the kick unblocked. This is not really a dirty trick, but it is using a natural brain weakness against your opponent, which is the path to success.

Math is like love; it starts with a simple idea but quickly gets complicated.

## **CROSS BODY ATTACKS**

Sooner or later in sparring you are going to be grabbed by your opponent. We have already stated that and done some explanations of what to do about it. Here are several more points, which you should consider.

The first point is that when grabbed you should grab the hand of your attacker and then use your body as the lever to apply force. This actually is similar to many Hapkido techniques (and other styles). The trick here is that the wrist and the elbow have very little natural motion in the lateral (sideways) planes. Therefore, by grabbing your opponent, you lock up these joints so that they can- not move away. Then by simply twisting your body, you can apply pressure at these joints (a first level pressure point attack) that can easily bring them to their knees.

The next point is the logical extension of the first one. That is grabbing with the other hand after you have secured the grabbing hand. The advantage of this is that your second hand naturally pulls your opponent downward and applies force across their body at a 45-degree angle. If you remember our earlier discussions, we stated that that is the most inefficient angle for the body to move. Therefore that is exactly what we want and what the second hand does.

The second hand should grab your opponent at the elbow of the hand which attacked you. Preferably at the pressure points. Now depending on whether you place your hand on top of the elbow or on the bottom will determine how your opponent moves. Pulling down from the top (on pressure points) will cause them to move directly downward on the 45-degree angle. Pulling inward from the bottom of the elbow (on pressure points) will cause them to try to invert, rising up on their toes to decrease the pain they are feeling. Personally, I prefer the bottom attack approach because the pressure points are slightly easier to find, making the move faster and the person is more vulnerable when they are up on their toes. This means that I can cause them to move and be used as a shield easier than if they are down on their knees.

## **BALANCE AS A WEAPON**

Most people instinctively know that balance is a weapon. It is deplorable that for some reason most people have not developed the concept of using balance control as part of their weapons arsenal. While almost every fighter knows that winding up on the ground is a situation to be avoided if possible; it is the actual loss of balance and the time involved in the fall which is the most vulnerable period of time and not being on the ground itself. This can be shown by the fact that some very competent martial arts styles concentrate on getting themselves on the ground.



The truth is very few people have actually examined the actual mechanisms of balance so as to use the loss of balance as a weapon. I used the word "people" in the sentence above, rather than martial arts styles, because when you look at the forms of some styles there are many different moves and forms/katas which do contain elements of techniques which can be interpreted as attacks against an opponent's balance. Unfortunately, the meanings of this concept have not been recognized by most styles and the real potential of these moves is seldom if ever used.

The most probable reason for this is that most people don't realize just how powerful a weapon balance is. There is a Quan Li K'an statement that claims that if you control the balance you control yourself and your opponent. This chapter will explore this concept and how we can use the concept of balance in martial arts. To understand balance fully and it's uses, we must delve into medicine slightly. I will try to keep it light and not too boring.

The body has a mechanism for maintaining its balance called the "righting reflex." The obvious function of this reflex is to keep you from falling. The righting reflex is responsible for automatic shifts in balance, sudden extension and locking of legs and other associated involuntary movements designed to prevent falls and minimize the damage if you should fall. This reflex is very important to martial artists because it is a low level reflex. This means that it is one which the body puts most of it's energy and concentration on maintaining. In fact, only the automatic reflexes like breathing, cardiovascular reflexes and sharp pain withdrawal can override this reflex. Therefore, when you stimulate the righting reflex on the body of a conscious person, the body will turn it's total concentration towards preventing or minimizing the damage of what it perceives as an upcoming fall.

Two things are of extreme importance in that last paragraph. The first is that I said "a conscious person." - Unconscious people will do nothing to protect themselves on the way down, which in some cases increases damage and other cases will actually decrease the damage.

The second thing is that I said "perceived fall." It is not an actual total loss of balance which stimulates the righting reflex but a sudden change in a person's balance. You do not have to cause your opponent to fall to stimulate their righting reflex; you only have to cause a sudden shift of their balance to stimulate the reflex.

A very important thing about this action is that it is a reflex. Reflexes are involuntary actions that occur suddenly and without any thinking-brain input. Therefore, it cannot be blocked. If you remember, or read my book on pressure point reflexes, you know that there is no way a reflex can be blocked because reflexes do not depend on pain sensitivity. Therefore, there are no non-responders. to REFLEX pressure points

The importance to martial arts is that when the body puts this much concentration on any one single effort, there is little left for anything else. In order to fix the perceived loss of balance, the righting reflex will divert all the body's energy towards re-establishing control of balance, taking that energy from any physical activity which is being accomplished. Therefore, if you can even momentarily disrupt the balance of a person as they are punching or kicking at you, they will never be able to complete that punch or kick with any force.

The object in controlling someone else's actions via the righting reflex, is not to make them fall. If they fell, they would be on the ground and you would have to attempt to regain control all over again. The real purpose in controlling someone's balance is to have them perched, so to speak, in such a precarious position that you can make the balance centers of their brain think they are going to fall.

Since it is impossible for anyone to overcome the body's own righting reflexes, a person will lose all strength not directed towards keeping the body off the ground, and give you an unopposed opening to do just about anything you wish until they have regained control of their balance.

Please be warned that there is a way to counteract pulling a person off balance. There always is a counter. That counter is to lower the center of gravity towards the ground. The best way to do this is to try to sit down, forcing the buttocks downward. This is the main reason why many styles develop stances where the balance is so well centered and in many cases low to the ground. That way when a punch or kick is blocked, the person does not lose control of themselves and gives the fight to their opponent.

Back to the question of how to control a person's balance? Actually, the task is relatively simple if you follow a few general rules. First off, in order to control a person's balance you must determine what their balance state is. To know that, you need to determine where their weight is applied. Is the weight on one leg or evenly applied on both legs? Many styles place too much weight on the front foot, and thus a knife-edge kick to the side of the weight-bearing knee will cause a tendon stretch reflex causing their leg to relax and resulting in a fall.

A person is susceptible to such an attack if they have more than 20% of their weight on a leg. Less than that amount of weight and there will not be sufficient tension on the main tendons so that even when struck the tendons cannot be stretched. You should realize, however, that if a person has their weight evenly distributed between both legs, even though there will be a reflex relaxation of the leg with such an attack, they will usually be able to adjust their weight on to the other leg fast enough to prevent a fall. As we just said, however, this is not the case if they have the majority of their weight on the leg you attack.

Another consideration is whether your opponent's weight is on their toes or their heels. Placing the weight on the heels is probably the worst thing you can do, yet this is what many styles teach because it makes for a more secure (i.e., more fixed) stance. These styles believe that the better your base, the more power you can develop. While that may be true, the price of losing a leg, the fight, or your life before you ever get to throw such a powerful blow make it not worth the price. In this position it is dramatically easier to stimulate the tendons of the knee and leg and cause the knee to give out.

Placing the weight evenly between the toes and heels makes it slightly harder to stimulate the leg and knee tendons, but makes shifting of the weight to the other leg much faster and easier. Therefore, the righting reflex has a diminished effect.

Placing most of the weight on the toes makes the knee and leg tendons hardest to stretch.

Note: If you do stimulate the righting reflex, the response is just as dramatic as with the weight on the heels. However, when standing on your toes you have the least stable base and thus are in the easiest position for a simple pushover.

Therefore, no matter what stance or weight distribution you pick, there will be some disadvantages. However, I believe the best advantages and least disadvantages are with the weight evenly between both feet mostly spread out over the entire foot but just slightly (and I do mean slightly) toward the toes.

By now, if you are following this discussion, the next question you should be asking your self is: How can I stimulate the righting reflex and destroy someone's balance? Well, the answer is both simple to say and yet hard to accomplish. The most obvious answers are that you must either pull them off balance or cause a reflex action where they throw themselves off balance.

Initially the concept of pulling someone off balance is the easiest to understand. Unfortunately, it is also the hardest to accomplish. This is, of course, because your opponent's righting reflex is doing it's very best to keep you from accomplishing this objective.

If you are going to accomplish this maneuver, here are some helpful points:

- 1) It is far easier to pull someone off balance with a forward movement than with a backwards one. Unfortunately, it is also easier for them to recover their balance when pulled forward.
- 2) Pulling someone off balance **backwards**, is best done by attacking the pressure points, of the neck. It is best to pull these pressure points backwards, in the direction across the centerline of your opponent.
- 3) Causing your opponent to first move one direction then suddenly change and pull in the opposite direction is the best technique for pulling them off balance. Multiple motion techniques like that cause any resisting force which their body was producing to accelerate their body motion when you change directions.

Reflex actions, which cause a painful stimulus, can cause a person to move off balance, and thus stimulate a second reflex, the righting reflex, are the easiest to accomplish. Because the pain withdrawal reflex does not consider the consequences of it's actions, it is easy to stimulate a pressure point and cause your opponent to move in a way that they lose or believe they are going to lose their balance. Some helpful considerations to do this are:

- 1) If you are attacking the upper extremities, drive your Opponent's extremity inward, across the center line.
- 2) If you are attacking the lower extremities, drive your opponent's extremity outward, away from the centerline. Of the two techniques this one takes the least force.

In closing I just want to reiterate one major point. The biggest mistake most people make when they think about balance control is that they believe the object is to make their opponent fall.

It is not! The object is to stimulate the righting reflex so that their body thinks they are going to fall. The perfect situation is if you can gain control of their balance, usually best done by holding pressure point in the neck, from the back, and then keeping them perched on the edge of falling. That way, if they even try to attempt to do something, you can move them, stimulate the righting reflex and cause them to abort whatever action they had attempted. They will be totally helpless unless they can free themselves from your grasp. The fact is, you can use muscle strength to overcome your opponent or you can use the basic instincts of their mind to force your opponent's body to work against them and this is an example of the real power of the mind.

## Walking?

Most people don't realize it, but they walk like a baby elephant. As a matter of fact, make that a three-legged baby elephant with a case of gout. Just by listening to any person walking down a hall you will realize that you, and everyone else, can hear them coming from a long way off.

Most people blame the noise they make on the shoes they wear, but the reality is that even barefooted, they still walk as if they had lead bars in their pockets.

Now, as I said, this is a very common situation. I remember Master Van Kiemp chewing me out time and again, as I was sparring, to walk correctly. Fifteen years later, I think I may have some small amount of understanding and maybe a little proficiency about what he was telling me.

The trouble is that we learn to walk as children by trial and error. With enough trials (and falls) we eventually get the ability to move around without falling, and then we move on to attempting to learn something new. Therein lies the problem; we never get taught how to refine our walking skills.

For those of you who don't believe this, then think about all the time you spend learning to fight using different stances. If walking and balance were so easy, why bother wasting time learning all these stances?

The real problem is that fighting stances were developed to bring about good balance for a limited number of situations. No single stance will allow you to protect yourself from all sides. For example, the front stance provides rotten coverage for the back. To overcome this default, in any stance you must be able to move from one to the other quickly and fluidly. Many people spend inordinate amounts of time learning numerous different stances and how to get from one to another. Ask yourself one question: How about attacking someone, as you are moving? Then what stance are you going to be in?

My biggest problem with learning stances is that if you confine yourself to just specific stances you will be limiting your ability to flow naturally. This may not matter if you can force the fight into your way of sparring, but try getting more than one attacker fall into that trap.

As I tell my higher belts, stances are guidelines. Stances are only suggested positions where your power and balance are temporarily in good alignment; but they are only suggestions.

In order to be able to carry the fight to your opponent, you must be able to flow like water, not like an elephant stuck in the mud.

The most prominent mistake people make is that they lock their knees when they walk. They stomp, so to speak. I heard one gait specialist describe the average walk as putting your foot in front of you

and letting your weight fall forward as you push off with the toes of your other foot. This is actually a pretty good description of what most people do. This also explains why Westerners have that common up and down bobbing motion as they walk. Conversely, the proper way to walk is with your knees bent slightly. This not only improves your balance it also has the added benefit of putting the strain of the shock generated by each step in your feet, legs, and thighs where it belongs, rather in your lower back where most people feel it.

Now don't go overboard. You only have to keep your knees loose. The trick is to keep them from moving into the locked position when you step. The only time your knees should lock is when you require them to push off the ground for a hand strike or a kick. Try something for a minute. Stand up and lock your knees. Notice how you are standing. Now just move your knees forward until they are not locked anymore.

Notice how your hips rotate when you bring your knees forward. Your buttocks are actually lowered a little when you unlock your knees. If you have done any balance training, then you know that the way to keep your balance is to lower your buttocks.

Therefore, just by unlocking your knees you have improved your balance. The second mistake most people make is that they bounce when they walk. Look at people as they pass you by. Notice how with each step their heads first raise up and then sink back down. Up, down, up down, their balance is always being adjusted. It's no wonder the average person is easy to knock off their feet. They never really have control of their balance.

What you should do is glide along. No, you don't have to bend your knees so far forward that you look silly. Just keep from raising yourself to the top of that peak as you step forward and you will have greatly improved your overall balance. The third mistake most people make is in weight balance.

Actually, men are much more prone to this mistake than are women. The mistake is the placement of the majority of the body's weight on the heels of the foot. While it is true that with the weight placed mostly on the heel (compared to the toes) you are in a relatively stable position, it is also harder to recover your balance once it is lost.

Now, before the women start crowing, they generally make the opposite mistake, they put the majority of their weight on the front of the foot. Maybe this is because of the time they spend in high heels, but I am not certain. Unfortunately, neither sex usually have a very good balance recovery because of these mistakes.

When you take a step you should reach out with the middle part of the foot, not the front and not the heel, but the area just behind the metatarsal heads. The proper step is when you touch down softly and roll forward until the weight is evenly distributed

between the front and back parts of the foot.

This motion, while it may not seem natural at first, has several advantages. One advantage, of course, is that you will not be slamming your foot down with a bang, thus less shock wave for your body to absorb. The second is in sensitivity. With this type of stepping action, you will know what you are stepping on before you actually put all your weight on the ground.

One exercise I try to tell my students is that you should walk as if you are walking on thin ice. If you bang your feet as you step, you are going to get very wet! The object here is to flow smoothly from one step to another. The purpose behind this exercise is to give you excellent balance as second nature. This way, when you are in a situation where you must attack or defend yourself, you will always have your balance, even when moving. With good balance, you will have the ability to use all of your body's power to defend yourself.

Also when you learn to walk correctly you will also become aware of how another person is walking and standing. This becomes very important in assessing how they are going to attack or how you should attack them.

When you stand on the back part of your heels, as we said earlier you have good stability but lousy ability of move out of the position quickly. This is why boxers train really hard to stay on their toes during a fight. One implication is that if your opponent is putting too much weight on their heels, they are at risk of being swept. Also, if their foot happens to be the front foot in a side or back stance position, then you have an open invitation to attack them with much less danger of getting kicked for your efforts than if they had their weight on their toes.

When you are on your toes you have difficulty delivering good force. You need stability to produce full force. Therefore, if your opponent makes the mistake of getting up on their toes (both feet) they are not going to be able to kick you with any significant force.

I would concentrate on protecting vital areas, let them have a non-vital target and move in and nail them to the wall, so to speak. Another important concept is that most people unlock their back knee and shift their weight to the heel area of the back foot before they kick off the front foot. Note: this also happens in the front stance and in fact is even more noticeable. If you are observant of this fact, your opponent has just telegraphed their intentions to you without even knowing it. You now know with which leg they are going to try and kick. It should be much easier to prepare a suitable reception for that kick.

To be successful, you must be able to flow between the two stances. You must also be able to change these rules for what you do, if you don't want your opponent to garner the same information from your stances.

The best way to learn to be aware of where someone is placing their weight is to watch people as they walk. Trying to do such, initially, when you are sparring takes concentration away from trying to stay alive. Not usually a good practice. Instead just take time out, sit down and watch people walk as they pass by. Listen to the amount of noise they make as they take a step. Differentiate the noise from their shoes versus the

noise from improper walking techniques. Very quickly you will begin to develop the ability to tell where on the foot they are stepping down, with how much of their weight (relatively speaking) and where their balance is. Once you have that information you have discovered things about them that even they don't know.



We keep on returning in one form or another to our beginnings.

# **All of life is a circle.**

## **The C-step**

When I first started studying Okinawan martial arts (the style of Uechi Ryu) my instructor spend a great deal of time ensuring the we were able to move forward in a proper way.

The principle method of moving forward was by stepping in what can best be described as a C-step. The leg first moved towards the center in a circular arcing path and then reversed that arc back out to shoulder width before setting down.

The reasons given by my instructor, when reasons were given at all, was that such a stepping pattern would ensure that I remained in control of my balance. A reason given by one of the senior assistant instructors was to move anything out of the way before you stepped down on it and lost your balance.

I am not sure that I bought either reason completely even then. I will admit though, that learning such a movement pattern did quickly make me more conscious of my own balance as I moved through each step. Unfortunately, that was all it did. I can assure you that when I was exposed to real opponents in the world outside the dojo, they were not impressed and soon taught me why mobility and quick movements are to be considered for anyone who is not in love with pain.

Therefore, unfortunately, for years I abandoned this stepping motion as I studied other styles, which didn't use it. It has only been in the later years that I have come back to using a version of such in my own style.

I will admit, however, that the reasons why I use such a step have little similarity to the reasons given initially.

Short and sweet, the real reason why I now have relearned and once again use a C-step is that properly done, it is an all-out attack against my opponent. Look at it this way: When you move in on an opponent, you not only want to strike them, it also would be nice to destroy their balance. That way, not only will they not be able to strike you back, but the effect of your strike will be more effective because they will be so busy with their balance they won't be able to block or resist the strike. Also if your strike tips them over the edge, balance-wise and they bounce off the floor, so much the better.

How it works is this: When you take that step forward, the inner half of the circle is to get your knee and leg on a line between your opponent's leg, then as you continue with the step, you drive forward and outward for the last half of the step. This places pres-

sure on your opponent's leg, driving it backwards and outwards from the center, a definite balance-disrupting maneuver.

Note: The focal point of your power to really produce the best effect is to strike with the proximal lateral leg just distal to the knee (the area on the outside of the leg, just below the knee) against the inner aspect of your opponent's medial proximal leg. This will drive the force line through the knee, unlocking it so even if your opponent is in a great locked stance, they will still lose the power in their leg and their balance if they have any significant portion of their weight on that leg.

If they should happen to have the majority of their weight on the other leg, or shift it before you complete the maneuver, just execute the same move with the other leg. They won't be able to step down with the leg you just disrupted because the position is so awkward and thus ALL their weight will now be concentrated on the leg you are now attacking and they definitely will fall!



**The whole is greater than just the sum of the parts.  
This is the definition of life.**

## **SIMULTANEOUS ATTACKS**

I realize that most people have the feeling that overall, there really is not that much difference between the various types of martial arts. They acknowledge the different philosophies of each different style, but overall feel that the majority of differences is in how the style arranges and interprets its forms or katas.

This assumption has theoretically been born out in watching the mixed styles compete against each other in sparring competition.

My personal opinion is that they are wrong. There are some fundamental differences between selected styles that differentiate them from other styles in the world. Now I am not talking about whether they hold their hand one way versus another in a kata or whether they step behind or in front when executing a kick. Nor am I talking about whether they consider themselves street styles or competition styles. There is, in fact, a horrendous difference between most styles of the world and several (but not all) Chinese styles in how they deal with oncoming force.

Please do not mistake me, I am not about to get into an argument here about whether it is better to redirect or stop your opponent's force. Most people will acknowledge the validity of both of these concepts. There are many styles all over the world which promote and practice such philosophies, both Chinese and non-Chinese. Styles like Aikido and judo, etc. are examples to only name a few.

No, the one major difference which I am talking about and which completely separates certain styles, mostly Chinese, from the rest of the world is the concept of simultaneous attacks.

Now, I will grant that many non-Chinese styles make claims of simultaneous blocking and attacking. When examined, however, what they really mean is that they block so hard that they cause their attacker to be injured by attempting to strike them. The fact is, however, that unless you are going to use a technique like poison hands or strike a nerve pressure point, the force you are going to have to use to seriously damage your opponent will cause you to leave an opening which your opponent can exploit.

The main concept in simultaneous blocks / attacks is that you must obviously stop your opponent from striking you, but not stop the force so completely that neither you nor your opponent lose your forward momentum.

The purpose of not stopping your opponent's nor your own momentum is to bring you in to each other at close range. While I admit that you can still do the following

concepts for those styles which do not like to operate at distances extremely close to your opponent, Quan Li K'an practitioners are trained to operate as close as possible whenever the situation warrants, so this is the view point I will express here.

I fully acknowledge that these concepts are just as valid at a medium range. Once you have redirected their force, you may continue on with your own ideas for completing a strike OR a capture of your opponent.

NOTE the last part of that sentence. Many times it is more important to go for a capture than for a strike because you gain more control over your opponent with a capture than you would by a simple strike. Also in multiple sparring, you can then use the person you have captured as a shield against your other opponents.

Anyway, back to the explanation. Without trying to get long winded, the trick is to strike your opponent's oncoming attacking extremity at an angle between 30 to 45 degrees, deflecting it, but not their main body force.

Continue your momentum in a forward direction (i.e. toward your opponents main core) and strike with your other hand and also strike their leg with one of your legs or feet. The best way to do this and to fully execute a true simultaneous attack is to kick one of your opponent's legs as you move in.

Thus you will be executing three separate maneuvers at the same time. An acceptable alternative to kicking (and one which I like, much to my student's dismay) is to step on my opponent's foot as I move in.

This is not a kick, but not only accomplishes the same effect of attacking, but is faster and does not divert my balance like a kick does.

The advantage of this technique is as follows. For someone who does not have good control of their balance, you will obviously have them falling into you at this point. If you come up against another martial arts practitioner of even moderate ability, however, their balance will not be this bad but the effect of such a deflection will still be to open them up for you to step in and attack them.

Now that I have make this sweeping claim for superiority for CERTAIN styles, I would like to go back and also state that I truly believe that almost every style I have seen has techniques in their katas which really are simultaneous blocks and captures or redirection and captures. A good example of this is the cross-body punch, in which the fist comes out and strikes parallel to the front of the body with the elbow bent at 90 degrees.

In fact this could very easily deflect a person's punch; redirecting it so that they do not strike you, causing their body to turn as you force their arm sideways and also placing your elbow against their outer arm completing the capture. (If you do not see that this is in fact a capture, try it out with a friend. When you do this technique you will see that you have them in a very precarious position, especially if you are grabbing the pressure points of the hand or distal forearm.)

Now one could make the argument that any two-handed attack (when you grab your opponent with one hand and strike with the other) is a simultaneous attack but the fact

is that there is one major element missing. That is the ability to attack your opponent with at least three of your extremities at the same time.

The example I gave above fits the criteria because in real life you would not be putting your elbow softly against your opponent, plus the fact that you have not committed your balance and thus can attack with either of your legs and the other hand.

When you do a grab and attack the extremity or even grab an extremity and lash out at your opponent's core, in most styles, the distance you maintain from your opponent and the fact that you have to use significant strength means that you must assume a stance which does not allow you to kick at the same time. If it does (and in fact you do kick) then you are executing a simultaneous technique.

The advantage of this, as explained in the chapter explaining how to overload the brain, is the fact that three attacks are more than the brain can handle, thus you will be overwhelming their ability to block the pain you are causing and can cause more devastation than with the same blows done separately.

The circle is the most powerful thing in the universe.

## Elbow

Ever notice that in many of the hand movements in katas the elbow seems to come up almost parallel to the ground as you execute strike to the side? Or at least it does when you watch many of the masters do their katas. This is especially true when you are doing a turn movement with a hand strike. A perfect example of this is the knife hand. Before the hand strikes out, the elbow comes up, the hand moves into position, and then the strike occurs.

There is a good reason for a separate elbow movement. The real meaning is that when you are using the technique (whatever technique, we are talking in general here) you can use the muscles of your shoulder to drive your opponent in the direction you want to go. The muscles of your proximal arm provide a tremendous amount of force because of the leverage they apply against some- one's hand or arm. This is very useful in sparring when you are grabbed because now, besides grabbing the hand, you can attack your opponent's arm/forearm with your elbow causing a loss of resistance to whatever attack you decide to pursue.

The point is that when you are attacking you should use your hands as the primary attacks but immediately follow the hand attack with an elbow strike or capture (using the elbow to contain your opponents extremity so that it can not move and strike you back.) The real trick is to flow from one technique to the other so fast that it seems like one single attack, occurring too fast for your

## COUNTER TECHNIQUES

This chapter is definitely going to be one of overstatement and simplification. Unfortunately, I do not have the talents to do any better. The subject is that of response to grabbing/joint locks, or Chin Na if you will.

The real problem, of course, is that these techniques and the counters to these techniques are not something that can be well described on paper. This, I guess, is one of those cases where it truly can be said that you cannot learn martial arts from a book.

Still, since most of my readers are not trying to learn martial arts from any book, including this one, then we can discuss some principles that will enhance the techniques you are already doing and learning.

It has been said that sooner or later every confrontation results in grabbing or take down techniques. While I do believe that every fight results in grabbing, and I do believe that a majority of the confrontations on the street result in such close quarter fighting. I absolutely do not buy the go to the ground ideology ... in fact I believe that if you let your opponent take you to the ground you have really messed up ... because

with the ability to do light force knockouts, neck breaks and redirection there is no reason besides not being trained or prepared to wind up on the ground.

Now if you are not trained in these techniques then you have a MAJOR flaw in your training that you MUST correct because there are many styles that WANT to take you to the ground... but with the probability of poor ground conditions like mud or snow or ice or even concrete, you do not want to wind up on the ground.. Add the possibility of multiple attackers and the ground is a real danger.

Another problem is in training to deal with the grab. In training we don't really want to hurt or destroy our Training partners. Yet we must train to strike with Brutal force against the arm/ hand that has grabbed us and tries to take us to the ground... Believe me they have trained to take a hit. We MUST be prepared to strike dramatically harder than they have trained for, and use techniques that will overcome what they are trying to do AND TOO MANY MARTIAL ARTISTS HAVE NEVER TRAINED TO DO THIS...which is exactly why Jui jitsu artists frequently win when they are involved with most people. Instead you must learn to strike with such hard force that their whole body is rocked from the force of your strike.

NOTE" you do NOT have to be big or strong to do this because you only have to deliver force to the arm[s]/ hands that they are grabbing you with to have the effect you need!

And so you know, such confrontations are in fact the rule, not the exception now days, so one must be really versed in such, if you are going to defend yourself on the street.

The trick, of course, is not just to know how to use joint locks or other pressure holds. Almost every style or school of any legitimacy studies such at some point in time.

They may have their own variations of what they call each type of technique, but in general they all follow the basic rules. (To reiterate the rules of pressure holds, pressure points, joint locks see the book PRESSURE POINTS: The Deadly Touch.)

Based on whether you want the person to move towards you or away from you will determine how you should twist the joint to be locked. Twisting a joint toward the centerline moves the person away from you, usually in a circular motion. Twisting a joint away from the centerline moves the person towards you.

Now as we said, the subject of this chapter is counter techniques. The trick to overcoming any grab is not to resist. Please don't interpret not resisting with cooperating. What I mean is that you should not direct your force against the person in a pulling contest. That is a sure way to ensure that the person with the most strength and the best balance will win. Most probably since they were the one who grabbed you, they are the most prepared.

Meaning you will lose that type of contest. What they are not prepared for is for you to go along with the direction they are trying to move you in, then to accelerate the speed in that direction and then suddenly change the direction. (If this sounds like the principles of Tai Chi, it is because it is ].

In fact I absolutely know it is. I do not proclaim any expertise in Tai Chi but I have trained in it for years and most of the principles and forms are used in the upper levels of Quan Li K'an also.)

Now I will not claim that these techniques will by themselves free you from every grab. Such techniques of going with the flow (if you will) also should apply to the motions the rest of your body makes. In fact, if you are in a serious grab, you may find your body turning in a circle as you negate their grab.

The last part of the counter technique which may be necessary against a successful grab is the counterattack technique, i.e. you get them so busy trying to defend themselves that they have to let go. Well, while this technique by itself works well on paper, in reality when the person has you in a successful grab they can apply pressure on that hold to negate your attack.

Therefore, before you try to use a counterattack to get them to let go, you should use one of the above techniques to nullify the effectiveness of their grab. That way, even if they still have a hold of you, they will not be in a position to effect your balance or negate your counterattack. Then, since they were in a fixed position to resist you in case you attempted to pull, they won't have as many extremities to attack with as you will. Therefore if you launch an all-out attack against them, the tide will definitely turn in your favor.

In summary, if you use all these principles, you will be able to apply force to your opponent in a controlling way and not let your opponent use grabbing force against you.



Emotional intensity is everything!

Bruce Lee

## EMOTIONAL CONTENT

Exactly what is it that makes the successful combat martial artist? You know the type: size really isn't the factor but when you are facing them you know that as soon as you screw up they are going to take your head off. The feeling you get facing these people isn't an "if", it's a "when" you screw up.

Every training school has had such people of both kinds. People who even at the Dan level have passed all the requirements and are qualified to hold the level. People who would do okay in a fight, but, well, let's face it, they just don't have the finesse to be top notch. Compare them to the other extreme where you pity the poor sucker who forces this martial artist into a fight.

So what is it that makes the difference between the two types? Don't try to tell me it the amount of practice or dedication.

I have been in the teaching business long enough to have very hard-working, dedicated people who just don't have what it takes to make it to the Dan level. Oh, they were able to do the physical aspects okay, but they just couldn't hold up the mental side (I don't mean intelligence because the majority of them were above average, in my opinion). Some people define this win-or-lose, make-it-or-die-trying, go-down-in-flames attitude as merely self-confidence. That is a nice easy explanation, but there has to be more to it than that. Just precisely how does one develop self confidence to the point where they win repeatedly and thus have the confidence that they are going to keep on winning?

You know that when we first started, even us old timers lost and lost repeatedly against those we sparred against. As time went on we got better, but not before we got our lumps, so to speak.

What was it that made us keep going? Again, I won't accept the simple answer of "dedication." As I said, I have seen numerous students with that dedication, that keep practicing and they make their goals but the never develop that special flame; that special something.

This was a subject that has puzzled me for years. A topic over which, I have had numerous discussions, with my assistant instructors. (One of them is female and definitely has that flame; so don't give me that male attribute garbage!)

Let me start this off by saying that I am not a JKD fan. Nor a Bruce Lee fan, if the truth be told. (I don't care if that starts a fight!) I personally prefer some of the newer martial arts stars for watching entertainment. In the practice of martial arts, my tastes run more

to the classical styles, despite the fact that Quan Li K'an is in some people's definition a new Martial art, having existed for a mere 40 + years]

Regardless of that, there is one quote from Bruce Lee (paraphrased because I don't claim to remember the exact words), which is one of the most prophetic martial arts statements I have ever heard. The statement was, "Emotional intensity is everything." I really believe that the emotional energy which one puts behind their techniques is what makes the difference.

Without emotional pressure and emphasis, there is only the technical mechanics of the action. While I really do believe in studying the mechanical aspects of all motions, let me say that it is the emotional overlays that change martial arts from a pure science into the art form, which it is.

So how does one go about putting "Emotional Intensity" into their techniques? Well, I will admit, that is the million-dollar question. For my beginning students, I frequently get them started by getting them to think about being mad. In fact, there are times when I purposely get certain students to the point where they are livid just to show them what they can accomplish when they have this emotional push to drive their techniques. (It is unfortunate that some people have to be taken to this point, but so far every one of my students has realized what has happened and not thought badly of me.)

Now I frequently remind my students and make it clear here that the end point is to:

- 1) Be able to control your temper so that you cannot be forced into losing it.
- 2) Be able to turn on the emotional drive in a moment, so to speak. In fact, the perfect state is where you start your technique completely calm and wind up with full intensity just before it impacts your opponent.

For those of you reading this I would suggest that you do the following exercises to develop the same emotional abilities. Start by finding a subject, which makes you mad. Now, for 20 seconds I want you to visualize whatever you picked in a way that you can feel yourself getting mad. Feel your blood pressure rising and the adrenaline starting to flow. I don't want those of you who are just starting to even think of consequences. Instead, think of delivering a full force kick or punch into an enemy. Feel the emotions.

## **GET MAD!!**

Now after 20 seconds, I want you to deliberately force your- self to be calm and completely negate the emotional charge you have built up. This way you are also learning to handle emotions that someone else is trying to stimulate in you (i.e. make you mad.)

Keep practicing this at a rate of at least 3 times per day for several weeks. You will know you are starting to get the hang of it when you can really work yourself up in that proverbial split second and then calm down again in the same amount of time. (Please note there is a big difference between truly doing this and faking it. Don't just have your outer-self show anger/calm. Make your inner self be that way!)

The next phase is to work out on a physical target. NO, I DON'T MEAN YOUR SPARRING PARTNER! You should work out on an fixed **inanimate PADDED** object. The object is fixed so that you will learn how use your entire body weight when delivering a technique and won't have to worry about the object moving away from you. It is padded so that you won't have to worry about bruising yourself if you hit it too hard or wrong.

The problem with many students is that they have learned to practice their kicks and techniques against free air, but never practiced against objects which can take a significant blow. Initially, you should try just to focus on hitting the object hard and at the correct target point. Once you have that down (and only then) you should practice adding your emotional content to the force of you blows. IMPORTANT: Remember you are not trying to stay mad the entire practice time. That way leads to over-tight motions, improper consideration of your stances and death in a fight. Practice just like it should be on the street.

Force you self to stay calm until AFTER you have started the technique and then add the emotional content. Soon, with practice, you will find yourself delivering every erg of energy you can into the target, repeatedly.

The third phase it to do the same exercise above but this time, use objects like boards that can be broken. I like to train my students on the re-breakable boards with a fixed board holder [much cheaper and in fact you can buy multiple gradients... soft to very hard] .

What I do is to have them practice using the same techniques above until they complete ten successful sequential breaks. (Of course, if they make nine breaks and then don't break the tenth, they must start over so they learn quickly not to slack off. They also get in more practice than they might otherwise realize.)

If you can master all three of these phases with emotional control so that you can generate the emotional intensity that you de- sire INSTANTLY, you will be well on your way to becoming a very effective deadly warrior.

The only fair fight is one that I win.  
[and I will win. It is not an option.]

## FRONT-ON STANCE

I have held off explaining the front-on stance up to now because up to now it really wasn't needed. In the next chapter, however, we are going to be talking about sparring against multiple opponents. To do this successfully you must be able to do a front-on stance.

Oh, it is possible to spar against more than one person with a cat or back stance. You can spar with lead weights in your pockets, too, but that doesn't mean you are going to do well. The concept here is to win.

Therefore, you must be able to maximize your ability to respond in several different directions at once. Let's face it, that is exactly what is needed in sparring against multiple opponents, because they are (unless they are really rank amateurs and stupid besides) going to split up and approach you from opposite sides.

The principles we discussed before, however, apply to both stances; so don't throw them out just because you have changed stances. The front-on stance, as the name implies, means that you face your opponent front on. Face-to-face, so to speak. As we said earlier in hand placement, your hands are resting easily just above the groin area, the knees are slightly bent and you have your weight evenly distributed on both legs and over the entire surface of both feet. You are not committed in any direction physically or mentally. Prepared, but not committed.

Right away this gives you several important advantages. The first is the range of your peripheral vision. Especially when facing multiple attackers it is easier to see more of them, even if they spit up with the front-on stance than it is with the back stance. Thus you will have to turn your head less, have less problems tracking on-coming blows, and more chance and time to spend being in the right place at the right time. (You are thinking positively, aren't you?)

The second major advantage is the fact that it is easy to stand in the stance and still not expose your poison points. With the cat/back stance you have to pay particular attention to keeping your foot turned toward your opponent or risk getting struck in a poison point, which will ruin your entire day at least. (Week is more like it, or so says my editor. i don't disagree with her... I don't dare.)

Thirdly, initiating a movement is just plain faster coming out of a front-on stance than it is in a back/cat stance. This is very important when you need those extra split seconds to successfully close the gap.

Now everything is not gravy here or no one would be using the cat stance in the first place. The fact is that with the front-on stance you have more exposed target areas to be concerned with.

Fortunately, by the time you have reached the level of even first-degree black belt, you are more than up to the level where you should be able to protect all these areas if you follow a few simple rules.

The first of these rules is that you make especially sure that you do not reach for any blocks. This was true for the back stance but it is even truer for the front-on stance because to do so will require a more obvious commitment of your entire body. In short, don't do much of anything until you are ready to go all the way.

The second rule is a variation of the first. Don't reach or even try to block kicks to the legs with your hands. The actual rule is that if it is aimed below the upper quarter of your thigh, your legs, not your hands, should block it. Yes, I realize that for many styles not used to even kicking below the belt, there will be a horrendous adjustment in kicking that low. Also the concept of blocking with your legs is not one that most people pick up quickly but is essential to survival.

Comments on blocking with your legs: For those of you, who haven't read Secrets Of Power, Vol. 1, the correct method of leg blocking is not to meet the oncoming extremity head-on. Instead, meet it so that you redirect the force of the blow. If you try to meet it straight on you will cause yourself significant pain. If the person knows poison hands, your leg bones will shatter on impact unless you learn to block correctly. Therefore, while your knee may actually hit the oncoming strike directly on, no other part of your leg ever should.

Cogito, cogito, ergo sum cogito.

## SPARRING AGAINST MULTIPLE OPPONENTS

The biggest problem in sparring against multiple opponents is not what most people think it is. The greatest fear that most people have is that you will get attacked from two or more directions simultaneously.

Actually, this seldom happens because unless both attackers have trained together and know the principles of attacks, one of them will almost always attack slightly ahead of the other.

In reality, the fact is that one person of the attacking group will be the most aggressive and they will initiate the attack. Try as they might, the other person will wait for this person to begin the attack and will respond as soon as they see that person attacking. That isn't near good enough, however, because no matter how fast they are, they will always be some amount of lag time that you can use between the first person's attack and those who follow.

The trick here is to respond to the first person's attack by moving in that direction (just a little bit, we will talk about this in a minute). The movement you make will be toward closing the gap with the person attacking and also one of moving you out of the range of the other people who are attacking but are a split second behind.

Now it really doesn't matter that much if the first attack is a fake or not. What matters is whether you take it seriously enough to respond. If it is an obvious fake, the best response is no response. Instead, wait for the real attack. If you feel the attack is real, then go for it.

Now, the true biggest problem in fighting more than one attacker at a time is in fatigue. Almost every untrained fighter I have observed makes the classical mistakes of expending too much energy too quickly so that very shortly they don't have enough energy left to handle the third, fourth, or whatever attacker.

In short, they may be great fighters, but when they don't have enough energy to do what they need to do to be able to defend themselves, they are easy pickings. Now, when I say trained, let me make it perfectly clear that there is a big difference between being trained to handle one attacker and being trained to handle multiple attackers.

Most martial artists have learned to fight quite well against one attacker. Many have become VERY proficient at it. However, let me say flat out that the rules you learned and the proficiency gained through training against one person does very little good at all against more than one attacker. I don't care what happens in the movies. The reality

of sparring against more than one person at a time is not just two or three times as hard as sparring one person. The fact is that the difficulty goes up logarithmically to the second power (i.e., it is four times as hard to spar two people as it is one; nine times as hard to spar three, and so on).

Unfortunately this is not really understood by most black belts and therefore they have an overinflated estimate of how well they will do in such a confrontation. Which is why Quan Li K'an spends a significant amount of time training it's black belts to fight against multiple attackers. Unfortunately, first you have to teach them that they have a lot to learn.

I like to teach/inflict a game on my new students learning how to spar against multiple opponents. The purpose of the game is to teach about the fatigue factor because inevitably black belts believe they have a method of sparring which works and they are not readily willing to give up the concepts and sparring methods which have gotten them this far in their martial arts career.

Therefore, I need to show them that their system is totally worthless in some situations so that they will open up their mind once again and begin to learn. [I am NOT trying to be mean ... but their life depends on learning the reality of the street where moer than one attacker is to be expected]

The game I use to accomplish this task is called protection and is played like this: I take one of my newer students (a junior belt) place them in a small defined area of the dojo and tell them they cannot leave this area. I then inform the black belt that they must protect this student at all costs. They must do everything in their power to prevent this student from being hit, grabbed, or whatever.

Then I take two or three attackers (preferably higher belts or black belts) and have them try to attack both the student and the new (protected) student. It doesn't take very long (seconds really) for the protector to run out of breath as he is trying to chase around to attack the attackers and yet hurry back in time to protect his charge.

About one to two minutes of this game and they begin to realize that their previous method of sparring doesn't work. They may be able to keep one attacker at bay, but they can't keep two of them out. Then, of course being the nice person that I am, I always try the game again, this time with a third attacker.

Of course by this time the learning student believes that it is impossible to safeguard the protected student, so after they fail with three attackers I show them that it is possible. Usually by this time, they have given up the concept that they had the world by the tail. The fact is that every one of my students and every person not used to sparring against multiple attackers makes the same mistakes.

The first mistake is in their stance, but we will get to that point in a minute. We are going to talk first about the second mistake they make. That is trying to bring the fight to the attacker. Every black belt learns to win. They also learn to close in on their opponent (at least follow their opponent, keeping them in the range they like) as they begin to overpower the person attacking them.

This may seem like a good thing to do, but the fact is that when you are following or attacking someone, you are expending energy at a fearful rate. No one but the most dedicatedly in-shape person can keep up a full out attack for very long.

## PATIENCE

It is the hardest thing to do - but the most important

So what are you to do? Chasing your opponent will tire you out, but if you do not chase them, they will just escape to come back at you until they get a significant kick or blow in. Well, the secret of success here is in waiting long enough that they are close enough that you can actually close the gap without moving very far at all.

Let me make it clear that you are going to have to close the gap a little. However, if you do so too quickly, a running battle will occur with you again spending too much energy even if you do win that confrontation. The best thing to do, is use the technique of slipping, until the person is in close enough that you can explode, take less than two steps and be in their face. (Now you know why I waited until this point in the book to tackle this subject.) At this point you have to follow one of Miller's rules...that is, get a little crazy.

Remember your defense but attack with everything you have. However, do not do a drive-them-back type of attack. Instead you should do a capture type of attack. The point here is that while you can destroy this opponent, the best thing you can have is a shield against the other attackers you are facing. You can always disable or kill this person if it becomes necessary.

There is nothing better to dissuade your attackers than the requirement of having to kick through their friend. The best way to capture and control this person is with a neck attack (see previous chapters).

**IMPORTANT POINT:** you cannot count on your attackers to respect the person you have just captured. You **MUST** be willing and able to drop them instantly. I don't mean let them go- but to drop them/ destroy them if there is even the slightest hint that the other attackers are willing to go through them to get to you!

Back to the point we skipped over for a awhile. The proper stance for sparring against multiple opponents is the front-on stance. Not only does it make for faster reactions, allowing you to turn in the direction you wish to go, it is actually a more comfortable relaxed stance than the cat/back stance so that, once again, you are conserving your energy.

Secondly, because you are more relaxed, your breathing will be more relaxed and you will not be increasing anxiety levels/burning energy in that way. Thirdly, in the front-on stance, your opponents have no indication whatsoever which way you are thinking of attacking. This keeps them all on guard and makes it less likely that they will get bold enough to be able to do that simultaneous attack which most people believe is so dangerous. (Actually a simultaneous attack is very dangerous, but since most fighters



can't pull it off ... Beware of fighters who have trained attacking together, however, they can pull off such an attack because they have learned the subtle signs of when their partner will attack.)

One point that was glossed over so far is the point that breathing is not adequate to keep up with your demands for oxygen in an all-out attack. This is true no matter what type of physical shape you are in. You can offset this problem by training yourself to help this state by remembering to breathe in deeply and slowly.

One would think this is the natural thing to do, but in fact what will happen unless you consciously force yourself to breathe slowly and deeply is that you will begin to breathe shallow and fast. There is no way at all that shallow fast breathing will be able to keep up with even the modicum of demands of the type of sparring you are doing. In fact, even slow, deep breathing will not fully keep up. However, if you force yourself to conserve your energy and force yourself to breathe EVERY chance you get, you will find yourself recovering from your all-out attack much more quickly and your fatigue level much more low.

## Which one?

There have been many different articles written about multiple opponents sparring. Most of them are totally unrealistic and obviously never written by anyone who has had any street experience doing such. Generally what these articles have in common are some type of special system for singling out who you should attack first.

Let me tell you from experience there are far too many variables to consider to even begin to think about some system of whom to worry about first. As the old saying goes 'when you are up to your \_ \_ \_ in alligators....' Therefore let's forget about any silly "system" and concentrate on reality.

The person you should concentrate on eliminating is the person who presents the most immediate real threat to you. Since this may change from moment to moment, you may have to shift your emphasis from person to person.

However, let me make one point very clear here. To succeed when you are facing multiple attackers, you have to have a philosophy of doing whatever it takes to take someone out. By this, I mean when you have decided to go after someone (ie. close the gap), then you need to go full out. Playing with any opponent will only give them a chance to come back at you again, this time more prepared for what you can do. That is definitely a mistake.

The way to survive is to wait until someone makes a significant attack, cross the gap (as I described earlier in this chapter) and then attack them FULL OUT and continue to attack them, FULL OUT until you have disabled or are in total control of them.

NOTE: You really have no reliable system to tell which opponent will be the most dangerous or who will attack first. Despite appearances, preconceptions will just get

you in trouble because you will not be observing the other opponents close enough. Yes, if you are fast enough in moving you may take some blow from the other opponents. The trick here is to try to get behind the person you are attacking so that you can use them as a shield and a delaying tactic (it takes more time to get around this person to get to you, giving you time to move again).

Continue with this weeding-out process until you are down to one-on-one and then you can revert to any system of fighting that you like. Personally, this is the ONLY method, which I have found that works on the street. The silly rules of analysis you can keep for the people who haven't been there!

## **Obstacles**

Another point which must be taken into consideration during any sparring episode but which plays even more importance when sparring multiple opponents is the topic of obstacles.

The short of it is a only use an object which prevent your opponent from coming around them and getting at your back.

For example, the use of a telephone pole to "cover your back" won't do. In fact, it will help your enemies far more than it will help you, because they will be able to move around the pole and launch attacks with only minor limitations in attack angle. You, however, will not be able to turn freely in the direction of the pole nor get as close as you may need to be without the fear of bouncing your hand or foot (or whatever) off the pole.

On the other hand, a wall is a great asset. It totally blocks your opponents from getting around behind you. Be careful, however, that you do not get into a corner because if you are forced back into the corner, the angle of attack that your opponents must spread out decreases rapidly. True, the area/angle that you defend is smaller, but the angle that your opponents have to deal with is dramatically smaller and they will find it much easier to crowd in on you and force you to deal with more than one of them at once. Not a healthy situation! Therefore, seek out walls but avoid the corners. Seek out things your opponents cannot get around but avoid things they can maneuver around.

# APPENDIX I

## Rules

- 1) DEFENSE IS THE FIRST, LAST, AND ONLY IMPORTANT concept!
- 2) Never kick off your back foot or hit with your backhand unless you are closer than an arms length from your opponent.
- 3) Remember how long it takes to do each technique (relatively). Pay attention to time considerations, when choosing a technique.
- 4) Keep your hands up and your elbows down
- 5) Keep your toes pointed towards your opponent
- 6) Never attack with less than three techniques. Five is a preferable number!
- 7) Stay loose. Fight the other guy, not yourself.
- 8) Get crazy when you are inside. (But remember rule #1)
- 9) In the words of the late Robert Heinlein, "if you are going to shoot, then shoot! Don't talk about it." You can discuss it after it's over.
- 10) Talking just gives your opponent information. Spend the time looking for openings, then ATTACK! the late Robert Heinlein also said, "Shoot quick. It makes them duck their head down so that you have time to get off a clean shot." Also excellent advice.

# APPENDIX II

1) See the book, *Poison Hands: Techniques, Truths, and Reasons* for a further explanation of the use of these techniques. All five techniques are taught!

2) Kicking off the back foot forward is a suicidal attempt! Anyone who has any martial arts training has a shot at your abdomen, chest and face area as you turn to deliver the kick. Also even more important is the fact that it takes approximately four times as long for your back foot to reach your opponent as your front foot. Therefore, unless they are:

1) Stupid,

2) Extremely busy at the moment, or

3) Have no significance concept of martial arts fighting, you are not going to land a kick from the back foot.

You don't have to be a Quan Li K'an practitioner to understand this. Even going to most modern tournaments will show you that most fighters use their front foot almost exclusively. Well, at least the ones who win do. Kick- ing off the back foot should only be done with a spin technique! I didn't re-discover this. The masters of old knew it well, that's why the spin techniques were developed.

3) Your back has some very vulnerable target areas but dramatically less so than your chest and abdomen. Besides, most people are not practiced in striking the targets in the back (a mistake) so they won't even take a shot.

4) Quan Li K'an uses this concept!

5) See the book, *Pressure Points: The Deadly Touch* for a complete description of the actions and use of pressure points. Western medical explanations are used so actual usable fact is given. ALL seven levels of pressure points are explained.

6) Fighting is not a game! This is why I do my absolute best to avoid any confrontation. An old master of mine liked a saying "When two tigers fight, one is killed, the other maimed!" If I am forced into a fight, I intend to do whatever I can to stop my opponent... immediately! If I didn't believe they were any danger to me, I would have just walked away in the first place. Since I consider them a threat, I will use everything I know to eliminate that threat.

# Conclusion:

I hope I have given you some ideas to ponder. Yes. I said "rules" but we both know [or should know] there are no actual rules except win or come home in a box.

Use any and every advantage you have or can make. Use every weapon at your disposal. There is no such thing as "fair". Fair is for sports... and this book is about survival! Would I use a gun... damn straight ... but unfortunately it is not legal to carry everywhere and the reality is that it take too long to draw and aim a gun for an encounter at close range ... you have 1-3 seconds to determine the outcome !

I teach my students to work and plan to deal with that period of time [for each attacker]... and longer than that and they are playing with their food!

But I hope that this book will give you things to consider and that some of what I have covered may spark your own ideas of how to deal with such situations in ways that make sense to you

I have always believed, and experience has confirmed, that NO PLAN SURVIVES CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY but we plan because doing such gives us the best chance we can have in advance.

Anyway hopefully the principles in this book will be more useful than the so-called rules

Please be safe!

Bruce Everett Miller