



Article 2

In last month's article we established that the wide majority of confrontational situations will be initiated via a series of defined levels, including a verbal exchange, finger pointing, double or single handed push or shove, a grab then a strike, obviously it makes sense to suggest that depending on the situation, the confrontation can move through any of these stages at any time.

The suggestion that body language, gestures and communication can also effect these stages can also be said to be true as a verbal comment can generate an 'automated response' from an aggressor and of course the effective diffusal or in turn, possible escalation of an engagement.

Most will already be aware that during the verbal exchange aspect of a confrontation your vocal tone, pitch and content can be used as a tool, for example with clear and concise communication a situation can be calmed whereas being aggressive can increase it to the physical contact stage. On a more thought provoking level verbal exchanges and gestures can be used as a distractive method and technique as it can be used to draw the aggressors train of thought to something different other than the immediate danger and engagement i.e. an open ended question requiring a thoughtful response, hence leaving the opportunity for a more proactive approach to a physical counter strike or diffusing technique.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

Obviously, providing a verbal exchange can take confidence and self assertion but through correct rehearsal and scripting responses, its efficiency can be achieved. The following technical example shows, at first glance, quite a simple weapon based self defence technique but as with all drills and skills, done at face value the technique will be learnt in a couple of minutes but to master it will take the strategic breaking down and analysis of all the key elements and stages.

John Swift on the left in black defending
Lee Grazier on the right in red attacking



1. As the confrontation starts the defender should assume a comfortable neutral body position, as discussed in the previous issue. Attempt to distract through verbal communication, open ended questions i.e. 'Sorry sir, what's going on?' but be vigilant as essential timing is key with their response as it may buy you the second needed to initiate a technique or movement.
2. From your neutral position step in palm strike the shoulder (the majority of the initial power in your aggressors strike is sourced here) simultaneously checking the aggressors hand that wields the weapon – balance, grip and control is of course important.
3. Being close to an aggressor has obvious danger implications so using a shorter range counter strike in the form of an elbow strike or change of position may be useful at this point so as to ensure the aggressor does not use a secondary attacking strike i.e. a left hand punch or grab.



4. The weakest part of an aggressors grip is between the fore finger and thumb and though a single pull away / downward or drawing technique can be used to release the weapon, the application of strategically placed strikes can also open a grip – the wrist and forearm to name a few.
5. In the photos you can see the drawing of the stick downwards, both hands are used for control, if the aggressors resists there are a number of wrist and elbow locks that can be implemented from here as well as low leg and groin strikes.
6. Continue the rotation round until the grip is released, once the weapon is yours you have a choice of counter strikes, discarding of the weapon or returning to a neutral safe guarding position.



Defence against a weapon wielding aggressor will obviously differ from a situation where there is not one involved, firstly the perceived threat of danger and risk of injury is greater. When being placed under this pressure and stress, nerves and adrenaline can confuse logical thinking so often a simple response and technique is a better more effective one.

For those who already practise the martial arts don't forget the roots and skills your style has instilled in you as the vast majority of attacks are thrown from the same place and could warrant the same natural response with or without a weapon – for example a bottle or knife lunge could almost represent a straight punch or an inward baton or stick attack could be likened to a 'hay-maker' or over hand right style punch!

For more information feel free to contact John via email on info@vervemartialarts.co.uk or telephone 01562 827437. Alternatively visit his website at www.vervemartialarts.co.uk
I look forward to next months issue. Train hard, hone those skills and hope that you don't have to use them!