

Ed Martin

Simple Escapes

Probably most people can remember those school days during which scuffling occurred under the title of 'fighting'. Some people encountered fighting enough to see that some techniques reoccurred. One of those was the famous 'headlock'. A headlock is caused when somebody tucks your head under his arm, wraps that arm around your neck and squeezes. This kind of handling can be very rough on a person's neck!

When encountering a headlock, the point to note is that both your arms are free while your opponent is using both of his to imprison your neck. One quick way of getting free is to simply grab and clench your opponent's groin with either of your free hands. Another is to reach up to your opponent's neck with your hand closest to him and then use your fingers to push on some of those nerve points at the base of the neck (points described in previous articles). A third way is to use your knee to press into the back of your attacker's leg, forcing him to fall. Most probably his hands will come loose to stop his fall, releasing you from his hold.

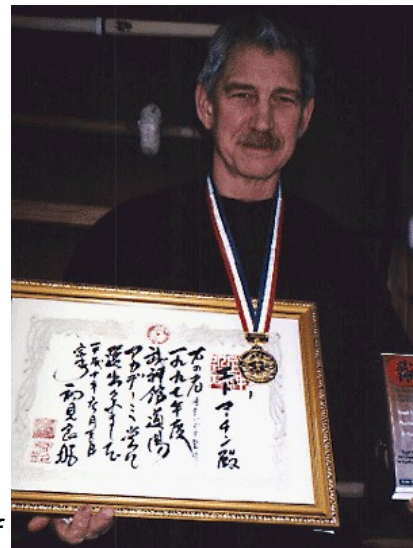
Another common attack, commonly called a 'chicken wing', forms when a person's arm is bent behind their back and raised. A quick and simple counter to this lock is to bend forward at the waist and quickly turn toward the trapped arm. This motion releases the lock and allows a reversal of the hold. Too, turning away from the locked arm while moving in to the aggressor can be effective. Bear in mind, however, that this escape requires a greater degree of flexibility in your shoulder joints. Also necessary is the immediate use of your free hand to attack vulnerable places on his body to encourage him to let go of the lock.

Next to mention of the common holds, is the "bear hug." This is where someone encircles you with both his arms and squeezes as if to crush you. If your hands are free, it is very simple to become free of this hug. Reach up to his head and neck area with both your hands. If he is facing you, use the nerve points on the neck or the face to cause him to let go. If he is behind you, you can utilize the nerve points below the ears.

Hands prove to be one of the most accessible areas of the body. You can take advantage of this accessibility in a variety of ways. Dig your finger nails into the cuticles of his fingers, then peel out one or more fingers from the grip. Lock fingers by bending them back in the direction they are not designed to go. Pressing the knuckles of your hands into the bones on top of the hands, and rubbing hard and fast across and into those bones will yield an impressive result. This is quite painful and will cause the hand attacked to open. As he releases his hold, again grab fingers and lock them. You can have much influence in this way, even control.

Please note that, if the "bear hug" traps your arms, you have fewer options. If from behind, you can still attack the cuticles and fingers. If from the front, attack the groin, or the skin on the inside of the thighs. If you grab or pinch the skin in this area it is very painful and may cause him to release you. If nothing else, it will loosen the hold and perhaps imbalance him. Opportunities are created in this way.

Many other counters exist. Stomping on the top of his foot; kicking into his shinbone are options. Twisting sideways to get a leg behind him will take his balance. The most



important point to remember is to stay relaxed and use whatever is available at the time. Don't try to use complicated maneuvers, they usually do not work. Keep it simple. Remember the Israeli motto KISS, (keep it simple stupid)? That is actually very good advice. More on this next time.