



Bullied! No More

By

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Bullied! No More

I was bullied as a child – especially after my parents moved more than a thousand miles away from where I grew up. Being the new kid in school is often a challenge for children. I used humor to try to find both acceptance and safety, but it didn't work as well as I had hoped.

I was small in size and the older boys found me an easy target. They made fun of me, pushed me, pulled me, threw me and pinned me to the ground. It was painful and embarrassing.

So, what's a bullied boy to do?

Martial Arts

My parents sent me to a local YMCA when I was 12-years-old. They hoped getting some strength training would help me. Working out with weights didn't help much, but something else did.

I saw some children about my size throwing larger kids and adults to the ground with ease. **Judo** was my introduction to self defense training. I signed up for the class and fell in love with martial arts. The instructor also taught Aikido and Karate, so I studied those as well.

An interesting thing happened almost immediately after I started learning Judo. The bullying at school and in my neighborhood stopped. I hadn't told anyone I was in a Judo class, so why didn't the bullying continue? I think it may have had something to do with the newfound confidence I had to defend myself against a bully. I didn't talk about it. I didn't show anyone what I was learning. But I was confident in defending myself.

I eventually had the opportunity to do some teaching and discovered that I enjoyed helping others learn how to deal with bullies. I still have that passion to help people more than 50 years later. It has been a wonderful privilege to be a self defense and martial arts instructor and see so many children, teens and adults gain confidence physically, mentally and spiritually.

It's also a joy to see people I've taught teach others with a passion to make a difference in their part of the world.

Your Passion?

What is your passion? It may come from an unexpected place – like mine did from being bullied. Be open to what God can do through your tough experiences. He may show you a wonderful opportunity to help others be “saved and safe”.

“When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, ‘It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.’ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, ‘Your father gave this command before he died: ‘Say to Joseph, ‘Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.’ Joseph wept when they spoke to him. His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, ‘Behold, we are your servants.’ But Joseph said to them, ‘Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.’ Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.” Genesis 50:15-21

Joseph went through a tough time in Egypt because of his brothers’ mean-spirited bullying, but Joseph trusted God and learned that the Lord had a high purpose for what he went through.

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Evade To Escape

What do martial arts instructors mean when they talk about **evade to escape**?

As we've mentioned in [previous articles](#), evasion is an important aspect of teaching at Grace Martial Arts. Here's the basic process for our instructors

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1. First – teach awareness
2. Second- teach preparation
3. Third – teach evasion (escape and run)
4. Fourth – teach invasion only when it's necessary (stun and run)

Let's take a closer look at the third step – *evade to escape*.

Be Aware and Ready

Evasion in a self-defense context means evading capture. How to teach and learn that is a combination of being aware and ready to escape in case of attack.

We start with **situational awareness**. We need to be aware of our situation at all times: location, environmental elements, time of day, who is close enough to you to be a possible threat, etc. We think of it as having our “radar up” in all directions (360 degrees). It means using all of your God-

given senses to assess your safety at all times. It's engaging mind, body and spirit for safety sake.

If what you see or hear doesn't seem right or safe to you, move. That may mean walking faster or even running in a different direction because of what your senses tell you.

If someone approaches you in an aggressive manner, yield and clear. That means moving away from them quickly and in a direction that makes it difficult for them to reach you. If you can evade and escape before they grab you, you should be fine.

Help!

However, what happens if someone grabs you? The good news is you still can *evade to escape*.

We teach children, teens and women to yell something that other people would understand as a distress signal. An example for children might be – "Help! Bad man! Not my daddy! Bad man! Help!" An example for women might be – "Help! Bad man! Hurt me! Help me! Bad man!" Any words that are easy to understand and describe the danger you're in should work well.

Escape and Run!

We teach how to get away from a variety of grabs, but it's important to remember to run after getting away. If we do a great job escaping from a grab but don't run away, the attacker will just grab us again. We have to do several things in **two seconds** or less:

1. Yell
2. Escape
3. Run

We teach children how to zig-zag run so it's more difficult for attackers to chase and grab them again. We also teach children to continue yelling descriptive words (e.g. words that describe the attack and attacker) while they're running. They can stop yelling when they reach a safe distance away from the attacker as long as the attacker isn't still chasing them.

But what if we don't escape from the grab or the attacker catches up with us? What do we do then?

Evade To Enter

What do martial arts instructors mean when they talk about *evade to enter*? In our last article we looked at how to *evade to escape*. That should be our first response to someone attacking us. If you can get away – get away. But if you can't get away – **evade to enter**.

In Yon Ch'uan Martial Arts we speak about this process as –

- Evade
- Ward off
- Escape

Ward off is one of the four basic methods of the application of expressing energy in Yon Ch'uan:

1. Push
2. Ward Off Slanting Upwards
3. Press Forward
4. Pull Back

“These four should be clearly differentiated. When these four methods of applying energy are understood, one can then follow the opponent's high and low movements, thus making it difficult for the opponent to mount an effective attack.”

We let the opponent attack us with his hard strength. Using as little as FOUR OUNCES OF PRESSURE, we are able turn aside his THOUSAND POUNDS of force, letting the attacker fall into empty void. When the chance comes, we return his attack by JOINING to him without letting up, FOLLOWING his every move and STICKING to him even if he moves backward in an attempted retreat. This STICKING ability cannot be done if we use force.” The Song of Pushing Hands/ Sticky Hands, [Yon Ch’uan Martial Arts Black Belt Study Guide](#), p 62

This is another way of understanding “evade to enter.” We do not teach students to enter **unless necessary**. If a student can effect an evasion that leads to escape, they should do that first. However, if escape is not possible then entering through “ward off” will help the student escape from even a strong attack.

This is **not fighting** – it is **defending**. This is a big difference for the student of self defense. Once the student can escape from an attacker, that should be their choice – not staying around to fight. Some of the “ward off” techniques may appear to be fighting, but they are not.

Power

The source of strength in Yon Ch’uan comes from a relaxed posture. That doesn’t come naturally for new students, so teachers will work with them to develop balanced whole body **power** and connect that with physical movement that is **springy**.

It's based on taking advantage of how God created the human body and using what He has given us as tools to defend ourselves against harm. An 80 pound girl can effectively defend against a 180 pound man if she understands how to maximize her power through whole-body movements.

The Six Basic Principles of Yon Ch'uan are:

1. Redirection
2. Evasion
3. Quartering
4. Entrapment
5. Absorption
6. Reflection

The first thing we need to emphasize about use of power in self defense is to **NOT meet force with force** –

“The essential difference between meeting force with external ridged strength as opposed to internal energy is when resisting force with force you engage the attacker on his/her terms. Whereas, when using SOFT internal energy, you deny both your attacker’s expectations and the object of his/her attack: Yourself. Through routine practice the student acquires startling speed and focused strength with superior ability to apply effortlessly the six basic principles unique to the Yon Ch’uan Martial Arts system. These basic principles are redirection, evasion, quartering, entrapment, absorption and reflection. The Yon Ch’uan Martial Art system teaches students to avoid physical force, whenever possible, but when unavoidable, how to utilize the escalation of force to

ensure personal safety. Students develop realistic easy-to-use self-defense skills, personal discipline and Christ-centered confidence!” Yon Ch’uan Martial Arts Black Belt Study Guide, p 7

Trying to use force against force only works if you are much stronger than the attacker. The chances of a weaker person attacking you are low. The chances of a stronger person attacking you are high. Thus, we learn how to generate power differently than force to force. We emphasize evasion and quartering, which we will address in some detail later in our series.

Speed

It is surprising to see how quickly someone can change an attack into powerful self defense. Our goal for students is to accomplish that in less than two seconds.

While a student can eventually evade and escape in about one second, evading to enter to escape will take a little longer – about two seconds total. That’s because the student will push, pull, strike, kick or throw the attacker just before escaping to safety. That will add another second to the technique. If the attack is especially strong, the student may launch a flurry of techniques that might add another one or two seconds to the total response prior to escape. The larger goal is to finish your defense in under five seconds to limit injury to yourself.

Again – and this is VERY important – our goal is to **escape** from an attacker, not **fight** with them.

Exit Strategy - What's Yours?

If you are attacked and want to escape to safety, what is your *exit strategy*? Think about it. If you had to decide in less than two seconds where you should run once you escape from an attacker, would you know where to go?

We've recently looked at *Evade to Escape* and *Evade to Enter*. Both have the purpose of escaping to safety in two seconds or less, but how will you know which direction to run in that short time span? Keep in mind that you'll be focused on escaping the attack, so where do you get the time to develop an exit strategy?

The best time to develop an exit strategy is **before** someone attacks you.

What! How can I develop an exit strategy before I've been attacked? Don't I do that **when** I'm attacked?

That is an option, but not the best option.

You may remember our emphasis on *Safe in Seconds*. The first part of that safety plan is the 60 seconds before an attack. Every person who has ever been attacked had a period of 60 seconds prior to that attack. We use that 60 seconds to prepare ourselves for possible attack and one of the things we do is continually build our "exit strategy." Why? Because the exits change as we move or as situations change.

Exit Strategy

Building an exit strategy begins with **situational awareness**. That's where we have a *60/360 mindset*. We are aware of our present situation at all times (every 60 seconds) and in every direction (360 degrees). We know what's happening around us and whether we need to do something to protect ourselves or others. Our senses are finely tuned toward safety concerns at all time. Spouses, parents and friends will also be looking out for the safety of others as well as themselves. That can be for human, animal or other dangers (e.g. cars, trucks, construction equipment, storms, water hazards, etc.)

The worst position to be in is "unaware." That's where you have no idea what's going on around you. You may take a nap and leave the doors unlocked. You may be walking on a sidewalk or in a store texting a friend or talking with someone on the phone. You are not paying attention to your environment at all and have no way to know you're in danger until it hits you.

A better position is to be "aware." What does that look like?

1. Keep your eyes and ears open for anyone or any animal that could attack you.
2. Keep your eyes and ears open for any "thing" that might hurt you.
3. Search for a way to exit your current location if you are suddenly attacked or otherwise in harm's way.

If you see or hear something that looks like it could lead to an attack or danger, you should quickly move into an “alert” position. My wife knows when I have moved from awareness to **alert**. My visual and audible “radar” is sweeping the area and I’m ready to move quickly to protect her or anyone else I’m with (e.g. grandchildren, friends). My self-defense plans, including an exit strategy, are ready to go. If someone moves aggressively toward me or someone I’m with, I immediately go into defense mode, which includes getting between the attacker and my family or friends.

[Part of training for this kind of self defense is also training your family and friends what you’re going to do in an attack situation and what you want them to do to stay safe.]

Field Tested

Martial arts has a long history that includes military functions (attack/defense). Many of the best martial arts systems and techniques have been field tested over many centuries. One of those systems is *60/360 situational awareness*. Anyone who is now or has been in the military studied situational awareness in one form or another. However, you can be the best trained and armed person in the military, but if you aren’t aware of your surroundings – your training and weapons may not save your life or the lives of others.

A Way To Escape

Our goal when attacked is to **escape** – get away from danger. Knowing how to defend yourself effectively in two seconds or less is an awesome skill. However, if you successfully escape an attacker only to discover that you don't know how get from your current location to safety – you have a big problem.

As you use the *60/360 Mindset* throughout your day, keep your eyes open for exits – places that would allow you to get away if you had to quickly.

- Do you know where the nearest door, hallway or stairs are located that would lead you outside or to another part of a building or open area that would allow you to find a way to escape?
- If your attacker comes between you and your exit, do you have a plan for getting *through, over, under* or *around* your attacker to get to the exit?
- Is there more than one exit you can use? If so, do you know where each exit leads?
- Do you know which exits not to use? (e.g. an elevator is not a good place to run to unless it's the only exit available).
- If you are surrounded by a group of people or several animals or a fire, do you know what you would do to get away safely?

An important part of self-defense training in Grace Martial Arts is to develop a *60/360 Mindset* and an *Exit Strategy*. We hope this Ebook will help you build on both.

Here are some other articles that address the importance of being aware **60/360** –

[The 3 A's of Attack Awareness](#)

[Self-Defense Advice For Children & Teens](#)

[A-B-C's of Self Defense](#)

[Five Stances of Christian Martial Arts](#)

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