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Make no mistake the world is at war, although it is not an official war with uniforms and troops invading lands, it is still a war that is taking lives. Obviously there are actual wars ongoing in various countries and the recent attacks on civilians in our local areas are a result of these wars from far away.

These misguided individuals are blinded by a belief that has hypnotized them to bring the war to you, the person on the street. These coward attackers will target male and female, elderly, women and children, they show no remorse or fear. The knife has become the chosen weapon of choice, so this article aims to prepare you for a knife attack and aid your own self-defense with some basic principles.

When faced at knife point you have but two options - fight or flight. Your acute stress response is a physiological reaction to what is perceived as a harmful event. The choice you make could either save you (and perhaps others) or it could be your undoing.

Knife attacks are happening everywhere. Asia has always had knife attacks plague its history but the blade has now become a popular choice in the West. Crime statistics in America, 'the land renowned for the gun', show a spike in knife violence, sighting that knives are consistently used to kill people far more often than guns.

In the UK the knife has become more common and more dangerous, according to newly released data. The number of people prosecuted for carrying a knife in the UK has gone up by 7% in the past year. There has also been a 20% rise in stabbings and knife attacks, up from last year's 3,663 to this year's 4,415. This is not including the recent craze of terrorist attacks whereby the weapon of choice has been some form of blade.

The need to be able to defend yourself against a knife attacker is fast becoming a necessity. Even for countries that rely on firearms as protection have to beware of knife attackers.

The FBI proved that trained police officers need a minimum of 21 feet between themselves and a knife-wielding attacker in order to successfully draw their gun and accurately fire. Anything less than this distance and the attacker can easily stab the victim before he or she can draw their pistol. Hence it's vital that you do not become a casualty or worse. Just basic knowledge will help increase your chances of a fatal knife attack.

Firstly, beware of your surroundings, walking about the city listening to your iPod is cutting off one of the essential five senses, hearing. Sound alerts us constantly, we hear a loud bang, a scream, footsteps fast approaching behind us, etc. This sense allows us a microsecond to respond as opposed to being too late and reacting only after the warning sound.

If you do see a threat of a knife attacker or attackers, quickly estimate their aggression levels. Fact remains that if they are openly holding a knife out in public then there's a good chance they will use it, even if it's a robbery as their adrenaline levels will be high and they will not be thinking clearly. They will rather react then act, so when you make a move it must count for something. Prepare for a strike, keep yourself centered and bring your body closer together and tight so that you are smaller, by keeping your body compact this will prevent you from flailing and will make it easier to keep your balance during strikes.



Know your defensive position, place your non-dominant leg in front and pointing outward. Bring down your body, so that your center of gravity is low. With your front fist closed and blocking your face, keep your balance until you are ready to pivot your body on your stronger and faster

leg.

A knife attacker has only two plays, they will undoubtedly launch to get a thrusting stab and they will slash at you as they advance. Ideally you want to engage the arm holding their live blade and immobilize it and hopefully disarm. However things are not as clinical and structured as they are in your martial arts classes. There could be hesitation from your knife attacker throwing off your timing or perhaps they lead by literally jumping at you because of the adrenaline fix in their body. There's really no way of knowing which is why you must stick to the basics and keep it simple.

As the attacker enters your space pivot out of the line of fire but engage in the fight before the blade reaches its full extension. Hurt whatever comes towards you so they may consider not attacking a second time. Use the outside of your forearms to stop and block the knife attacks, ideally redirecting their live blade arm keeping away from the sharp knife. However if the knife attacker changes their initial attack in motion or you misjudge the blade, the cut you are going to receive will be on the outside of your arm. This is far better than the inside of your arm or your having your hands sliced up as there are thirty-four muscles which move the fingers and thumb and seventeen in the palm of the hand, so you don't want them to be shredded as hand mobility is going to be a key factor during this encounter.

If the fight is imminent, try to strike first, hit and move, never stay in one place, even if it's a slight pivot of the back foot this makes you a moving target and also opens up an opportunity to strike your attacker again. Your objective is high value targets on the body, the groin, eyes and throat strike to obliterate what's in front of you as you may only get one chance, so make it count. If you can put the assailant down it gives you a chance to run or if you're still game in the fight then to continue to render them useless.

Obviously the more you learn in your chosen martial discipline the better prepared you can be but even these teachings must be reality based. Blocking and swinging your opponent's knife around high above your head once or twice to then wrap their arm in a deadlock is highly unlikely to work in actuality. It's not to say these techniques do not work, they can, but they need to be streamlined into compact basics.

Reaction force is force acting in the opposite direction, there can never be a single force acting alone. Forces only come in action-reaction pairs, so naturally when your knife attacker acts, you will react, but it's what reaction you choose to take that will decide whether you'll end up a victim

or a survivor.

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