



## Commonality in Training

With the way the mind stores information you better have perfected every single block to pull it off when attacked by surprise... And in there lies the problem. See in the USA most of us are martial hobbyists. We like to think of ourselves as martial artists, but that is simply not true. Train 4 hours per day, every single day, and you are a true artist. So, how can we address this problem with limited training time? **Commonality in training** is the answer. Simplify your training to incorporate the basics that work for *you*. If you limit yourself to say 10 things that you can “perfect” vs. 100 you will only be “good” at..... that is realistic.

Prior to starting any training a person must know what their goal is. If it is to receive a Black Belt in a particular art then you don't train at a boxing gym. If the goal were to be an MMA Fighter, you wouldn't train at the local Tae Kwon Do school learning forms and patterns of movements all day. My goal was to be good in self-defense, so I had to continue to seek it out.

I have to have a regular discussion with people regarding training for self-defense. It seems more often than not, television has influenced the way they view “techniques”. Thanks to television people often times believe they can “pull off” a technique ***As seen on TV.***

I see several problems with this. See, people don't seek out what they need to get better..... in other words, they continue to follow a set pattern. They require an ABC approach to everything. That is not always the fault of the student. The student can get so caught up in learning a "technique" they fail to see the end result. This can slow reaction speed.

Most martial arts systems have "basics" required to move forward in their respective art. I am all for this type of training, but as soon as the student has a good grasp of the basic, the students must learn to make it their own. There is no such thing as the "best system" all systems have great self-defense tools within them. Look at the top MMA fighters of today..... they train in kickboxing, boxing, wrestling and BJJ a mix of stand-up and submission skills. Each fighter takes what they need from each art and makes it their own. But no two fighters train the exact same way. The top fighters found their fears and weaknesses and trained to fix it.

Where the commonality in training for self-defense comes into the picture is this: If you train in 25 different blocks –which one will you use when the time comes? How do you decide what to use against a club strike, a punch, a push, a grab attempt, and a knife slash? Now what if the attack is coming with their other hand?

What I have done is reduced my blocks to three instead of 25 and I made all the other stuff I learned (throws, takedowns, wristlocks etc) work from the three blocks. To me this makes sense. This speeds reaction time by reducing the number of choices I have to make during a defensive situation. It is training for the probable, not the possible, common types of attacks.

If you are like me (not as strong or fast as the next guy) you have to find a way to train smarter. I like to say, "Teaching person to fight is hard, but teaching self-defense is easy". If I am not a willing participant in the battle and keep moving back, the attacker will make a mistake moving in. I will say the mindset has to be.....if I can no longer retreat, then I am committed 110% to winning. Winning in self-defense does not mean to beat a person into submission. Instead it is using "reasonable force" to end the illegal use of force against you, needed to escape.

So, find for yourself a common bond between all of your training..... don't change because someone said to, find the "why" it would work or not work for you inside yourself. If you have trained at all, you have a technique you already like. You may have pulled it off on almost everyone you have ever sparred or wrestled. Build on that one technique, master it, and learn how to get into it from kneeling, standing, falling etc. That is the commonality in your training.