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AWARE

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Counter Weapons Training

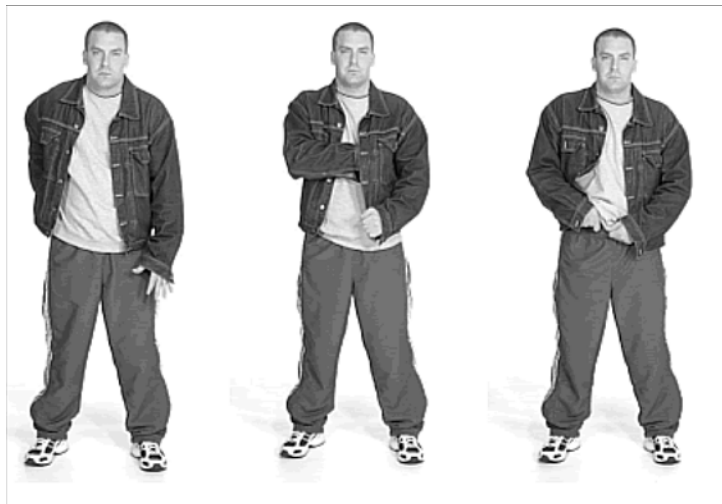
Counter weapons' training is a major topic and is deserving of an entire book of its own if you are to attempt doing any justice to the subject at all. Please bare in mind that no one system of martial art or Combatives will ever hold all the answers regarding empty hands against weapons, particularly when concerning the knife. What I teach is based on what I feel are the best methods that I have come across during the last 24 years of training. My sources come from an array of methods and experienced people, from Filipino Kali and also from Western Combatives as well as from the experience that I have gained from the 4 live knife situations that I have been involved in so far.

For simplicity any cutting tool regardless, of if it is a Stanley knife, stiletto blade, broken glass or beer bottle will be referred to from here on as an edged weapon. The fact remains that any of the above tools can only really be used against you in either swinging or slashing motion or they can be jabbed and poked at you in a stabbing motion to any number of targets on your person. Therefore any variation of these two most basic physical actions of what to expect if the knife is actually drawn and you have seen it. I will not cover such counter measures here as space, will not allow me to do the subject any justice. But we will take a look at a couple of methods that we can deal with the weapon before it has been drawn.

Body language cues:

Here we are going to rely on our awareness, our instincts and our understanding of body language. We have already discussed certain elements of this in the preceding chapters. For example understanding the verbal and physical cues of aggressive body language, and also understanding the Modus Operandi of our potential aggressor's attack ritual and dialogue. Here we are going to need to become more specific in terms of picking up on any inclination that our potential assailant is indeed carrying a weapon. Spotting any clue to that fact, before the weapon is brought into play may well be the only thing that will give you a chance to take the necessary action to get the jump on the situation.

If your aggressor already has the weapon to hand and the intention to use it, then you are most certainly going to have a harder time dealing with the problem, then if your instincts told you that he is carrying and you take action as soon as your assailant tries to access the weapon thereby shutting down the threat before he can get the knife out. Remember if you find yourself in a confrontation situation always assume the aggressor is armed. Always scan for the hands can you see both his hands and all his fingers? Some of the most common methods of concealment are palming the knife, holding it flat against the thigh or keeping the bearing hand concealed in a pocket or behind his back out of view. So look out for concealment, if you can't see your assailant's hand/s or if his palm is turned in flat against his leg or concealed in a pocket ask yourself why? Remember also that you could be approached with some kind of distracting dialogue to divert your attention before the aggressor draws the weapon. Look out for erratic eye movement, is his face pale, are his eyes wide, does his body shiver? These are all indications of his adrenal reaction that will of course be present if his intention is to stab/slash you. Such indications might be the only thing that separates you from dealing with the threat and meeting your maker. We will look at a couple of drills that will allow us to practice working off these body language cues and shut our aggressor down quickly and clinically.



Here are several examples of Body Language Cues; the first shows the aggressor move one hand behind his back. The second shows one hand concealed by clothing in this case placed inside his coat and the final pictures shows one hand reaching into the front of his waist band, obscured by his t-shirt as the other attempts to clear the garment for access.

Trap and strike drill:

In this drill you will be working off the reaction or body language cues given off by your partner. Face each other at arms length making sure that you keep your arms by your sides and are stood in a neutral position with no fence. Your partner will have a training knife behind his back tucked into his waist band. Start at no more than fifty percent speed and have your partner slightly exaggerate his movements so that you get an idea of what you are looking for. Basically if he starts to turn away slightly by moving the weapon bearing side shoulder this is a cue to move, if one of his hands starts to move behind his back or slightly out of view then this is a cue to move. You are looking for any sign that will tell you that your partner is reaching for the weapon. Your immediate action should be to step forward to shut him down and break his balance whilst seizing the arm that moves by grabbing it at the crook of the elbow and jamming it tight against his body. As you do this your free hand goes straight to his face for a chin-jab of a face smash strike or as is a more common reaction, straight to his throat for a claw grip larynx grab. From here you continue with forward pressure and continuous strikes to eliminate the threat. Once you both have an understanding of the drill as always throw away compliancy and have your partner move at full speed with a committed attempt to draw the training weapon and thrust it towards your body. If he touches you with it you would have been stabbed. Once you start to do this, it will make you a little jumpy this is good this is how you need to be to bring out the right reaction.

Start bringing in some role play and have your partner wear body armour so that you can put in the strikes with a degree of realism. Also progress to the point where your partner is wearing a heavy jacket and so all that you know is that he will draw the knife from some where. This could be from a pocket, under his shirt on the front of his waist band, strapped somewhere on his back or even to a limb or any where else he can think of any and all methods of concealment have been used and all are fair game to try out in this drill. Once you get to this point you will see just how dangerous the edged weapon threat can be. Stopping it here at this point is your best chance of dealing with the threat as once the knife is out it is even harder to deal with.



As the aggressor starts to move his hand behind his back, step in and trap his arm to the side of his body. Aim for the crook of his elbow or anywhere along his forearm. Once you get his arm keep it pinned in tight to his body and don't let go. Be sure to make a simultaneous grab for his throat making sure that you break his balance with forward pressure. Think of replacing his foot steps with your own as you follow up with continuous strikes in this case knees work really well.

Trap and strike drill two:



In this scenario the aggressor has the knife concealed in the front of his waistband under his t-shirt. As soon as a motion is made towards the weapon drop step forward and pin both hands in place to his body.



Continue this forward motion by driving the top of your head straight into his face follow up by walking violently through him with a rapid knee strike to the groin.

