

Now For My Sisters – The Sermon Of Safety.....

Travel is a reality of life. Predators roam the streets zeroing in on a “new face in the neighborhood.” Violence can be:

- An encounter in a strange locale, face to face with an individual with street anger pumping in their veins.
- The devastation of being cornered by a “friend”, who, moments before, was sharing a smile.
- The ultimate terror of a family member dripping with hostility in your own home.

Your first reaction to these situations is crucial for survival. A response clouded by indecision or a sudden angry response will put ones life in a delicate balance.

The average female community member is not hardened with the day-to-day struggle of survival. Today’s assailant is the product of doggedness—”to the victor goes the spoils”! Frighteningly this can also include a beloved relative. The goal of this workshop is to provide an opportunity to take a closer look at violence in our daily lives. The curriculum is designed to investigate the pitfalls associated with confrontation. Participants will have the opportunity to apply and re-apply techniques. Classroom mistakes can be repaired.

During my 30 years of research & training, developing a bridging method to serve the needs of women has been my goal. A course to provide the opportunity to develop defense skills against all forms of aggression - mental & physical. With countless methods being taught, can you determine sport martial arts from a combat technique? Respect for human life has all but vanished from our society. Graphic depictions of abuse are glorified by the movie industry and protected by the very legal system intended to serve the general public. This is not a martial arts class or a quick fix solution — it is the reviewing of those personal behavior patterns that could lead to serious trouble.

Whether or not a woman’s femininity will be altered is usually the reason that women avoid combat training. The word “martial” translates literally- “an act of making war” and the fighting systems of today are the archived techniques of when people had to rely on hand to hand combat to protect home and loved ones.

In most cases, the women were often alone while the men were off hunting for weeks at a time. Women had to develop fighting skills—there is not a fiercer fighter than a mother protecting her young. From the beginning of time women have kept things in check.

But alas, the combat skills of women have been misrepresented by the media. Only scantily clad females can be seen performing the fighting arts— giving the impression that the defeated male was visually distracted.

Then unfortunately, as the world became tamer there was less need for regular physical confrontations in order to survive. Gradually a women's role was confined to a standard dwelling of the home. But the fact that was over looked is that, women have to travel back and forth through the outside world.

When asked by women who are hesitant for their need of self-defense because they are at home most of the time or only travel in well populated areas I respond - just because an area is "well-populated" - doesn't guarantee they will come to you aid. When a woman finally realizes that self-defense is no more than self-awareness combined with self-confidence, then she is on the road to developing her own personal security routine.

As a native Philadelphian and public transportation expert, I have developed my "alter ego" to include a little "Freddie Krugger". Sometimes crazy is better than sanity. The safest method of all is common sense. My grandmother's advice was, "Keep friends close and enemies even closer". The inspiration from those words, have helped me to always be grateful of the love around me but to be aware of the pain of others.

Remember - self-preservation is God-given and it is my prayer that this course will enlighten your awareness as to securing your daily lives. Thank you again for choosing the AKERU Women's Urban Safety Program to enhance your lifestyle. Feel free to contact me at the information below if I can be of assistance in the future.

**"Self-preservation
is a state of being in control not being controlled.
Self-preservation is perceiving the enemy before the attack."
Dr. Germon "Mama G" Miller**

Be advised that the AKERU System and Urban Safety Course does not guarantee that these methods or any other course that instructs urban safety will keep a person from being injured or killed in an attack. This document is only designed to offer suggestions to present other options in case of an emergency situation. The AKERU curriculum is designed to investigate the pitfalls associated with confrontation. The opportunity to apply and reapply techniques. Classroom mistakes can be repaired. During my 30 years of research & training, developing a bridging method to serve the needs of women has been my goal. I have included these materials to provide the opportunity to investigate defense skills against all forms of aggression — mental & physical.

With countless methods being taught, can you determine sport martial arts from a combat technique? Respect for human life has all but vanished from our society. Graphic depictions of abuse are glorified by the movies & protected by the very legal system intended to serve the general public. This is not a martial arts class or a quick fix solution — it is the reviewing of those personal behavior patterns that could lead to serious trouble. Realize that self-defense is no more than self-awareness combined with self confidence, then a person is on the road to developing her own personal security routine. As a native Philadelphian and public transportation expert, I have developed my "alter ego" to include a little "Freddie Krugger". Sometimes crazy is better than sanity. The safest method of all is common sense. My grandmother's advice was, "Keep friends close and enemies even closer". My inspiration from those words have helped me to always be grateful of the love around me but to be aware of what is behind the hologram.

Now about a Women's Role In The Combative Sciences.... Whether or not a woman's femininity will be altered is usually the reason that women avoid combat training. The word "martial" translates literally- "an act of making war" and the fighting systems of today are the archived techniques of when people had to rely on hand to hand combat to protect home and loved ones. In most cases, the women were often alone while the men were off hunting for weeks at a time. Women had to develop fighting skills — there is not a fiercer fighter than a mother protecting her young. From the beginning of time women have kept things in check. Careful - chivalry can be out-weighed by the fear of a lawsuit!! Women in combat can be identified in cultures around the world.

A basic routine should consist of four areas:

- Reflex & Reaction Time
- Basic Skills
- Urban Awareness
- Correcting Personal Limitation

And never forget Regular Exercise! If you had to run a block or two to get away from an attacker could you? You wouldn't expect your car to start right up if it has been sitting in the cold for a week or never changed the oil. The same holds true for your body - exercise is the foundation for all physical activity - especially self-defense.

With each generation there is a struggle to shed old theories and make a way for the new. Tried and trusted methods are always under attack for the sake of efficiency but it is our progress that may cause us to lose sight of elementary needs in the field of physical development. Unfortunately we are the victims of convenience - a generation where the car has robbed us of our endurance. Sticking to the basics—eating balanced meals, drinking plenty of water and avoiding over-medicating ourselves for every little ache is a "blue print" for building the body up to a higher tolerance level to survive an attack .

Have I ever been hit or fell hard on the ground? You damn skippy! Recognizing Your Limitations & Fears to the most common of falling, being grabbed or punched in the face! This is quite normal since as girls we were encouraged to steer clear of activities that would encompass this situation.

Of the nine basic skills, the female gender has normally only been exposed to running and jumping. But on the other hand — the games of male dominated sports include a combination of at least six to nine. For example, in baseball you will have the skills of running, throwing, catching, striking, and jumping. The two skills of throwing and catching alone develop arm and shoulder strength. Then the maneuvers of weaving and ducking the wild flying baseballs, are the prerequisite for learning how to avoid a punch. Even the areas of climbing and falling are handicapped for young females since scaling to the top of the playground equipment is discouraged. And what does this have to do with self-defense? If someone pushed you backwards very hard, would you know how to break your fall and not your head? The most important part of climbing those monkey bars was learning how to jump/fall and not get too hurt. A general rule to follow is when preparing to enroll in any course — make it clear what limitations you need to address before you kick or punch. The best offense is always a good defense strategy.

The sister moves of weaving and ducking require the person to practice the art of reflex movement and timing. Many of the world's great boxers practiced in these areas alone for several hours a day. Muhammad Ali didn't stay "pretty" by just being able to absorb a punch. Evasion through body moves is an asset that is priceless. Remember as discussed earlier, without a doubt, if you can duck or weave a baseball, then your ability to dodge a punch is a lot easier. In short, the process for ducking is to bend your knees until your nose is at the attacker's waist—

**KEEP YOUR ARMS UP WITH YOUR HANDS ON
EITHER SIDE OF YOUR EARS! DO NOT LEAN FORWARD AND ABOVE ALL,
KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN!**

You can't evade or block what you can't see. Keeping the eyes closed only protects you from KNOWING what has just hit you.

Weaving is ducking with finesse. When a person weaves the head and/or body, they avoid the attack by adjusting the distance between by moving from side-to-side or in a circular motion. This is an art that must be practiced to be maintained to keep at a master level. Ducking and weaving are the preliminary defenses for a good blocking system. This is because regardless of whatever block you may use – the individual may decide to throw an additional 5 punches and "getting out of the way" may be the optimum response.

Enlist a family member to help you develop your evasion skills. Have them take a towel and swing it in different patterns over the top of your head or on either side of your body. You will discover very quickly where your shortcomings could be a fatal mistake. Finally always wear eye protection when practicing swinging any object at your face.

SELF-AWARENESS is "Knowing" Your Surroundings! During the warm months of the year, women have a tendency to travel farther because of the longer day-light hours. Then during the "Holly Jolly" holiday time we all but forget about our safety. Often it is the arrangements for "when the party's over" that has been neglected. Though wisely turning down the ride home with the intoxicated coworker she is only faced with having to travel home alone in an unfamiliar environment. Bottom line, in today's society, danger is only a moment away. Now how we respond to our surroundings will dictate how we are affected by the circumstances.

ALWAYS TAKE TIME TO PLAN AHEAD FOR THE UNEXPECTED!

By The Way - Tears Are A Waste Of Time. The saying, "Pride goeth before a Fall", encompasses a basic safety rule for traveling women. First, keep your "EGO" in check and zip that lip. Avoid those smart-ass answers. Next, carry a pair of flat shoes to travel. Looking cute in heels after dark may give the wrong impression.

Out running the attacker is much more practical than the 1940's myth of "after he grabs me I can always step on his foot with the sharp point of the heel". This will work as long as he keeps his foot still! Or there is the other myth: "I can always take off my shoes to run". Most times though it will be "right over" some glass or old nails.

Want to survive a kidnapping? Use that phone all the time! Remember that you are never too old to call home! When you are leaving the party shout back, "If I don't call you in 20 minutes call me then call the police". This will dissuade any tag along that you may have unknowingly gave an invitation to "meet me after midnight". The same method is ideal by having a friend call mid-way through a new house date to make sure everything is right on course. That ringing phone combined with a, "If I don't answer that, my sister will dial 911 next", may be just the edge to end a late night summit. Keep in mind that many rape victims have met their attackers.

Our counter-parts of 50 years ago would not hesitate to delegate the responsibility of their safety to a gentleman. But the streets were safer then and most clean cut men were not wolves in sheep's clothing. Today's female has evolved in to a very vocal creature, waving our constitutional rights high in the air. But the other side of that coin is that very ugly fact that there are individuals who hate freedom of speech.

Remember security at convenience stores is limited to the store grounds. And if you use public transportation, don't endure harassment. Get on any bus - better to go the wrong way then to the hospital! Lastly don't be enticed into a crusader role. If a person calls to you for help or a wide eyed crying child wants you to come with them to "help their baby sister".....

REMEMBER YOU ARE NOT A "SUPER HERO" SO GO AND DIAL 911!

Please don't misunderstand me. I am the last person to advocate that we as women run for our "panic room" as soon as the sun goes down or never speak the truth. But keep in mind with our new found independence comes the responsibility of knowing how to handle a situation where physical defense may be necessary. Then learning an adequate and effective amount of self preservation techniques is a good investment

Attacks !!! - Punches, Slaps & Grabs Number One Rule: Don't Be A Deer In The Headlights Of A Car And Just Stand There! Whether the attacker has your coat, arm or hair, a duck or weave evasive maneuver can be easily executed. Kinetics is on your side and the body can be used against itself by moving in certain directions. Basically attacks can be divided into two categories: Striking (With The Hands Or An Object) and Grabbing.

There are as many ways to punch as there are targets on the body. So for the sake of the "K.I.S.S." method, we will limit this discussion to the ones most commonly used. Punches and Slaps are similar in movement and direction. Obviously the punch can do more physical damage yet the slap can be psychologically just as devastating.

Grabs, which also include hand & body locks, are difficult to get out of if the person loses their composure. Reflex and reaction time drills are essential if one is to learn to elude a grab technique. As with punches, grabbing holds are so numerous that the one which is most feared will be the focus of our examination - Being Grabbed From Behind!

REMEMBER !!! IN AN ACTUAL ATTACK - GRABS WILL JERK THE HEAD & BODY VERY HARD & FAST!!

We have now reached the pinnacle of my martial science training journey - The Art of Preventing An Attack From Reaching Its Target! The theory, “for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction”, holds true for the art of self-preservation. Blocking may be as simple as pushing the punch out of the way or using the arm to keep a punch from connecting.

But let us also identify where ducking and weaving also plays a very important role. Let’s suppose a 250 lb. individual is swinging wildly at your face. Now the other side of the equation is that you only weigh 150 pounds. Combining acceleration with the weight difference, even the best well executed block is going to crumble like the “Walls of Jericho”. So adding a little side step with that bended elbow will redirect that angry projectile right into the cement wall behind you!

All too often many victims are too kind hearted to fight back because they feel it is wrong to inflict pain on another human being. But when someone is trying to knock your teeth out of your mouth then self-survival should take the place of turning the other cheek. A good rule for counter-attacking is “allow no one to alter your physical condition to be any worse than before the two of you crossed paths”. Counter-attacks are almost infinite since they are the combinations of the hundreds of punches, kicks & blocks developed throughout the centuries. It’s not how fancy a technique is but how well it works. Two of my favorites are “Trash Can Swing” and “Hot Iron Slap”!

Now for those “flexible” people, I recommend spending some time on the art of “placing one’s foot upside someone’s head”! Kicking takes a great deal of agility and one must continue to practice on a regular basis. But in order to learn kicks really well you will have to take a few “kick-backs” in the process!

P.S. Be advised that a lot of people watch “Karate Movies” and know how to catch a leg in mid-air! So a “great kicker” better be a “great faller”!

On to the really social aspect of the martial sciences....

TAKEDOWNS, JOINT LOCKS & GRAPPLING!

“Put your booty to the ground” are the opening lyrics to an old hip-hop song. Watching people try to accomplish this feat and still stand up gracefully justifies my belief that these optimum fighting techniques will equalize any opponent at a 180 degrees angle. Most of these techniques are preferred by security and law enforcement officers because they neutralize an aggressor quickly. The old fighting adage goes, “maximum effect with minimum effort”. The maneuvers deal mainly with attacking joints & pressure points while using the person’s weight against them or generally outwitting the individual to sweep their legs from under them. Naturally in a self-preservation document such as this one, I also would suggest to “stomp” the head of the assailant as you are running for your life screaming “Fire”!

Weapons are a Life Or Death Decision! Sticks and Stones Will Break Your Bones - And Your Mouth Can Get You Killed! Being faced with a weapon of any kind can be referred to as "The Point Of No Return". When a person points a knife or a gun at you the "5 Second Freeze" will determine if you survive. During those moments you must assess the situation and the mental state of the individual who is now your attacker. Weapons are like fire - depending on how the wind blows will dictate who gets burned. So your objective is to "fan" those flames away from you or have your best self-protection technique available to "extinguish" the flames.

Carrying a weapon is never the best idea and these are the reasons why. First, most people like to point the weapon once they have pulled it into view. Then the sad situation that takes place is that it is taken and used against them. Next, how many hours a week do people train in using their self-defense object.

For example, buy an extra canister of Mace and practice under supervision to see how it works before the necessity to use it in an attack. Finally, there is the law - which may cause a person to hesitate about "pulling" the trigger which will be long enough for the attacker to get "home court advantage. Is it possible to survive an attacker who is armed with a weapon?? I believe it is if special training steps have been taken. Seek out a class that will allow you to be both the attacker and the victim. Being on both sides of the "situation" will be invaluable for survival. Next, talk to a police officer about your needs in your neighborhood. All you may need is a good alarm system especially if you are sensitive about deadly force items.

There are now personal sound alarms available and learning how to "death scream" is always essential. Finally, be familiar with all of your environments where your work and travel. Many ordinary items can be quite effective, such as spray paint, oven cleaner, pens, perfumes and the traditional ring of keys. Keep in mind that unless you have caused the attacker to stop breathing, they are only off balance and distracted so don't wait around — leave and go dial 911.

This document is dedicated to all of our Sisters who have transitioned to the glory of the Creator. Personally, I Recognize "Wanda" Who Was My Roommate In The Women's Shelter & Crossed Over On April 11, 1980 At The Hands Of A Murderer Never Brought To Justice! May These Angels Continue To Watch Over Our Efforts To Survive In Such A Turbulent World.

"I love my life more than I love cooperating with my own oppression."

Clarissa Pinkola Estés, Ph.D. - "Women Who Run With The Wolves"!

Always Remember These Variables For A Safer Life.....

- Negotiate A Potentially Violent Situation While Assessing Options.
- Expose The Possibility Of Danger To Others Around You.
- Relocate To Another Area Immediately If The Threat Continues.
- Violence Can Happen to anyone-anytime-anywhere
- The difference between Self-Defense & Self-Awareness
- Leave Your Pride & Ego At Home. Avoid Being Baited By Words
- A Push Can be a Set Up – Keep Walking
- Hospitality Is Limited With Strangers – Watch That Friendly Smile!
- If Everyone Leaves – You Leave Too!
- Learn To Death Scream & Use Fire Alarms
- High Attack Times – Mothers Day and Valentines Day
- Know The Difference Between A Police Officer & A Security Officer
- Never Follow A Child Anywhere To Help Their Family Member
- Juveniles Are Attracted To Media Encouraged Items
- Over Come That 5 Second Freeze – (Store Encounter)
- Body Language Is The Safest Communication But Watch Your Hands
- Juveniles Can Kill Too – Understand That Unruly Child Is Not Yours.
- Understand the Difference Between Intimidation and Assault.
- Recognize the Difference Between The Need For Money & Violence
- Mace Does Not Work In The Wind
- Loose That Motherly Instinct
- Racism Is Not An Issue When You Are Feeling Uneasy
- Do Not Carry Guns Or Knives Unless You Are Ready To Kill
- Familiar Defense Items – Perfume, Oven Cleaner, Spray Paint
- Never Clean Up - Use that Camera Phone To Get Evidence
- In A Fight Act Like Cornered Rat Or that Spoiled Two Year Old!
- Legal Rights To Wear What You Want Especially At Night? Not!
- Physical Actions Begets Physical Responses
- Acknowledge Your Own Ignorance About Society
- Groups Aren't All That Safe – Guns Have Multiple Bullets
- Laws Can Protect Criminals Too – Pepper Spray – FDA Approved
- You Have The Legal Right To Wear What You Want Especially At Night? Not!
- Body Language – Run Around Objects Never Just Straight Back
- There Are More Pressure Point Areas Than “The Groin”!
- No One Should Know Every Thing – Change Up Your Patterns
- Live Alone – Have Really Big Males Visit You
- Know Who Comes Into Your Home
- Never Eat Or Drink At an Unfamiliar Location
- Adjust to Human Nature - Males Are Different Than Females
- Throw the Money And Run - Do Not Resist A Robbery Incident
- Caution the Assailant With Authority – “I will fight!” Not with empty threats – “I will kill you.”
- Act Effectively If Physically Confronted.
- Telephone Law Enforcement Immediately After The Incident.
- Someone Following You In The Parking Lot – Use Your Car Alarm