

## Lives in Action

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and Transformation

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Effective Drills for  
Continuous Improvement

## Empower Your Dojo

Free Tools and Opportunities for Growth

## Spotlight

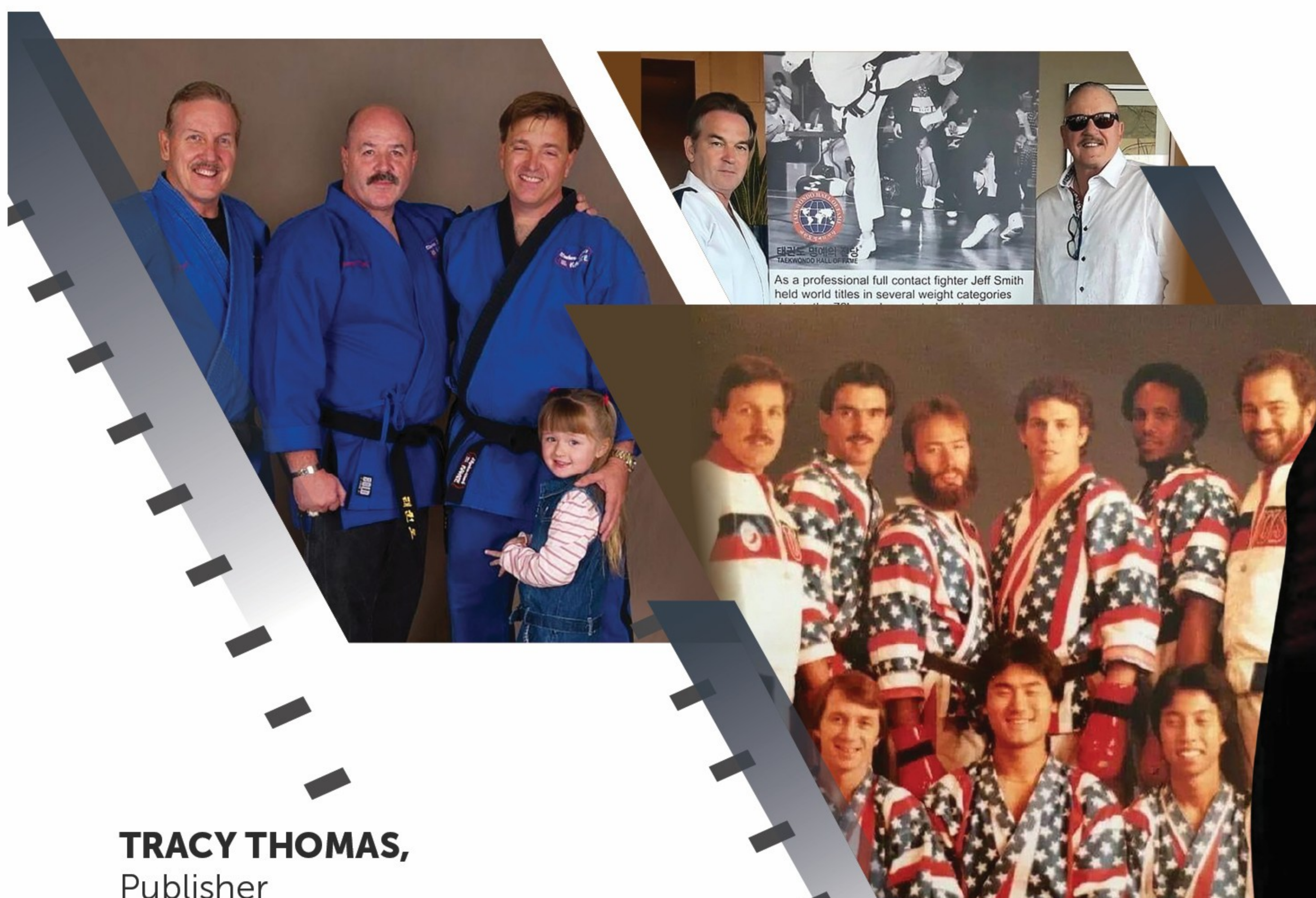
Exploring Key Issues and Influential Voices



WORLD CHAMPION  
GRANDMASTER

**JEFF  
SMITH,**

10th Degree Black Belt



**TRACY THOMAS,**  
Publisher

As a professional full contact fighter Jeff Smith  
held world titles in several weight categories







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## EDITOR'S LETTER

We're excited to welcome you to the latest edition of Go2 Karate Magazine! Summer has arrived, bringing with it a renewed sense of energy and motivation across the martial arts' community. The longer days and sunshine inspire us to train harder, set new goals, and fully embrace the journey. Whether you are a school owner, an instructor, a student, or someone just beginning your martial arts path, this issue has something special for you.

Inside, you will find powerful training insights, compelling stories, and inspiring contributions from martial artists across the country. Every feature is designed to support your growth and keep you connected to the spirit of martial arts.

We are also proud to introduce our new Creative Director, Jason Smith. Jason brings a sharp eye for design and a deep appreciation for the values that make martial arts so impactful. His creative vision is reflected throughout this issue. From the layout to the smallest design elements, his work helps bring each story to life in a meaningful and visually engaging way.

This edition also features the launch of two new sections. Our **In Memoriam** page is dedicated to honoring those we have lost, individuals who made lasting contributions to the martial arts world. Our Rising Star spotlight celebrates young and emerging martial artists who are already making a difference in their schools and communities. We are proud to include these heartfelt and hopeful additions to the magazine.

Thank you for being part of the Go2 Karate community. We are honored to share this journey with you. Enjoy the issue, stay inspired, and make the most of your summer training.

### Denise Morin

Go2 Karate Magazine | Editor





## CREATIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

It's an honor to step into the role of Creative Director at Go2Karate Magazine, a young publication with a fresh voice and a growing presence. From its earliest issues, Go2Karate Magazine has shown a strong sense of identity and potential, and I'm excited to help shape its next phase. My background in design and communications has taught me the importance of balancing vision with clarity—and I look forward to building on the foundation that's already in place while exploring new creative directions.



We have some exciting things in the works—whether it's pushing the boundaries of our design, diversifying the voices we amplify, or exploring new formats to enhance your reading experience. At the heart of everything we do is the belief that great design and compelling content can spark meaningful conversations. I can't wait for you to be a part of this new chapter. Stay tuned for what's to come!

**Jason Smith**

Go2 Karate Creative Director

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# Interview with Gareth Brown, Head Coach USA Taekwondo

By Go2 Karate

**Dr. Greg Moody:**

Hello. This is Dr. Greg Moody with Go2 Karate Magazine, and I'm looking forward to this special interview. We've got Denise Morin, editor of Go2 Karate Magazine, and we're really happy to have Gareth Brown, Head Coach, United States Taekwondo. Thanks a lot for being here, sir.

**Gareth Brown:**

Thanks for the invitation, I'm excited to chat with you guys.

**Dr. Greg Moody:**

I think a lot of the things that you talk about with combat sports are going to apply to the martial arts students. What first drew you to Taekwondo?

**Gareth Brown:**

It came through family, my father. He was in the military and at one point in his career, he was posted in Hong Kong. He learned Taekwondo, and then he brought it back to the United Kingdom where it was unheard of at the time. He just started teaching classes and training me from four years old.

**Dr. Greg Moody:**

He was probably one of the first people that started working with kids.

**Gareth Brown:**

Yeah. There weren't many Taekwondo schools, clubs, or teams based in the United Kingdom. It was those days of no protection on the feet, no match, just fighting with claws and wearing no headguards or helmets.

**Dr. Greg Moody:**

You were probably getting a little beat up at a young age. How did you transition from that to being a coach?

**Gareth Brown:**

I started coaching young through my father's Taekwondo school, often leading 20 students in a class of 60. I loved it from the start. Seeing kids succeed at their goals gave me real satisfaction and that feeling pulled me deeper into coaching. It's what sparked everything for me.

My father was in a position with local government where he managed children's homes, so there were a lot of kids under his care that were practicing Taekwondo, and I'm sure that was very beneficial to them. At the time, there weren't many kids my age doing Taekwondo. Whereas now, you see a lot of kids, especially in the United States.

**Dr. Greg Moody:**

How'd you get into combat sports and starting to compete in all the tournaments?





### **Gareth Brown:**

We focus on the high-performance Olympic path in Taekwondo, which brings intense pressure. When I began coaching 12 young athletes, I emphasized gradual exposure to competition to build confidence. Taekwondo offers many potential “X factors” speed, height, mental toughness and success comes from identifying and developing each athlete’s unique strength. As they advance, they learn to use that strength tactically against tougher opponents. This method builds confidence, resilience, and versatility key traits for long term success in the sport.

### **Denise Morin:**

What are your thoughts on what the kids are getting from martial arts that isn’t physical? Parents nowadays are looking more for the non-physical skills their child is going to gain. What, as a coach, would you say to that?

### **Gareth Brown:**

Martial arts give young kids confidence to speak up, stand tall, express themselves, and fight back when needed. With great instructors and the right environment, they gain discipline, respect,

and communication skills that transfer to school, relationships, and future careers. As training progresses, especially at elite levels like Olympic prep, martial arts instill habits like goal setting, accountability, and self-reflection. Athletes also learn about life essential nutrition, sleep, hydration, and lifestyle balance—while performing under pressure. Whether it’s your child’s first class or a shot at the Olympic podium, martial arts prepare you to succeed in high stakes, uncomfortable situations. It is personal development with a black belt.

Keep open communication with both the kids and their parents, especially for younger children. Set up a clear, structured competition plan with goals that focus on performance, not just winning. The objectives should be attainable and emphasize physical and mental growth.

### **Dr. Greg Moody:**

You’re talking about getting people to a really high level, like earning Olympic medals. How early would be the ideal time to start for that kind of Taekwondo training?



## FEATURED STORY

### **Gareth Brown:**

Some of the same methods we use at the Olympic level work just as well with eight- and nine-year-olds. They're that effective. No matter your goal, black belt in Taekwondo or karate or judo, first competition, or Olympic gold, what matters most is having clear, step-by-step objectives. If you're committed and professional, those goals are achievable. Whether you're up against a longtime rival or stepping onto the mat for the first time, clarity and consistency will carry you.

### **Dr. Greg Moody:**

How young would you like people to start if they want to earn a medal?

### **Gareth Brown:**

There's no one size fits all answers. Research hasn't nailed down the perfect starting age. We've seen athletes transition into Olympic Taekwondo from other martial arts like kickboxing, even if they only started Taekwondo recently. It's an adaptable sport, and a solid martial arts foundation. From ages six to ten tend to work well. Some kids thrive at six, others need until ten, but that age range is a good window to begin.

### **Dr. Greg Moody:**

Absolutely it's a big commitment for families. But with clear priorities and support, it's manageable. Busy schedules are normal success comes from choosing what matters most.

### **Gareth Brown:**

It's the million-dollar question. Balancing family life and training is tough, but it helps when families train together, especially with young kids. I'm lucky to have a supportive wife who carries half the load, and with my own kids, I've focused on exposing them to multiple sports first. My best advice? Let kids try different activities so they choose what they truly enjoy—because if they're not into it, it's a battle. Fortunately, my kids chose Taekwondo, which just means I spend even more of my "off" time doing what I do for work.



### **Dr. Greg Moody:**

What are the key things that people have to do? I'm really interested in the Olympic medal because I've actually had some students that moved on to Taekwondo Olympics. They trained with us for a while, and then they went to a school that was more focused on the Olympics. What kind of key milestones did they have to hit to get to that kind of really high level?

### **Gareth Brown:**

To pursue Olympic level Taekwondo, you need early and frequent exposure to international competitions, specifically within the World Taekwondo format. Start by finding a strong Taekwondo school, earn your black belt, and work your way through state and national competitions. Once you're competitive nationally, branch out into the Pan Am region—places like Canada, Mexico, and Brazil offer strong opponents. If you're still flying under the radar, step it up by competing in tougher regions like Asia, Europe, or Africa to gain visibility and sharpen your edge.



## FEATURED STORY

### **Dr. Greg Moody:**

It sounds like if you're going to get to the Olympics, you better do a lot, you better have a very high frequency of competition.

### **Gareth Brown:**

It's incredible how much more competition athletes face now compared to when I competed. They're navigating a packed calendar, often injured, because of how the sport is governed at the top, especially by the IOC, the International Olympic Committee. Changes to fit Olympic broadcast schedules completely altered the rules, which in turn changed how hard and how often athletes compete. Despite concerns, the workload keeps growing, and with Taekwondo being a smaller Olympic sport, we don't have the pull to fight it like bigger sports do. People ask when our season starts or ends, but truthfully, we don't even have one.

### **Denise Morin:**

Do you have one particular memory or story about someone, one of your students, a success story, and what that meant to you as a coach?

### **Gareth Brown:**

One of my first real coaching successes came early in my career. I was working with my father and created a program for 12 young athletes to train with me as a team—four or five times a week, plus individual and group sessions. I developed a progression: domestic competitions, then national, then international. Eventually, I began taking the team into Europe. Around that time, Great Britain Taekwondo reached out and brought me on in a subcontract role.

One standout athlete was a girl I started coaching when she was seven. We trained for years, and she competed in two Junior European Championships,

one of the toughest regions to win in. She took gold. Watching her win was unreal. She stood frozen in shock while I, still young myself, was practically doing leapfrogs over chairs. Then, out of nowhere, her father somehow climbed over the stadium wall in Cyprus and jumped into the ring hugging me with tears in his eyes. That moment, her victory, his pride, was unforgettable. Easily my most memorable success.

## “Once you're competitive nationally, branch out into the Pan Am region...”

### **Denise Morin:**

What a fantastic story! Thank you for sharing that.

### **Dr. Greg Moody:**

You work with really high-level competitors.

What would you say for people that are not as high level, or that's not something that's a focus for them. Would you feel like they would still get a lot of benefits out of martial arts?

### **Gareth Brown:**

Absolutely. Knowing why you're training is key, whether it's for fitness, emotional release, fun, sparring, or the creativity of forms. When you understand your reason, martial arts become incredibly powerful. It offers structure, progress, and confidence. Every style has a grading system; belts, sashes, or something similar that helps track growth and reinforce your improvement. It's not just about physical skills; it's about setting goals, finding the right support, and seeing clear progress. No matter your reason, martial arts delivers massive benefits across the board, mentally, emotionally, and physically. It becomes more than training; it becomes a personal journey of development and success.

### **Dr. Greg Moody:**

What challenges have you faced as a coach that had been difficult?





**Gareth Brown:**

Coaching at the grassroots level versus the national level is a completely different experience, something you only understand by doing both. Early on, I worked with a small group of young athletes and parents. It was tight knit, personal, and incredibly rewarding. At the national level first with Great Britain, then the U.S.—the pressure is higher, the dynamics more complex, and you’re managing not just athletes, but other coaches and support staff. It becomes more about collaboration than direct coaching. The biggest difference is scale. Grassroots coaching is more personal and fulfilling, while national coaching is broader and strategic. Personally, I find the grassroots level more enjoyable and impactful.

**Dr. Greg Moody:**

Well, I appreciate what you’re saying. I think that you’ve given us, and the people reading this, a lot of insight into not just Taekwondo, but Taekwondo in the Olympics.

**Gareth Brown:**

It’s a major commitment and needs serious thought. In my experience coaching in full time, government funded Western programs, athletes get top level support—everything from transition help to performance resources. But despite how well managed these systems are, many athletes leave because they underestimated the demands. They didn’t expect it to be so relentless, with constant competitions, frequent injuries, and intense external pressure. It’s not just training, it’s a lifestyle. So before committing, athletes need to ask tough questions and talk to others who’ve been through it. Understand what you’re really signing up for, because it’s not just big, it’s life changing.

**Dr. Greg Moody:**

Hopefully that message resonates with anyone starting this path. It highlights the dedication and sacrifices these athletes make. Thanks for your honesty. Any final thoughts you’d like to share with our readers, whether they’re martial artists, school owners, or simply passionate about the discipline?



## FEATURED STORY

### **Gareth Brown:**

Absolutely! The 2028 Olympics will be the first time the U.S. Taekwondo team competes on home soil. USA Taekwondo is actively recruiting talent including from other combat sports so if you dream of winning an Olympic medal, now's the time. Reach out and take your shot at history.

### **Dr. Greg Moody:**

Where can they go to get more information?

### **Gareth Brown:**

Go to [USATaekWonDo.com](https://USATaekWonDo.com). Reach out. There's a list of staff names on there and contact details.

### **Dr. Greg Moody:**

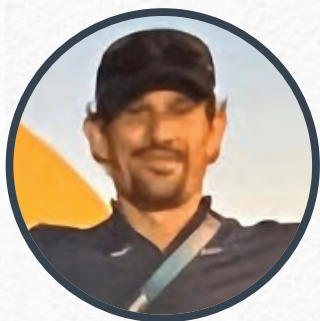
It's really inspiring to get to talk to you, and hopefully our readers get a lot out of this. Thank you so much for all the time you spent with us today.

### **Denise Morin:**

Yes, thank you. It's very interesting to hear about all the good you've done.

### **Gareth Brown:**

Thanks for having me, it's been great to meet you both. Good luck with everything that you're working on, and I hope we'll speak again soon.



Gareth Brown is a passionate and driven coach who leads the USA Taekwondo team with energy and heart. Originally from the UK, where he competed internationally and trained under elite programs, Gareth moved into coaching to help athletes reach their full potential. Since joining the USA Taekwondo in 2018, he's helped shape the next generation of champions, most notably guiding Anastasija Zolotic to Olympic gold in Tokyo. With a focus on discipline, strategy, and motivation, Gareth continues to inspire his athletes to dream big and compete with confidence on the world stage.





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# Lifetime Recognition Award

By Dr. Greg Moody, Go2 Karate

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

Welcome to Go2Karate Magazine! We're excited to be here with someone who truly uses martial arts to change lives—Professor Scott M. Sullivan, Ph.D. He's a third-degree black belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu, a former kickboxing and shootboxing champ, the founder of Bam Bam Martial Arts, and a published philosopher. Professor Sullivan, congrats on receiving the Go2Karate Lifetime Achievement Award, and thanks for joining us.

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Thanks so much, Master Moody. It's a real honor.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

You've competed on the big stage, written academic texts, and now run one of the top schools in the country. How did it all come together?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

A lot of it stems from the discipline built through martial arts. That carried into the business side, especially after learning from the Martial Arts Wealth group. Physical discipline then became business discipline.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

You've got a unique blend of academic and martial expertise. How does that show up on the mat?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Our school emphasizes character development. I draw from classical virtue ethics to help kids build values—discipline, courage, perseverance. It's more than techniques; it's about shaping who they are.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

That's powerful. What's your student breakdown?



**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

About ninety percent are kids. Most of our adult students are parents. We start at age four, though we get a lot of inquiries for three-year-olds.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

What advice do you have for school owners or parents with young kids?



## LIFETIME RECOGNITION AWARD



**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Discipline comes first. You can't teach anything without focus and order. We build motivation and rapport next. Only then do we layer on techniques. That structure matters.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

What life skills do kids walk away with?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Ninety percent of parent feedback is about the character program. Confidence, focus, goal setting, respect, willpower, we teach those skills directly in class. It is education that schools and sports often miss.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

A lot of people think martial arts are just another activity. How do you help parents to see the long-term value?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

We explain that martial arts aren't just for fun—it's for growth. Sports like soccer teach teamwork, but not self-discipline or focus. Martial arts build the internal traits that help kids succeed in all areas of their life.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

You've competed at a high level. What's the difference between competition and character-based development?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Competition has value, but our focus is self-mastery, overcoming fear, building resilience, becoming your best self. Unlike sports, where outcomes rely on others, martial arts teach personal responsibility and control.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

Right, and it's healthier than tying self-worth to trophies or grades.

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Exactly. When goals are internal, they're achievable and empowering. You can't control being the best in the state, but you can control becoming a better version of yourself.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

What do you say to parents worried about screen time and distraction?



## LIFETIME RECOGNITION AWARD

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

We all struggle with that. Martial arts build focus and discipline, skills every parent wants for their kids. It's an antidote to passive consumption and short attention spans.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

You've been running your school for a long time. What improvements have made the biggest difference?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Constant improvement—kaizen—is our approach. We're always evolving our curriculum, both physical and character based. Lately, the biggest impact came from investing in staff training. Better staff means better classes.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

How much time do you put into staff training?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

We spend several hours weekly, plus a lot of time prepping content. I created a rotating curriculum for the staff, so we cycle through essential lessons continuously. It keeps quality high.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

Just like training a kick. You don't say it once and expect perfection.

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Exactly. Repetition and consistency are key. Even a quick five-minute meeting before class can elevate performance across the board.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

Tell us about your competitive background.

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

I started boxing young, then got into Muay Thai in the '80s—before it was popular. Eventually, I fought in Japan and Russia. It gave me a global perspective and deepened my love for martial arts.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

How did that turn into a Ph.D. in philosophy?



**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

The same discipline applied. I learned to do what needs doing—even when I didn't feel like it. That mindset helped in academics and later, in business.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

Did you plan to run a martial arts school?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Not at all. I wanted to be a philosophy professor. But near the end of my Ph.D., I realized jobs were scarce and underpaid. I pivoted to martial arts and took the business side seriously, and that worked out better than expected.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

You've worked with Grand Master Stephen Oliver and Martial Arts Wealth Mastery. How has that changed your business?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

It's been game changing. I joined in 2018, nervous about the investment. My school was doing about \$32K/month. We doubled that within a year. Even partial implementation brought results. Now we've more than doubled that again.



## LIFETIME RECOGNITION AWARD

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

Do you think improving the business side has improved your instruction?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Absolutely. Structuring the business forced me to structure classes. I used to wing it, especially in jiu-jitsu, where many schools don't even have a curriculum. Now, our classes are more effective, parents see more value, and we can charge accordingly.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

So improving the business doesn't mean compromising quality?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

No, it enhances quality. It's a false idea that better business means worse instruction. If you run things well and ethically, everyone benefits.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

Any student success stories that really stuck with you?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

One comes immediately to mind. A 16-year-old kid came to us because he was getting bullied. He was the least coordinated student I'd ever seen. Two years later, he won the Indiana Golden Gloves. That moment, hand raised in the ring, black eye and all—that's what this is about.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

That's incredible. Last question: What do you hope changes in the industry over the next five to ten years?

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

I hope more instructors focus on improving both their curriculum and their business. We aim to be a force for good in our local area. That mindset, of providing maximum value, should guide more schools. And it starts with humility. You don't know everything, even with a black belt.

**Master Greg Moody, Go2 Karate Magazine**

Amen to that. Professor Sullivan, thank you again, and congratulations on your award. What you've built is incredible, and the community is lucky to have you.

**Professor Scott Sullivan:**

Thanks so much, I appreciate it



Scott "Bam Bam" Sullivan, PhD, is the founder and chief instructor of Bam Bam Martial Arts in Houston, TX. A 4th-degree black belt in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, he's recognized by top organizations including the Jiu-Jitsu Federation of Rio de Janeiro. He's a former heavyweight kickboxing and shootboxing champion with international fight experience. Dr. Sullivan also holds a PhD in philosophy and is a published author and speaker. His passion is helping others through martial arts while being a devoted husband and father. His academy has trained thousands, helping everyday people become stronger, more confident, and the best version of themselves. and add a headshot of him



# Rooted in Respect, Driven by Dreams

**By Amie Schake**

After many years of trying to have a child, our dreams were finally answered on May 9, 2010. Addison was a blessing to us from the beginning. My husband and I had to undergo in vitro fertilization to have her.

Addison was always eager to learn new things. She was always a very happy child. Being an only child had its positives and its negatives. She always received 100 percent of the attention, which she loved, but she didn't have a sibling to build that bond and learn how to compete for things.

Addison tried several different activities. She played soccer for a little while and even tried ice skating. Addison was trying to find an activity that suited her at that time. While she loved both, she wasn't sure what she wanted to do. She was young, and we wanted her to find something that she loved.

Around that time, she was also dealing with a bully at school. The girl said she wanted to be her friend, but she would get mad if Addison talked to anyone else. She was struggling with how to handle the situation with that girl. It was difficult for her. She is a very sweet and kindhearted person. She was trying to cut ties with the girl but didn't want to hurt her feelings either. We weren't getting much help from the school in handling the situation. My husband and I decided she needed to gain some confidence and learn some self-defense as well. So, we decided to give martial arts a try. Addison was hesitant at first. She thought martial arts was just about fighting, which she was not interested in. We explained that martial arts was about more than



just the physical aspect of it. We convinced her to go to a trial lesson before she decided. After that session, she was hooked. Before we knew it, the whole family had signed up.

Addison and I decided to take the three-year black belt path, while at the same time, her dad decided to go with Krav Maga. It was such an amazing experience to do as a family. She was so excited to learn each new form and weapon form. She was soaking up each lesson like a sponge. Memorizing the techniques and moves seemed to come easy to her. She was eagerly learning as much as she could. Each cycle also had a word for them to focus on, like "commitment." They were learning more than just martial arts. They were learning valuable life skills. I believe the focus on these important terms helped to shape Addison into who she is today.





She learned the value of commitment to her sport and herself. Before long, we went from classes twice a week to being there five to six days a week. Her issue with the bully was no longer an issue. She felt confident enough to stand up for herself and make her

own decisions.

Addison was thriving at the dojo. Soon, she started helping as a student instructor.

Addison had transformed from a shy only child to a confident young lady. She was helping the younger students learn their forms. She was so happy to be a leader and a good role model.

Not long into her journey, her instructors talked to her about competing in tournaments. While Addison was hesitant at first, she decided to dive into it. She was so nervous at her first tournament, but she put her heart into it and placed in all of

her events. For her next tournament, she convinced me to compete as well. That year, we both earned State Champion status. It was such a great experience for us to share. Going to the

tournaments sparked her competitive drive. She embraced the nervous feeling before competing. She learned to channel that energy into being the best she could be.

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**“Addison was thriving at the dojo. Soon, she started helping as a student instructor**

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Right after that second tournament, Covid hit, and everything changed. While social distancing and closed facilities changed how the class was conducted, Addison never missed a beat. She continued her black belt journey via Zoom classes, practicing on her own and, eventually, smaller classes. During this time, her main instructor also moved away. Addison had a special bond with him. It was very hard to see him go, even though we knew it was best for him. Addison didn't let either of these moments set her back. She was determined to get her black belt no matter what.

Eventually, the dojo opened back up, and classes continued as close to normal as they could. Addison continues to push herself to reach her goals. Her hard work paid off, and she received her black belt

in the summer of 2021! She had grown so much as an individual. While getting her black belt was an amazing accomplishment, she had gained so much more than that over the three years. Life lessons that will stay with her for her entire life. She learned about dedication, integrity, and the value of hard work. She set goals and achieved them.

Addison was getting older, and while she still loved Tae-Kwando, she decided she wanted to get back into soccer. While her martial arts journey ended there, the lessons and values she gained from her experience stayed with her. When Addison sets a goal, she sticks with it and does everything she can to reach out. She doesn't let anything or anyone stand in her way.

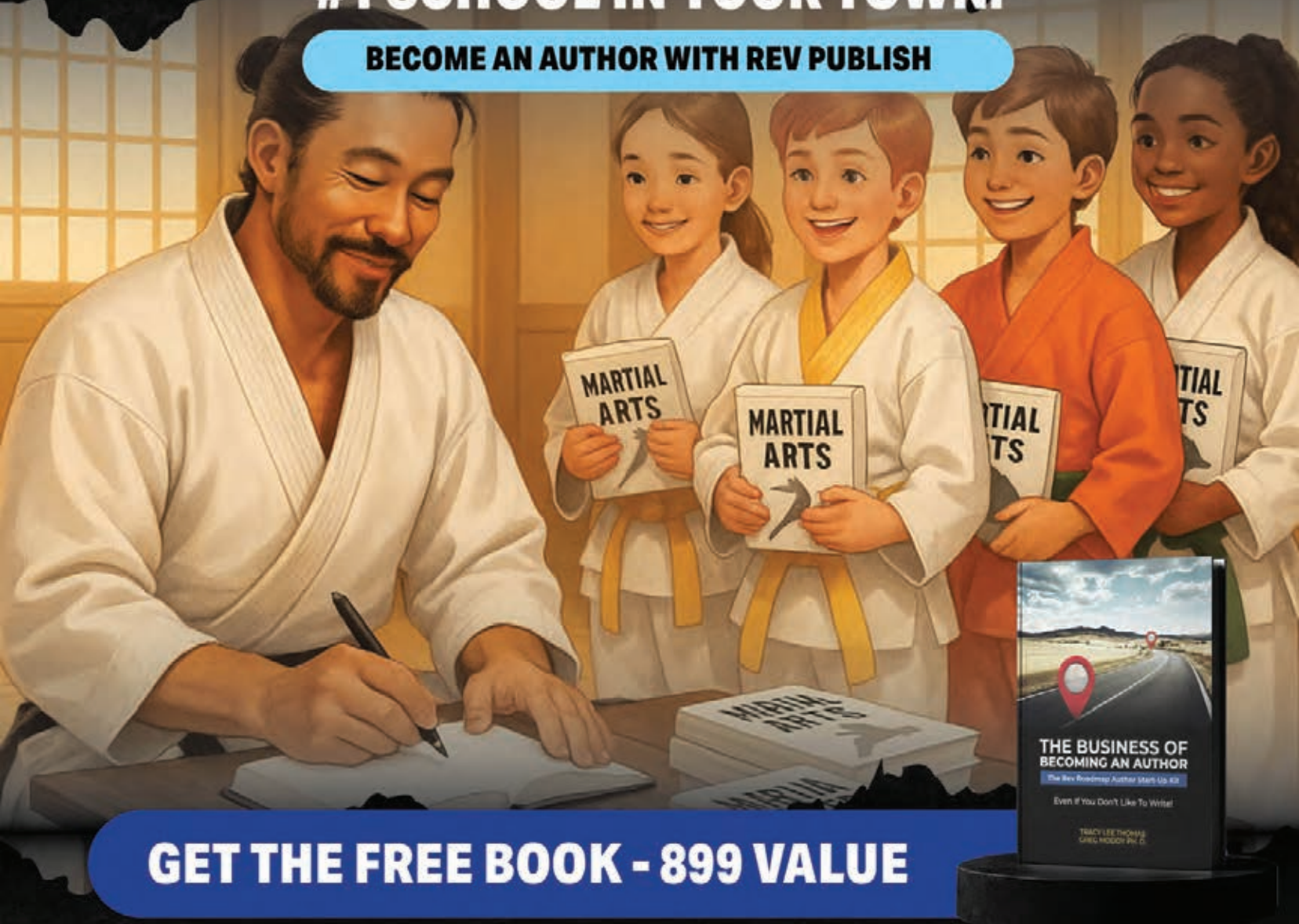
Addison has been playing soccer again for the last 4 years. She trains with her team three times a week. She also does additional smaller group practices with her coach; in addition to that, she has been training at the gym with a strength trainer. All through middle school, she would get up at 5 am twice a week to go to the gym before school. She has been training at the gym for over three years. Her consistent dedication to training was developed through her training at the dojo. She knows that if she wants to achieve something, she has to put in the work. This year, she was invited to play with her Club's top National team in Phoenix, Arizona, and the International Team in Barcelona, Spain! Both of these teams consist of the top players in her club from all over the United States. I strongly believe her dedication and commitment to her sport and herself came from her years in martial arts.

Addison hopes to play soccer in college and maybe even professionally. I can't wait to see where her hopes and dreams lead her. We are so thankful to the Instructors and classmates she worked with during her years of martial arts training. Lifelong friends and memories were made through our years at the dojo.



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# Effective Conflict Resolution – Part 3

By Dr. Greg Moody

Now we're getting to the good stuff! In part 1 we delved into understanding conflict and why it occurs, and why we need conflict. Just as important was understanding the difference between conflict, violence, and abuse (bullying, etc.). Part 2 covered the critical ideas of the different types of conflict (so you can identify what's happening), resolution vs. just de-escalation. In our final entry we are – literally – getting to the good part: **Good Conflict!**

## GETTING TO GOOD CONFLICT

Remember we all have the tools to resolve conflict, but when emotions get high, when buttons get pushed, when there are Perception, Preference, Process, or Pressure issues (see Part 2), things break down. Let's try to identify how to get to good conflict and real resolution!

### FIRST: USE THE RIGHT TOOLS (Even When You're Mad)

There are five internal skills that are a **prerequisite** to make conflict possible to resolve:

- **Humility:** "I could be wrong. You could be right. Let's talk." Hardest time to say this? Right in the middle of the fight. Do it anyway.
- **Awareness:** "I can see where I'm wrong." (Not that I'm wrong every time—but I can see it when I am.)
- **Responsibility:** "It bothers me when I make a mistake." If it doesn't bother you, you've got a bigger issue.
- **Empathy:** "It bothers me when I hurt you." Be capable to hear their feelings even if you disagree.

- **Reliability:** "If I'm wrong, I'll change." Simple, not always easy.  
You don't need the other person to have all five—**you need you to have them.** Start there.

## SECOND: DON'T MIXING UP COMMUNICATION ISSUES AND SKILL DEFICITS

Watch out for communication challenges. An example of this could be someone with autism – they communicate differently (not wrong but different). Others lack the actual reasoning skills. Some examples of this could be someone with a personality disorder (or even a child or teenager who hasn't learned them yet).

Don't confuse poor wording with poor intent or with being incapable of resolution. **Meet the communication level, not the frustration level.**

## FINALLY: FOLLOW THIS PROCESS

Here's how to get through conflict with resolution as an intent, not "being right".

### 1. Narrow the Problem

Focus on **one issue**. Just one. And it may not be your side of it – trust you will get a turn. If you say, "I don't like when you X," and they reply, "Well I don't like when you Y,"—you're now arguing about Y while pretending to fix X.

**One issue at a time. Period.**

### 2. Validate Before You Try To Resolve

Before anyone solves anything, both sides must feel heard. Not "I get it, but..."—that's fake empathy.



Repeat back or paraphrase what they said. Literally. Like: "So what you're saying is..."

Do this before you state your case and continue to repeat until you understand and they agree that you understand. You can't skip this step even if you are 100% sure you understand their point!

### 3. Solve (With One of These Five Options)

Here's more good news - there aren't a million ways to solve a disagreement. Paying attention to this is a key point to move forward. There are five options:

**Option 1: Win-Win:** Everyone gets what they want. You can come up with a new solution that satisfies everybody (if you didn't narrow and validate, this is close to impossible).

**Option 2: Compromise:** Each party gets most of what they want. Not perfect yet now you not only get most of what you want, but you understand why the other person's position.

**Option 3: One Way:** We do it your way (or my way). The key here is the difference between acceptance and tolerance. If I accept? Even if I didn't get what I want, I can make a new plan accepting our solution. If I tolerate? I agree to the solution, but I am upset about it. That starts resentment.

**Option 4: Wait:** We both agree to pause and revisit it. A key here is to define when we are going to reengage. One of us storms off and never brings it up again? That's stonewalling (part 2).

**Option 5: No Way:** We're just not doing it. We're agreeing to leave things the way they are. Acceptance vs tolerance again - If both parties accept that—fine. If one tolerates it? Again, resentment.

**4. Plan:** It's important to figure out the next steps. Most people get here and quit. "We talked, we're fine now."



**5. Adjust:** Don't wait until someone forgets to take out the trash (again) and you're ready to declare emotional bankruptcy. Talk about it in advance. What happens when it goes sideways? Plan for it to be ok. "What do we do if this falls apart?" Can we remind each other? Can we agree to revisit it without blaming? Do we have a monthly team meeting? A Sunday check-in?

If you miss this step, your resolution isn't stable.

### THE BENEFITS OF GOOD CONFLICT

Remember good conflict builds relationships and teamwork:

- Restores trust
- Grows connection
- Reduces stress
- Boosts self-awareness
- Builds long-term skills (for life, not just work)

You want high-performing teams, successful partnerships, happy marriages? Learn to resolve conflict. Not avoid it. Not de-escalate, resolve.



### WHAT IF IT DOESN'T WORK?

Start by asking: Did you follow the steps? Was there a breakdown during validation, planning, or adjustment?

There are three main reasons why it still may not work. First, it might not be conflict at all—it could be abuse or bullying, which involves an imbalance of power, repetition, and the intent to cause harm. Second, you may be dealing with a personality disorder. Somewhere between 9-15% of the population meets criteria for a diagnosable disorder (and cluster B types like narcissistic, borderline, antisocial, and histrionic are notorious for making conflict impossible to resolve). These individuals often create chaos rather than seeking solutions. In that case, your job isn't resolution—it's managing the drama. Lastly, if what's happening involves violence or abuse—whether it's physical, emotional, verbal, or neglect—then it's not about resolution. The next steps are safety, self-defense, and law enforcement. In short, if resolution fails, check the process first—but if it's not about conflict, don't treat it that way.

### CONFLICT RESOLUTION WRAP UP

Conflict is inevitable, but how we handle it determines whether it builds relationships or burns bridges. Throughout this guide, we've covered why conflict resolution matters—not just for reducing drama, but for saving time, money, and sanity. Understanding the “Four P's” of conflict—process, preference, perception, and pressure—helps you slow down and identify what's really going on before reacting. That alone can keep you from going down the wrong road. But identifying the problem is only step one.

The real transformation happens when someone decides to break the bad conflict cycle. That's when the skills need to be used: narrow, validate, solve, plan, adjust. These are tools for leadership, personal growth, better relationships, and team trust. Bad conflict creates distance. Good conflict creates growth.



Dr. Greg Moody graduated from Arizona State University, with a degree in engineering, a Master's Degree in Counseling, and a Ph.D. in Special Education and Psychology. An 8th Degree Black Belt, a serial entrepreneur, and a licensed psychotherapist, he speaks and writes on education, curriculum development, business, marketing, and martial arts. Dr. Moody has been a part of the Go2 Karate team for many years and is passionate about helping school owners grow. Whether it's a marketing platform, online marketing, becoming an author, or creating a business roadmap, he is always there to assist those within the martial arts community.



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# Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back.

**By Liz Beddow**

That was the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life slogan when my mom and I were Team Captains with Chief Master Michael Wegmann at Vision Martial Arts in North Carolina. Shortly after the relay season started, my mom was diagnosed with Stage 4 pancreatic cancer.

I had been taking part in the Relay since I was 12, raising money for the American Cancer Society, never realizing my family would one day be on the receiving end.

At my first team captain's meeting after her diagnosis, I let the committee know what was going on. At 20 years old, I had to quit school and work two jobs to help pay bills. Often there was only a ride for either work or treatment. Sometimes my mom waited hours in the waiting room until someone could pick her up.

We got connected to Road to Recovery and the Hope Line. Having a volunteer transport my mom to and from treatment was a game changer. That Relay was the first year I walked as a caregiver, and her only year walking as a survivor. After six months of fighting back, she passed away.

The next year, I struggled to return. Chief Master Wegmann asked if I'd like to be a captain again. I asked for time but ultimately decided to continue. I continued because of a volunteer who had once driven my mom to a treatment. I came home from my first job exhausted, and there she was, feeding our dogs. She told me my mom was resting, offered to stay so I could nap before my second job, and promised to wake me up. When I came downstairs,



a cup of tea and a sandwich were waiting. She had quietly slipped out the door.

That experience gave me hope in a very hard time. The program that allowed for that moment was funded by the work I had helped do. I wanted to make sure someone else could have that kind of support.

We continued fundraising, but I felt we weren't reaching everyone. Funds raised support Road to Recovery, the Hope Line, lodging for patients, and grants for cancer research, many right here in the Raleigh-Durham area. I personally know two survivors who went through clinical trials at Duke, funded by ACS.





In 2018, our Relay was small, and participation was low. My dad had passed away by then, so I went to my uncle for advice. He asked what I was good at. “Martial Arts,” I said. We brainstormed and landed on a Kick-A-Thon. I had never run a fundraiser like that before, but he encouraged me to reach out and ask others how they did it.

I contacted PTAs, met with the local ACS branch, and spoke with Chief Master Wegmann about trying something new. I organized our first Kick-A-Thon with a \$2,000 goal and invited two nearby Vision Schools. We raised \$10,000.

The next year, all six Vision Martial Arts schools joined in. I reached out for sponsorships and raffle donations from local businesses. This time we raised over \$30,000.

The following year, we aimed even higher. Chief Master Wegmann suggested turning it into a Master Party, inviting Master Instructors to teach specialty seminars. After training, students taken part in another round of the Kick-A-Thon.

My husband, Sr. Master Beddow, has been our MC since the first event. Each year, he gets more creative, motivating students by increasing

incentives for each kick round. In 2024, with help from our students, staff, and community, we raised over \$51,000 with 423 participants. The energy in that room, everyone kicking for a common goal, was electrifying.

This year, our goal is \$55,000. I know we’ll make it.

What started as an idea brainstormed with my uncle is now our largest Vision Give Back event of the year.

This past July, at ATA’s World Championships, I was honored with the Sun Lee Service Award for my work with the Kick-A-Thon and the American Cancer Society. Receiving it in front of so many friends and family who helped build this event made it even more meaningful. I wear the medal proudly and love it when someone asks about it, because I get to share what we do.

As always, I end with a PSA: Many cancers can be caught early through prevention. Please visit [Cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org) to learn your risk factors and what screenings are recommended. You can also call the Hopeline at 800-227-2345 for support or questions about cancer-related concerns.



# The Path of Purpose

**By Kris Rhoads**

Growing up as a twin shaped my whole childhood. It made me feel different, and honestly, I got picked on and bullied a lot in school. My dad was a black belt in the ATA, and in 1995, he got my brother, and I started in martial arts with Jeff and Tina Newberry in Mattoon, Illinois. We trained, went to tournaments, and even turned some of them into family vacations when the tournaments were out of state. But, like a lot of kids, I got distracted. I missed belt tests because I chose birthday parties over training. Eventually, we took a break from martial arts altogether when we moved.

Moving became a pattern. We moved again during my 8th-grade year, and I ended up at Metamora High School. My high school experience was anything but normal. I spent three and a half years in a traditional school before switching to an online program in my senior year. At the same time, I took college courses and, at 18, became a volunteer firefighter. I ran medical calls, responded to accidents, and even saw my first house fire. But my real goal was law enforcement.

I wanted to be as prepared as possible, I was told military service would help. That's when I met Master-at-Arms, Second Class Jason Morris. A friend of mine was training to become a Navy SEAL, and through him, I got to know Jason. We talked for a year before I finally decided to enlist. At first, I wanted to follow in his footsteps, but my focus shifted once I learned about Naval Special Warfare. I went into boot camp with the goal of making it, and I did. I got into the SEAL prep course. However, after some time, I made the decision to take a different path and became an Intelligence Specialist instead. That choice shaped my entire future.

The Navy made me who I am today. Funny enough, it also led me back to martial arts. While serving, I started teaching to help cover the cost of my own training. During the day, I was a Navy Sailor. At night, I was a martial arts instructor. Eventually, I earned my black belt and continued training under Senior Master Corey Coffrin when I moved to Bloomington, Illinois, after the military. I worked in sales, kept teaching, and stayed involved in





## A VETERAN'S CORNER

martial arts until there just wasn't a spot for me anymore. After that, I finished school and moved again, landing a job with a local police department before transitioning into a full-time Deputy Coroner position investigating deaths

Martial arts has always been a part of my life, even when I wasn't actively training. As a kid, I was fascinated by it. My dad's black belt status made it seem cool, and I was naturally flexible, so people were always asking me to show off some kick or stretch, but when I actually started training, I was terrified. In my first class, I didn't even want to leave the wall. It took me about a year to get comfortable enough to actually participate.

Still, I was hooked. I was obsessed with Power Rangers, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, any show where people kicked and flipped their way through fights. My instructor even set world records for breaking boards, and I remember thinking how lucky I was to be one of her students. Over the years, I have had some amazing mentors: Jeff and Tina Newberry, Tracy Thomas, Denise Morin, Bruce Dano, Corey Coffrin, and Elisha Coffrin. They weren't just instructors; they were people who shaped me. They were my mentors, my friends, my counselors. They showed me what real leadership looked like.

Looking back, martial arts prepared me for the military in ways I didn't even realize at the time. It taught me resilience—the ability to keep going when things got tough. I can't count how many times I wanted to quit, but I pushed through until I found my strengths. And when I picked martial arts back up while serving, everything made more sense. The rank structure, the discipline, the mindset—it all clicked for me.

Some of the biggest lessons I carried over from martial arts to the military were breathing techniques and knowing how to fall, both of which were lifesavers. But maybe even more important was learning that I didn't have to do everything alone. The martial arts community is bigger than just one person. There's always someone who is willing to help.



I haven't opened my own school, at least yet. But if I ever step away from law enforcement, I know that's a possibility. If I do, it'll focus on defense and personal security. I have a huge amount of respect for the military and law enforcement communities, and I want to help bridge the gap between them and the public. There's a lot that people don't understand about these professions, and I'd love to help change that.

Thinking about my journey, it all connects—my childhood, the Navy, law enforcement, martial arts. It's all shaped who I am. Martial arts taught me discipline and gave me skills I still use today. My Christian faith has also been a big part of my journey, keeping me grounded no matter what challenges I face. The world can be chaotic, and people can be unpredictable, but I try to stay positive and keep pushing forward.

One of the most important lessons I've learned is that the best fight is the one that never happens. Knowing how to de-escalate a situation before it turns physical is the real skill. Being a great martial artist isn't just about throwing the best punch—it's about knowing when not to throw one at all. That's something I carry with me every single day, whether I'm on duty, in training, or just living life.



# A Day In The Life Of A Master

**By: Adam Theros**

Most days start and end on the mat. New students always get a personal welcome—intro classes are something worth doing face-to-face. On the other end of the spectrum, the black belts and candidates come in for their advanced training. Classes run Monday through Saturday, and a strong team of instructors helps keep everything moving. Their development stays a priority that everyone teaches in line with our values.

Time is regularly spent with beginners, helping to lay the foundation. A few days a week, it's black belt training. Staying connected to all levels keeps everything in perspective.

Fitting in personal training around a full teaching load is a unique challenge. With the World Tang Soo Do Association, there are regular chances to sharpen skills. Master Instructors gather yearly to refine techniques and share ideas, and quarterly regional training brings together martial artists from across Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. Local sessions with Chicagoland instructors add to that rhythm. Sometimes, joining a black belt class just to drill something specific makes all the difference. Other times, the school is quiet during the day—perfect for focused, solo work.

Tang Soo Do remains a constant source of growth. Lately, there's been a focus on breaking techniques down in new ways, helping students see the art from different angles.

Classes follow a rotating curriculum, grouped by rank. This structure keeps the pace steady and the energy high, with each group receiving



training tailored to their level.

Belt testing happens every three months for adults, every two for youth. The younger students progress through more belts, giving them a rhythm that fits their development. Evaluation weeks are scheduled in advance to make sure everyone is on track.

To keep motivation high, students work toward earning Black Belt Character stripes—recognition not just for martial arts, but for schoolwork, acts of kindness, discipline, and even healthy eating habits.



## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MASTER



It's a way to build strong character, both inside and outside the studio. Those with a competitive spirit take part in monthly in-house tournaments, earning points toward trophies at the end of the season. The Holiday Banquet is always a crowd favorite, where awards are handed out and progress is celebrated.

Injury prevention is built into everything. With age comes the need for more mindfulness, nutrition, warm-ups, and consistent training. Each class begins with dynamic movement, getting both mind and body ready to train.

One class per week focuses purely on sparring. The rest rotate through core themes—forms, self-defense, and sparring drills—all aligned with the curriculum. A yearly training schedule helps students plan ahead and train with intention.

Tournament prep, test readiness, and curriculum retention are baked into the rhythm of classes. In-house tournaments provide regular performance

opportunities and build confidence for events like Regional, National, and World Championships. Regular curriculum quizzes give students a chance to take ownership of their learning.

The real reward comes from watching students grow. Families often walk in looking for help—more focus, confidence, and discipline. Watching those kids develop into leaders, watching them transform—that's what makes it all worthwhile.

Running the business adds another layer. Teaching is only part of the job—there's the front desk, finances, staffing, and programming. Weekly hours are long: classes from late afternoon through evening during the week, and mornings on Saturdays. Full-time staff meet weekly, instructors bi-weekly, and youth leaders train regularly. Events fill the calendar—Buddy Days, Parent Nights Out, weapons seminars, women's self-defense classes, and monthly tournaments.



## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MASTER

Community outreach is another cornerstone. Martial arts programs run through local park districts in two off-site locations. Booths, school seminars, and anti-bullying programs, staying involved is part of the mission. Even fundraisers have made an impact, like raising over \$15,000 for St. Baldrick's in honor of one of our students. Giving back stays at the heart of it all.

Health and wellness stay in front of mind. Teaching advanced classes often becomes a form of stress relief. Nutrition is a work in progress—progress over perfection. Mindfulness helps.

Time off means leaving town completely—vacations are the only way to fully unplug. If the break isn't taken somewhere else, work tends to follow. Two or three weeks a year of full disconnection brings the reset that's needed.

Personal martial arts goals don't get left behind. Being part of the World Tang Soo Do Association means continued learning and continued inspiration. Training with high-level martial artists across the world is a reminder to keep improving.

Could a change be made? Earlier bedtimes. Late nights are a bad habit, and better sleep would make a huge difference. That's the current personal challenge, one step at a time.

Ultimately, it's not just about mastering technique. It's about helping others discover who they are through the discipline of martial arts. Each day brings new faces, new challenges, and new opportunities to lead by example. As the years go on, the mission remains unchanged: to teach, to grow, and to inspire. That's the life of a master, lived one lesson at a time.



Master Adam Theros is a 5th Degree Black Belt in Tang Soo Do and the owner of Northwest Indiana Martial Arts Academy (NWIMAA) in Schererville, Indiana. He began training in 1993 and earned his black belt in 1998, later becoming a certified Master Instructor through the World Tang Soo Do Association in 2016. In 2013, he founded NWIMAA, now a thriving 7,000+ square foot facility serving over 200 students of all ages.

Master Theros is also a licensed Bully Expert, dedicated to creating a safe and empowering environment for his students. He serves as the Assistant Regional Director for WTSDA Region 5 and regularly leads community outreach programs, including youth martial arts classes in local parks.

His entire family shares his passion—his wife and son are both black belts, and his daughter is actively training, continuing the tradition of martial arts excellence and family leadership.





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# Parenting with Purpose: Melissa Bosstick's Keys to Raising Resilient Children

By Rev Publish

Melissa R. Bosstick's debut book, *Keys to Kids: How to Tame the Little Monsters*, published by Rev Publish, is a heartfelt and insightful guide to parenting that combines personal experience with practical advice. As a mother of four and a dedicated martial arts instructor, Bosstick has spent years shaping young minds—both in her home and in her martial arts school. This book is a culmination of her firsthand experience, offering parents an invaluable resource for raising confident, well-adjusted children.

At the core of *Keys to Kids* is Bosstick's belief that parenting is a journey, not a destination. She understands that every child is unique and that each family faces different challenges. Through the pages of this book, she shares relatable stories, wisdom from years of working with children, and actionable steps parents can use right away. Covering topics from discipline strategies to fostering open communication, Bosstick provides the tools needed to navigate the ups and downs of raising children.

One of the book's key themes is the importance of structure and routine. Bosstick highlights how children thrive when they have clear expectations and a sense of security. She explains that structure doesn't mean rigidity—it's about creating a predictable framework that helps kids understand boundaries and responsibilities. Drawing from her martial arts background, she shows how discipline



and consistency help shape children into resilient individuals. By incorporating structured routines, parents can create an environment where kids feel both safe and empowered to explore the world.



## AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT

Beyond structure, *Keys to Kids* emphasizes the power of communication. Bosstick believes that truly listening to children and confirming their emotions is essential. She explores how many behavioral challenges arise from misunderstandings between parents and their kids. Through practical advice, she guides parents in fostering open conversations, encouraging children to express their thoughts and feelings freely. By building this foundation of trust, parents can strengthen their relationships with their children and create a more harmonious home.

One of the most compelling aspects of *Keys to Kids* is Bosstick's ability to share personal stories that resonate with parents. She doesn't just offer theoretical advice, she provides real-life examples from her experiences raising her own children and working with families in her martial arts school. She recounts moments of struggle, learning, and growth, making the book feel like a conversation with a trusted friend rather than a set of rigid rules. Her authenticity makes her guidance more relatable and reassuring for parents facing similar challenges.

Discipline is another major focus of the book. Bosstick explores different approaches, stressing the importance of consistency, fairness, and teaching rather than punishing. She recognizes that every child is different, so discipline must be tailored to the individual. She offers insights on setting appropriate consequences while reinforcing positive behaviors. Rather than relying on fear-based discipline, she advocates for a balanced approach that helps children understand the reasons behind rules and expectations.

What sets *Keys to Kids* apart is its emphasis on preparing children for independence. Bosstick understands that parenting isn't just about managing behavior in the moment—it's about equipping

kids with the skills they need to thrive in life. She discusses the importance of teaching responsibility, decision-making, and self-sufficiency from an early age. Through small, everyday actions, parents can instill confidence in their children, helping them grow into capable and responsible adults.

Bosstick also highlights the importance of self-care for parents. She acknowledges that parenting can be overwhelming and that many parents struggle with guilt when taking time for themselves. However, she reminds readers that to be the best parent possible, they must also care for their own well-being. Whether it's prioritizing personal growth, maintaining relationships outside of parenting, or simply allowing themselves grace on tough days, Bosstick encourages parents to find a healthy balance.

As a first-time author, Bosstick's passion for helping families shines through in every chapter. Her writing is warm, engaging, and filled with a genuine desire to





## AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT

support parents on their journey. This book isn't about achieving perfection—it's about embracing the learning process of raising children. She reassures parents that mistakes are natural and that what truly matters is the effort put into building strong, loving relationships with their kids.

The stories and lessons in *Keys to Kids* make it a valuable resource for parents at all stages. Whether someone is struggling with discipline, looking for ways to strengthen their bond with their child, or simply seeking reassurance that they're not alone, this book provides guidance and encouragement. It's also a great resource for educators, caregivers, and anyone who works with children, as its principles apply to any environment where kids need structure, support, and guidance.

Published by Rev Publish, *Keys to Kids* marks an exciting start to Bosstick's journey as an author. Given her experience, wisdom, and dedication

to helping families, it's likely that this is just the beginning of her contributions to parenting and child development literature. Her perspective, shaped by both personal and professional experience, offers a well-rounded approach that is both insightful and practical.

In a world where parenting advice can often feel overwhelming or contradictory, *Keys to Kids* stands out as a practical, heartfelt, and relatable guide. It reminds parents that they're not alone in this journey and that with patience, understanding, and the right tools, they can raise confident, kind, and capable children. Bosstick's insights serve as a powerful reminder that parenting isn't about control, it's about guidance, giving kids the keys they need to unlock their full potential.



Melissa Bosstick is the co-owner of Family Success Martial Arts in Bloomington, Indiana. A 3rd Degree Black Belt in Songahm Taekwondo, she began her martial arts journey in 2000, training under Chief Master Phillip Minton. Originally a gymnast, Melissa was drawn to taekwondo as a way to connect with her husband, Shane Bosstick, during his instructor training—but quickly discovered a deep passion for the discipline herself.

Together, Melissa and Shane founded Family Success Martial Arts with a mission to empower students through life skills, discipline, and personal growth. Their family-operated school creates a supportive environment for people of all ages and abilities. Melissa is also the author of *Keys to Kids*, a book focused on child development and confidence-building. She and Shane have four children, all black belts, reflecting their belief that “a family that kicks together stays together.”





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# In Memoriam

## Honoring the Martial Artists We Lost in 2025

In 2025, we bid farewell to martial arts legends—teachers, pioneers, and visionaries whose impact transcended borders and styles. Go2 Karate Magazine honors their memory, celebrates their legacy, and extends heartfelt condolences to their students, families, and the communities they touched.



### **HANSHI DOUG PERRY**

**MARCH 6, 1937 – FEBRUARY 16, 2025**

Hanshi Doug Perry began his martial arts journey in September 1956 at Parris Island where he trained under Hanshi Tatsuo Shimabuku in Isshin-Ryu Karate-do. He later studied with Kyoshi Bill Hayes of Shobayashi Ryu and had interactions with Sensei Kanei Uechi of Uechi-Ryu. In 1997, he received the rank of Hachidan from Hanshi Shugoro Nakazato and was appointed to represent the Shorinryu Shorinkan Kyokai in North America. In 2009, he was promoted to Kudan (9th Degree Black Belt) by Grandmaster Nakazato in Naha, Okinawa.

A decorated U.S. Marine Corps Major, Perry served over 24 years, including two tours in Vietnam, and was awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received in combat.

He opened a dojo in Hendersonville, North Carolina, in 1983, which he managed for over 30 years before passing it on to his student Patrick Lang.



### **SHIHAN HUSSAINI**

**DECEMBER 28, 1964 – MARCH 25, 2025**

Born in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India, Shihan Hussaini was a multifaceted personality: a karate expert, actor, sculptor, painter, and archery mentor. He made his acting debut in 1986 with Kamal Haasan's "*Punnagai Mannan*" and appeared in several notable films, including Rajinikanth's "*Velaikaran*."

Hussaini was the founding father and serving general secretary of the Archery Association of Tamil Nadu, turning archery from a niche pursuit into a thriving sport in the state. He was known for his extraordinary feats, such as allowing 101 cars to drive over his right hand and breaking thousands of tiles and bricks in succession.

He succumbed to blood cancer after a courageous battle, leaving behind his wife and daughter.



**GRAND MASTER GARY LEE COX**  
**JANUARY 5, 1941 – MARCH 25, 2025**

Known affectionately as “Sensei Gary,” Cox ran Kiai Martial Arts in Sandy, Utah, for over 50 years and was inducted into the U.S. Martial Arts Hall of Fame. A former Green Beret, he blended warrior grit with grandfatherly warmth—cosplaying at Comic-Con one weekend, sharpening sword kata the next. His dojo motto, “Discipline is an act of love,” lives on in the generations he guided.

**GRAND MASTER SUNG HWAN CHO**  
**JUNE 15, 1938 – APRIL 3, 2025**

One of the last pre-Kukkiwon Taekwondo pioneers in the American Southeast, Chosabomnim handed down 1960s Chang Hon forms exactly as he learned them in Korea. He spent 50 years insisting that etiquette mattered as much as edge-of-the-foot accuracy, often reminding black belts, “A true master is measured by courtesy.” He passed after a quiet battle with lung cancer, surrounded by senior students reciting the tenets of Taekwondo.

**RICHARD NORTON**  
**JANUARY 6, 1950 – MARCH 30, 2025**

From raucous Hong Kong fight scenes to Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu seminars, the Australian action icon lived a life most martial artists can only imagine. Norton earned black belts in Zen Do Kai, Goju-ryu, and BJJ before choreographing stunts for dozens of Hollywood blockbusters. He remained a humble coach until his sudden passing at 75, inspiring practitioners to pursue excellence both on the mat and behind the camera.

**ECHOES OF THEIR IMPACT**

The loss of these masters leaves us with both grief and gratitude. Their teachings echo each time a student bows onto the floor, finds courage in a sparring round, or chooses respect over rage. As we move through 2025, and as Go2 Karate continues its mission of uniting the martial arts community, let us honor their memory by: Practicing with the sincerity they demanded. Sharing knowledge freely, as they did. Serving our own students and neighborhoods with the same passion for personal growth and service. May we train harder, live kinder, and bow a little deeper—because giants once stood where we now stand.

Last updated April 21, 2025. If you know of another martial artist who has passed this year and should be remembered, please contact the editors at Go2 Karate Magazine.



# Life Lessons from Legends of the Condor Heroes:

**By Go2 Karate**

*Legends of the Condor Heroes: The Gallants* isn't just a martial arts epic, it's a story full of valuable life lessons that resonate beyond the screen. Guo Jing, the central character, is not born into greatness. He comes from humble beginnings and faces immense challenges as he navigates a world torn by political conflict and martial arts rivalries. Throughout the film, he demonstrates the power of persistence. He doesn't give up despite the obstacles in his path, whether it's facing formidable opponents, dealing with personal loss, or struggling with self-doubt. For kids and adults alike, *The Gallants* teaches that true heroism isn't about being the strongest or most skilled; it's about the ability to keep going, no matter how tough things get.

The core theme of the film is the importance of loyalty to friends, family, and the greater good. Guo Jing's sense of duty and honor drives many of his decisions, even when they are not in his own self-interest. His loyalty to his masters, his friends, and his country illustrates how maintaining one's integrity can be a powerful force in shaping not only personal character but also the world around us. These values are especially important for younger viewers, as they are often at the stage in life where they are learning about the importance of trust and commitment.

The martial arts training in *The Gallants* serves as an example of how dedication and discipline lead to mastery. Martial arts require intense focus, practice, and a strong mind to control one's body and reactions. Guo Jing's journey is filled with intense training sessions that teach him not only physical

strength but also mental clarity. This can inspire young viewers to develop their own discipline, whether it's in sports, academics, or personal goals.

Though Guo Jing is often seen as an individual hero, his journey involves countless moments of teamwork and collaboration. Whether he's learning from his masters, fighting alongside allies, or making difficult decisions for the benefit of a group, the importance of working together is consistently highlighted. For families watching together, this underscores the idea that success in life is rarely a solo effort, and that working with others toward common goals is key to achieving great things.

The characters in *The Gallants* are not one-dimensional heroes or villains; they are deeply human, with flaws, fears, and moments of growth. Guo Jing, in particular, learns the importance of understanding and controlling his emotions, especially in high-stress situations. The film emphasizes empathy, as he often has to put himself in the shoes of others to make difficult decisions. This offers a wonderful opportunity for parents and caregivers to discuss emotional intelligence and the value of compassion with younger viewers, showing that strength comes not just from physical ability but from understanding others' feelings and needs.

Throughout the film, Guo Jing's journey is guided by the question of his true purpose and the responsibilities that come with his destiny. He has to reconcile his personal desires with the greater good, a struggle many people face as they navigate life's challenges. *The Gallants* helps viewers, especially





young ones, understand that finding one's purpose takes time, and often involves sacrifices and hard decisions along the way. It's a powerful reminder that each person's journey is unique, but that everyone has the potential to make a meaningful impact.

Loss is a recurring theme in *The Gallants*. Guo Jing faces emotional setbacks and personal tragedies that could easily have broken him, yet he finds the resilience to continue fighting for what is right. His ability to process grief, learn from it, and still push forward despite personal pain is a crucial life skill. It teaches viewers that while life may involve hardships, resilience is the key to moving forward.

The film places a strong emphasis on the role of mentors in shaping a person's character. Guo Jing's relationship with his teachers and martial arts masters is a testament to the value of guidance and learning from those who have more experience. This offers a great opportunity to discuss with kids the importance of seeking advice, learning from others, and giving respect to those who help guide us in life.

The characters in *The Gallants* must often grapple with questions of justice, right and wrong, and what is truly honorable. As they face personal and political dilemmas, they must make decisions that have lasting consequences. Guo Jing's journey teaches the importance of understanding one's moral compass, standing up for what is right, and questioning injustices, making it an excellent vehicle for discussions on ethics and justice in real life.

By watching *Legends of the Condor Heroes: The Gallants*, families can not only enjoy an action-packed adventure but also explore these valuable life skills together. Whether it's learning about perseverance, emotional intelligence, or the importance of teamwork, the film offers timeless lessons that everyone, young or old can take with them long after the credits roll.

### **THE LEGENDS OF CONDOR HEROES: THE GALLANTS - Official Trailer**

<https://youtu.be/uyIPBAmy1hY?si=Hlw4NshAmCneE3-n>



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# Mastering Sparring: Training Drills and Tactical Guidance for Instructors

By Cesar Ozuna

Sparring is a dynamic exchange between two individuals, influenced by each fighter's physical capacity, reflexes, and mindset. It is a responsive dance—each movement, block, or strike should be intentional and adaptive. This guide presents training ideas and drills to help instructors enhance their students' sparring effectiveness across core elements such as offense, defense, distancing, combinations, physical conditioning, and strategies against larger opponents.

## Punching Fundamentals

Start with the basics. Effective punching isn't just about power—it's about technique and timing. Focus on:

- **Penetration and Reach:** Encourage students to go in deep with each punch, closing the gap effectively.
- **Discretion:** Teach them not to telegraph punches; subtlety is key.
- **Twist Finish:** Emphasize a proper twist at the end of the punch to add power and control.
- **Guarded Striking:** When throwing a reverse punch, block or cover with the opposite hand to stay protected.



## Offensive Tactics

Sparring is a reactionary art. Offensive techniques should be strategic, with these core principles:

- **Reactive Striking:**
  - o Kick when the opponent uses their hands.
  - o Block and punch when they kick.
- **Exploit Openings:**
  - o If your kick goes unblocked, press the advantage with repeated kicks.
  - o Target circular and horizontal kicks aggressively.





- **Linear Advantage:**

- o Prioritize the side kick—its linear path and quick knee lift make it efficient.
- o Use the hand to block incoming sidekicks.

- **Opening Technique:**

- o Avoid starting with a #2 kick: instead, end with it for greater impact.

- **Breath Control Awareness:**

- o Avoid attacking right after your opponent exhales—they are often prepared to counter.

### Three Types of Offense:

- **Attack with Defense:** Initiate with a strike but be ready to block. While defending, look for counterattack opportunities.
- **Active Defense:** Defensive actions that transition immediately into offense.
- **Counterattack:** Stop the opponent's action before it escalates—this requires speed and predictive skills.

### Defensive Principles

Solid defense builds confidence and sets up counterattacks:

- **Effective Blocking:** A block should either stop or redirect the attack. If it doesn't, don't strike back blindly.
- **Footwork Discipline:** Never retreat more than one step. Retreat with purpose, drag feet to maintain balance, and avoid straight-line backing—always angle out.
- **Knee-Up Defense:** Elevate the knee while moving forward or backward to guard against low strikes.
- **Hand Blocking:**
  - o Use the front hand to block #1 attacks.
  - o Reposition the hand immediately to guard against follow-ups like double kicks.
  - o Use the back hand for #2 kicks and always follow with a counterattack.



## SPARRING

### Mastering Distance

Sparring is where two private spaces intersect. Mastering distance is essential for both defense and offense.

- **Proximity Control:**
  - o Stay far enough to avoid your opponent's reach, but close enough to strike effectively.
- **Reading Habits:**
  - o Learn and anticipate your opponent's tendencies to time your entries.
- **Footwork Drills for Distance Control:**
  - o Static stance
  - o Bouncing
  - o Lateral movement
  - o Double-steps (backward and forward)
  - o Step-and-drag (both directions)
  - o Upward steps
  - o Side slides

### Combination Drills

Effective combinations train students to think several moves ahead. Use these patterns:

- **Combo 1:**
  - o Back fist punch → Fake side kick → Reverse side kick → Reverse punch

### Combo 2:

- o Back fist punch → Side chamber → Axe kick → Reverse punch

### Combo 3:

- o Side movement → Block round kick → Punch

### Combo 4:

- o If opponent lifts front leg: Evade → Back fist → Spin 360° behind opponent

### Combo 5:

- o Shuffle → Crescent kick → Back fist punch → Reverse punch

### Combo 6:

- o Left knee up → Reverse punch → #2 side kick → Reverse side kick with slide

### Physical Conditioning Drills

Physical preparedness underpins successful sparring. Use these routines to build stamina and agility:

- **Sprints**
- **High-Volume Kicks:**
  - o 80-90 #1 kicks and 50-60 #2 kicks per minute
- **Leg Strengthening:**
  - o Hold the leg straight for 2 minutes





## SPARRING

- **Jump and Clap:** Build explosive strength
- **Sliding and Twisting Drills:** Develop agility and fluidity

### Tactics Against Larger Opponents

Facing a bigger opponent requires strategy over strength:

- **Avoid the Line of Fire:**
  - o Move off-line or, ideally, behind the opponent.
- **Angles Over Force:**
  - o Use angular footwork to destabilize their reach advantage.

- **Speed Beats Size:**
  - o Larger opponents often have slower legs—use speed and agility to get in and out.
- **Pressure Fighting:**
  - o Deny them space—stay close to neutralize reach.

With consistent practice, clear instruction, and the right mental approach, students can elevate their sparring performance. Instructors can use these drills and principles to structure well-rounded, strategic training sessions that develop fighters who are not only technically proficient but tactically aware.



Grand Master Ozuna, born in San Pedro, Paraguay in 1958, is a distinguished martial artist and founder of the Songahm Taekwondo Federation (STF), which unites over 200 schools across ten South American countries. With a career spanning over four decades, he has significantly influenced martial arts globally, especially after relocating to South Florida in 1997 where he opened six ATA schools. Under his guidance, more than 300 instructors and numerous black belts—including his three daughters—have flourished worldwide. He holds multiple high-ranking black belts, including Grand Master certifications in Moo Duk Kwan and Songahm Taekwondo, and an extensive background in international business and finance. Multilingual and internationally experienced, Grand Master Ozuna is a respected leader shaping martial arts education across continents.

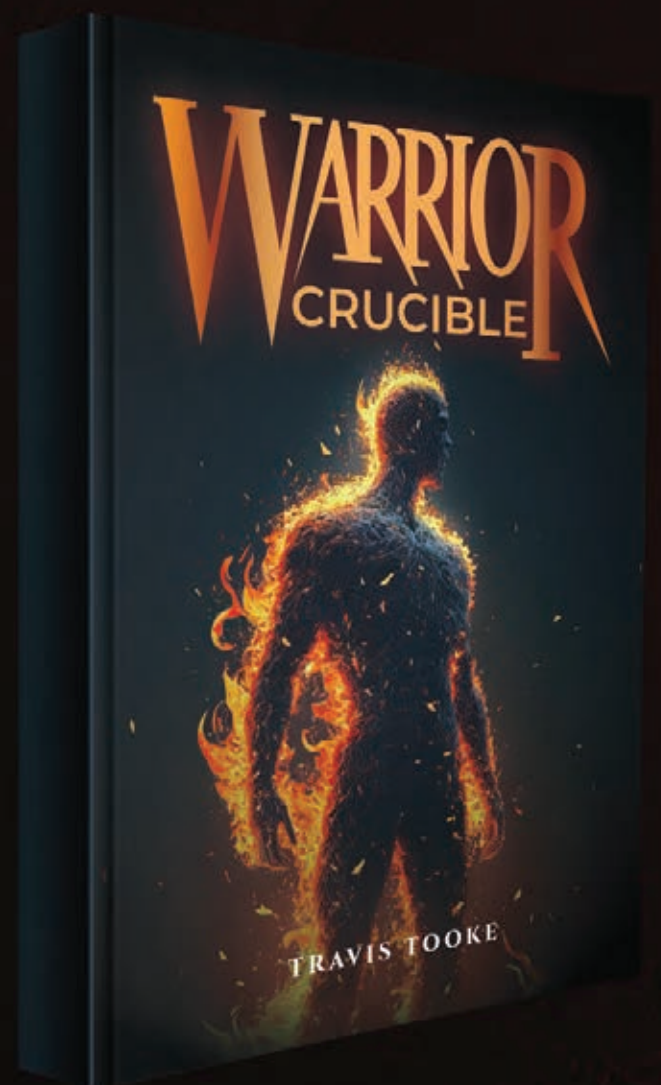


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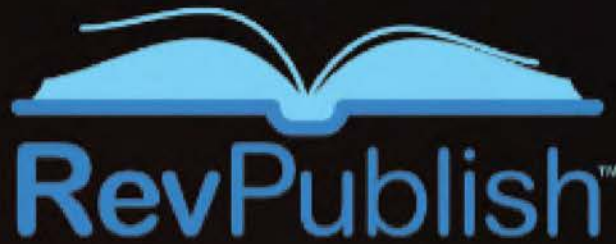
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# Krav Maga Transitions

**By Master Michael Brown**

Status Quo. Things are operating normally. It is what most people desire. In the best of times, it is hard to maintain. It happens to be the exact opposite thing that happens in a violent encounter.

Unless you are stationed in a combat zone or live in a high-crime area, then violence is not an everyday occurrence. Unless you train for violence and the chaos that comes with it, you run the risk of freezing. Circumstances in a fight are always different: The time of day. The size of the opponent. He pulled his knife. To that end, your training should include what I have coined “Transition Training.”

Transition Training does not focus on individual techniques but creates “flows” to prevent Krav Maga students from becoming complacent, as parameters are always changing.

Too often, we focus on individual techniques and

drills that don’t cross over. You trained in striking skills and feel confident in an engagement, but now he has a handgun. The unpredictability of a street fight necessitates quick decision-making and adaptability.

This concept is evident in mixed martial arts. The well-rounded fighter is more likely to win his fight. A quality ‘stand up’ paired with a good ground game makes the fighter a double threat. Understandably, there is a big difference between a competition and a violent street encounter, but that is where Krav Maga comes in. Today, we will explore different types of transitions that I teach my students. The first three focus on striking and kicking drills and are used in basic classes. The following drills are more advanced but can be integrated in part into the beginner classes.







## Hands / Elbows / Knees / Feet

I focus on three techniques for every class. A long-range kick, a strike with the arms, and a close-range technique like an elbow, knee, or head butt. You should work variations in your strikes and kicks. It is important for two reasons. The first is that the more variation of angles you throw, the more likely it is that they will land. Developing combinations of strikes and kicks can overwhelm your opponent. As they respond to techniques, others are being thrown from other angles.

The second is that you must train from the point of view that you will be injured. People get injured in fights. When it happens, this does not mean the fight ends. As a matter of fact, your injuries are more likely to multiply at this point if you can't adjust. The best bet is to have the ability to adapt

and use the other weapons of the body. An example would be if you break a knuckle, you can transition to using your hammer fist. Varying your technique allows you to not only confuse an opponent but to continue your fight even while injured.

## High / Mid / Low Zones

When training, a student would do well to vary between the High, Mid, and Low Zones. Kick low to the shins, then punch to the face! The same premise as in the multiple techniques section above. As an opponent experiences pain or injury in one zone, he will often leave openings in the others. The student should take advantage of this opportunity when it arises. You should train in combinations that transition from one zone to the other to make your attacks more effective. If your transitions amongst the zones are reflexive through your training, you become much more of a threat.

## Standing / Kneeling / Ground

One drill I use in class is on command, to transition between the ground, kneeling, and standing without any pauses. The natural tendency would be to pause as you transition from one position to another. When your life or safety is on the line, you never pause. You aggressively attack from one position to the next without ever disengaging from the fight.

## Stick and Move

This is a drill I use to increase aggression/competitiveness in students. It also creates confusion. This is where the true Krav student should thrive. The Stick and Move drill involves hitting a heavy bag three times and aggressively finding the next target. The bigger the class is, the more chaos. Perfect! The rules are that a student cannot wait for another student to finish his or her strikes on the bag. They must find a bag not being used. The competitiveness you foster is useful as you learn to commit aggressively in fights.



A variation on this drill is to also use pads laying on the ground and make the students transition from standing to ground and pound and back again. This is a great drill to train students for multiple attackers.

### **Weapon / Empty Hands**

When I train students with weapons, I train them for the eventuality that they will lose their weapon or that they gain a weapon an attacker had. Or that when in an "empty-handed" encounter, a weapon is introduced in the fight. Many people make the mistake of putting all their trust in a weapon. I often say in class, "I would rather be a weapon than have to wield one."

Students will use their sticks or knives while striking bags. On a whistle command, students drop their weapon and seamlessly continue fighting without pause. Then, while striking the bag, the next whistle is the signal to pick up a fallen weapon. To make it

more interesting, I will have students switch bags on command and pick up different weapons. I make it a competition of who is not only able to pick up his weapon but is able to engage with it first.

Many schools teach weapon disarming but don't prepare the student to continue the fight when the weapon is dropped. The transition to losing or gaining a weapon prepares a student for the reality of a combat situation.

### **Passive Stance / Attack**

This drill trains the student to respond in a position of disadvantage. We adopt the adage that, "The fight you always win is the one you are never in." With the student not in a 'threatening' stance, he is more likely to be able to de-escalate the situation. So we adopt the 'Passive' stance. The student is flat-footed, with hands up in a manner that is nonthreatening and clearly trying to de-escalate. With this training, the student has plenty of





experience transitioning into the fight if things don't go well. A whistle is the best signal in class because it is quick, clear, and easy to respond to.

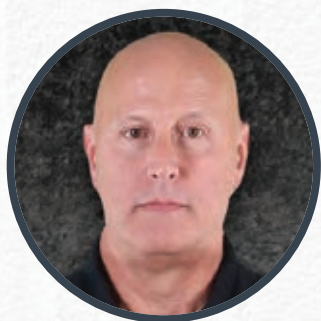
## Flows

### Striking / Joint Locks / Stick / Gun / Knife / Groundwork

In my advanced training classes, drills are performed at a much higher level. At this level, basic techniques are much more reflexive. Now, we combine different disciplines to make 'Flows.' The instructor will start the student out with some 'surprise' self-defense move, which flows into three different disciplines. An example would be the student would have his eyes closed while spinning to disorient him. An attacker would then, for example, bear hug the student. The student would then defend and flow into three disciplines chosen by the instructor such as striking, joint lock, take down, and ground and pound. The parameters are always changing. Learning to transition between the different disciplines mimics the unpredictability of a street fight.

Training in basic techniques is important. It prepares you to throw techniques that are effective and keeps you from injuring yourself. When basic techniques can be thrown efficiently, and you become solid in your self-defense moves.

Transitions ought to become part of your training. Flowing seamlessly between different disciplines allows you to be prepared for the unexpected. Find ways to create your own Transitions. Combine your striking with your JiuJitsu. Combine a joint lock when disarming a knife. The possibilities are endless. Open-mindedness to what could happen allows you to grow. I hope this article helps you to grow in your training. Live your best life, and as always, Stay Safe!



Michael Brown is an author from Fayetteville, NC. He is an eighth-degree black belt in Taekwondo. He is also a certified instructor in Krav Maga. He has been serving his community in self-defense training for over 35 years. Michael enjoys working with the Military, law enforcement, and civilians. He is a two-time world champion in sparring and a former Captain in the United States Marine Corps. He is a firearm safety expert/instructor who trains individuals in both concealed and carry techniques and in handgun safety. He also enjoys the occasional contracting with military units at Fort Bragg, NC.





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# The 1911, the 2011, and the Craftsmanship in Between

**By Todd Droege**



Let's talk about one of the best pistols ever made, the 1911. It's a legend. And the only thing better than a classic 1911 is the next step in its evolution: the 2011. But before we get to that, let me tell you how this whole thing started for me.

Back in the day, a buddy and I started a company called Tactical Evolutions. We were conducting pre-deployment training for the Department of Defense at Crane Naval Base in Indiana. (Yeah, I know, a naval base in the middle of the country. But it was legit.)

My friend had written letters to a Special Forces guy when he was a kid, and this guy would write back, even while deployed in Vietnam. Fast-forward many years, and that same soldier showed up at our range to teach us a few things. Meeting him was incredible, but getting to shoot and learn from him was even more so. That was something special.

Of course, like any gun guy, the first thing we asked him was what pistol he was running. That's when everything changed.



Turns out, he'd won the President's Cup in the military, one of the top shooting honors you can get. And his pistol? A custom-built 1911 by Bob Marvel from Crete, Nebraska, one of the best 1911 builders in the world. Guys from all over, no matter the brand, sent their 1911s to Bob to get tuned. If you wanted a pistol that ran, Bob was the guy.

The next week, I called Bob Marvel. He picked up the phone himself. I told him who we were and what we did, and that we needed one of his legendary 1911s for training. Thanks to our Special Forces friend, he agreed and said it would take 3 to 5 years and a deposit to get on the list. I didn't even know what options I wanted. I just knew it had to be a .45, because that's what the real-deal shooters used.

A week later, Bob called again. One of his customers had backed out, and he had a finished Classic model, polished, blued, with thin green Micarta grips. He sent me a photo and a price with a DOD discount. I couldn't write the check fast enough. It was \$3,500 back then, which would be approximately \$10,000 in today's money. That pistol had his initials engraved on the barrel, which he only did for builds he completed from scratch.

That first Marvel 1911 was a dream. Later, I ordered another, which took five years, and it's just as special.

Back in the '70s and '80s, if you bought a 1911, you'd shoot one box of ammo, then take it straight to a gunsmith to make it reliable. But not with a Marvel gun. It just runs. It's 2025 now, and I've never had a single malfunction in either one. They're built to be shot, not just shown off, and I still shoot them all the time.

Whenever I pull one out at the range, it always sparks a conversation. People ask what I'm shooting, and I love letting them run a few rounds through it. It's cool to watch someone experience true craftsmanship.

Eventually, STI came out with the 2011. It was based on the 1911, but with some serious upgrades, mainly the double-stack magazine. The old 1911 .45 held 7 to 10 rounds. We got fast at reloading, which I'm thankful for today. But the 2011? Depending on the caliber, you could hold 13 to 20 rounds. Huge advantage.

Glock, Beretta, and all the modern duty pistols carried 15+ rounds, and the military was shifting





toward 9mm. Easier to qualify with, less recoil, and let's be honest, women were joining the ranks in bigger numbers, and many of them are phenomenal shooters. They pay attention to detail, they listen, and they shoot accurately.

So yeah, I had to get one. I picked up an STI Edge in .45, because I wasn't ready to let go of that proven stopping power. The 2011s were dominating in the competition world: fast, reliable, high-end race guns. They weren't cheap, though. They ran \$2,000–\$3,000 just for the pistol. Magazines ran about \$70, and if you wanted them tuned, even more.

I showed up to my first training day with it, carrying four mags on my belt and one in the gun. Scotty Reitz, our lead instructor from ITTS in LA, took one look at my rig and said, "Don't fall in a pool." I had about 120 rounds on me and felt like I weighed an extra 50 pounds.

Scotty was a hardcore 1911 guy, so he gave me some grief. But when everyone else ran out of ammo, I just kept shooting. Those were wild times, a few

years after 9/11. The mission was real, and everyone took it seriously.

Years later, STI became Staccato, and the 2011 evolved again. This time, it wasn't about competition. Staccato pistols were duty-ready and built for self-defense. I picked up a Staccato P full-size first. Then I added the C model for everyday carry, about the size of a Glock 19. Perfect for concealed carry, and with a red dot and light, it was everything I needed.

A few weeks ago, I took the C out just to see how far I could push it. Started at 50 yards, no problem. Then moved back 10 yards every few shots. At 140 yards,

I still hit three out of four shots on steel. Not bad for a carry pistol.

Here's my take: the 1911 isn't a beginner's pistol. But once you've trained, once you're safe and responsible, go ahead and step up to a 1911. Or better yet, a 2011. Glocks are great, rugged and reliable, like a Hummer. But the 2011? That's your Porsche.

Always Be Training.

**Todd Droege**

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**“Staccato pistols were duty-ready and built for self-defense...”**

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Todd Droege is a Taekwondo Grand Master Instructor, the founder of Tactical Martial Arts in Marietta, Ga, a Personal security expert, and a former DOD contractor. He is second in the command structure of GTMA, one of the fastest-growing martial arts organizations in the world, under Grand Master G.K. Lee.





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# The Importance of Recovery in Athletic Performance: A Focus on Martial Arts

By Lisa Agens

Recovery is often overlooked as an important part of training and competition, but it is just as important as the preparation and sustainability for success in any sport, and martial arts are no exception. Martial arts are intense! They demand strength, speed, and technique but also endurance, focus, and discipline. Recovery allows martial artists to optimize their performance, reduce the risk of injury, and maintain their mental focus, enabling them to consistently perform at their best. In past articles, we have explored the importance of nutrition in training and competition; now, let's talk about in-between and after!

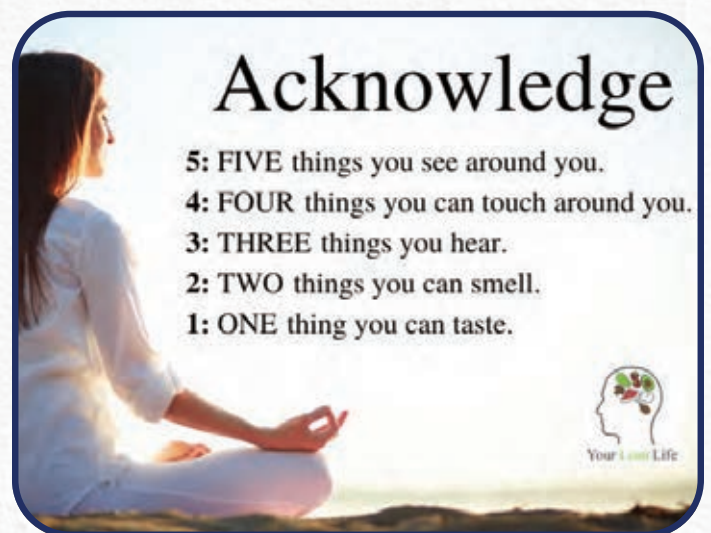
## 1. Muscle Recovery

Training is taxing on the muscles. Whether practicing forms, breaking, kata, striking, grappling, or a combination, the intensity of training sessions leads to small tears in muscle fibers. While these tears are normal and a necessary part of building muscles and strength, they also require adequate recovery time to heal properly. The recovery process involves rest and nutrition to repair and rebuild these muscles

Muscle recovery begins immediately after training and continues for several hours or even days, depending on the intensity of the workout. The

body repairs and strengthens muscle fibers, which leads to an increase in strength and stamina, during the downtime. Muscle recovery strategies include:

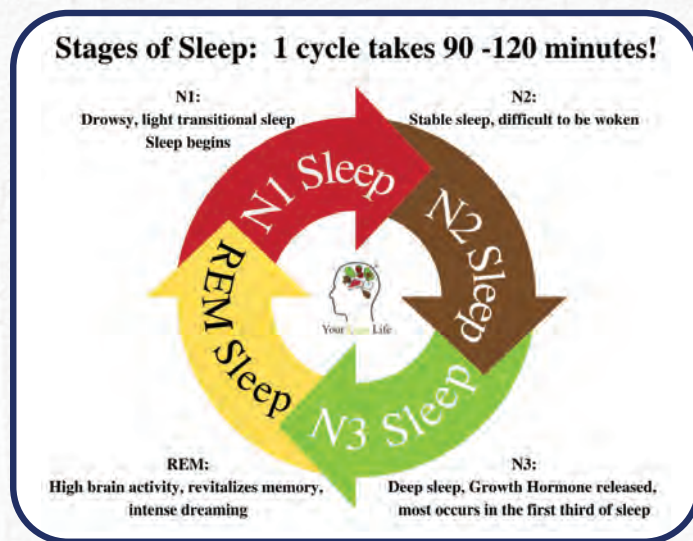
- **Nutrition:** Adequate protein intake is crucial for muscle repair. After a training session, the muscles are more receptive to protein synthesis. Consuming complete protein-rich foods before and around your training can help fuel muscle recovery after.





- **Rest and Sleep:** Sleep is essential for muscle recovery since it is during this period (particularly the second half of the night) that the body produces growth hormone, which plays a critical role in tissue repair. More specifically, N3 (Deep or slow-wave sleep) is when your body repairs its tissues. This should total about 20-25% of your sleep time. A lack of sleep can significantly hinder recovery.
- **Active Recovery:** Low-intensity exercises, such as walking, swimming, or light stretching, can promote blood flow to the muscles, improving the delivery of nutrients that help in muscle repair.

## 2. Endurance Recovery

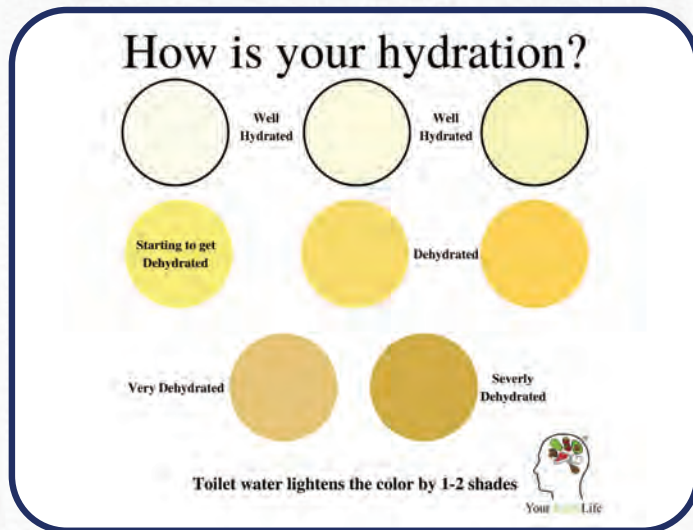


Endurance is particularly important for martial arts since it requires sustained cardiovascular and muscular endurance. Whether engaging in a prolonged sparring session, a long-distance run, or a series of intense drills, our bodies experience both muscular and cardiovascular stress. Endurance recovery involves replenishing energy stores, reducing fatigue, and restoring cardiovascular efficiency.

During intense physical exertion, the body uses stored glycogen as its primary energy source. Glycogen is stored in the muscles and liver, and once depleted, it leads to feelings of fatigue, muscle weakness, and a significant decline in performance. After a high-endurance workout, the body needs to rebuild its glycogen stores. This is where nutrition comes into play.

- **Carbohydrates:** After training, it may be important to replenish glycogen levels by consuming carbohydrates. Complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, help to replenish glycogen slowly, while simple carbohydrates, like those found in sports drinks or white rice, can replenish glycogen more quickly.
- **Hydration:** Proper hydration is crucial during endurance recovery, as dehydration can impair the body's ability to recover efficiently and can increase the risk of injury. Water helps maintain the balance of fluids and electrolytes in the body, while also aiding in the transport of nutrients to tissues and the removal of waste products.
- **Rest:** Similar to muscle recovery, endurance recovery requires rest to allow the body to fully recover. This includes both time between training sessions and an appropriate sleep schedule. Our bodies thrive on consistent sleep schedules! Training without adequate rest can result in brain fog, fatigue, diminished performance, and an increased risk of injuries like strains or sprains.





### 3. Hydration and Electrolytes

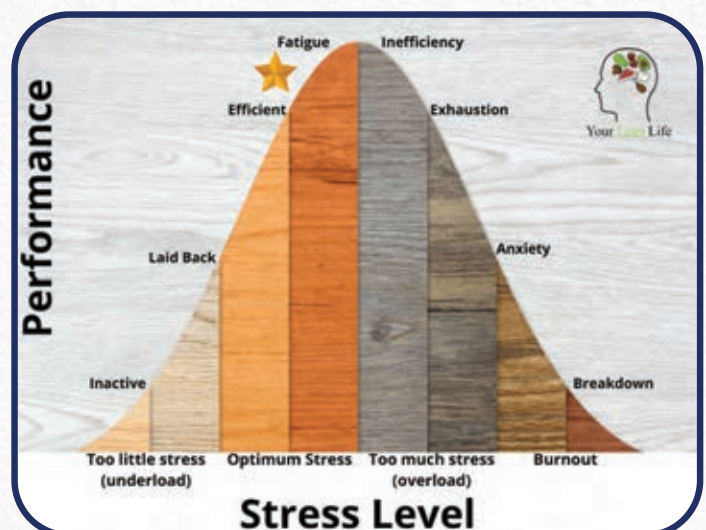
As you may have read in previous articles, hydration is a very important aspect of training. It is also very important in recovery! Martial artists who engage in intense training or fight in hot, humid environments need to be aware of their hydration and electrolytes not only during training, but also as a solid part of their overall recovery. Dehydration can have a significant impact on performance, recovery, and overall health.

When the body sweats, it loses not only water but also electrolytes, which are essential for maintaining fluid balance, nerve function, and muscle contraction. Sodium, potassium, and magnesium are the primary electrolytes lost through sweat. When these electrolytes are depleted, it can lead to muscle cramps, fatigue, dizziness, and even more severe conditions like heat stroke.

Proper hydration strategies include:

- **Water:** Water should be consumed regularly throughout the day to maintain hydration levels. During training, it is important to sip water frequently rather than gulping large amounts at once. This ensures that the body maintains a steady level of hydration.

- **Electrolyte Replacement:** While water is essential for hydration, it is also important to replace lost electrolytes, especially after long, training sessions. Electrolyte drinks, sports drinks, or other supplements can help replenish the body's stores of sodium, potassium, and magnesium. There are many products on the market, so know how much electrolytes each product you are looking at is providing. Often, the electrolytes lack and the sugars exceed needs for trainees.
- **Monitor Hydration Levels:** Athletes can monitor their hydration by tracking their urine output. Clear or pale yellow urine is typically a sign of proper hydration, while dark yellow or amber urine may indicate dehydration.



### 4. Mental Recovery

It is clear that physical recovery is crucial for martial artists, but mental recovery is just as important. The mental demands—focus, discipline, strategy, and the ability to react under quickly—can be just as exhausting as the physical toll training takes on the body. Mental fatigue can result in decreased



performance, slower reaction times, and even burnout if not managed effectively. It is good to challenge your body and mind, but there is a point of diminishing returns, so find your sweet spot!

Mental recovery involves giving the mind time to relax, reset, and refocus, which can be achieved through several methods:

- **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Practices like meditation, deep breathing, or yoga can help reduce stress, improve focus, and promote relaxation. These practices allow martial artists to disconnect from the intensity of their training and bring their mental state back to a place of calm and focus.
- **Visualization:** Athletes can use visualization techniques to improve their recovery. By mentally rehearsing techniques, strategies, and positive outcomes, martial artists can maintain their focus and confidence, enhancing performance while also allowing their minds to recover.

- **Rest and Downtime:** I like to call this “Me Time!” Just as the body needs physical rest, the mind needs mental rest. Do things you enjoy like reading, listening to music, or indulging in your senses can provide the necessary mental reset to return to training feeling refreshed and ready to focus.

- **Social Support:** Having a strong support network is also critical for mental recovery. Support from coaches, teammates, family, and friends can help reduce stress and anxiety, particularly after a challenging training session or a tough competition.

Overall, recovery is just as important for athletic performance, particularly in martial arts, as the training is. Proper recovery strategies, such as muscle repair, endurance replenishment, hydration and electrolytes, and mental relaxation, help athletes avoid injury and allow them to stay consistent in their performance. Martial artists who neglect recovery risk burnout, injury, and plateaus in their training, ultimately hurting their long-term success. By making recovery a part of their training, martial artists can improve their performance and ensure that they remain at the top of their game, both physically and mentally.



Lisa Agens: Transitioning from a career in dance to dental hygiene, Lisa struggled with weight gain. After many diet failures, she educated herself on nutrition and built healthy habits. As the founder of Your Lean Life, LLC, she's helped hundreds lose weight through a whole-food, fat-loss approach. A passionate teacher and coach, Lisa holds multiple certifications in fitness and nutrition, including ISSA, Precision Nutrition, and NASM. Learn more at [www.yourleanlife.com](http://www.yourleanlife.com).



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# Carbohydrate Cycling and Macro Manipulation for Peak MMA Performance

By David McKenzie

The foundation of any athlete's performance comes from nutrition. As the old phrase goes, "You can't out-train a bad diet." No matter the design or heart put into a training program, if there isn't a nutritional balance, your results will forever be hindered. Knowing the function of each different macro and the timing for when that macro should be implemented into the diet is a major component for pre and post-training for any form of MMA.

For each macro, there's a synonym that goes with it. The three macros are carbs, proteins, and fats. A synonym for carbs would be energy. Carbs are the

first macronutrient your body uses for energy when expending energy. This is why athletes are typically prescribed up to two times their body weight, or more, to maintain a caloric output. For the sake of weight loss, or in a more applicable situation, a fighter cutting weight, the calories they remove from their diet first will be carbs.

You can gain carbs from multiple sources, and not all carbs are the same. There is a chart called the glycemic index, which measures how quickly your body breaks down carbs to use for energy. A high-carb food with a high glycemic index is used for







energy very quickly. These are your fruits (apples, oranges, simple sugars). Carbs low on the glycemic index are those that your body digests slowly and keep you full for a longer period, such as oatmeal. Neither of these is a nuisance to a fighter's diet, but rather a tool to be used correctly. This is where nutritional timing plays a crucial role.

Nutritional timing is a valuable eating technique for optimizing macronutrient intake. The theory is that you can maximize energy output and performance by eating certain foods or macros in various quantities at particular times. By putting your body in a better hormonal and metabolic state, you give yourself the best chance of your energy systems properly burning through your food.

For timing your carbs, Everyone's diet is unique to their body. The principals stay the same, but the quantities will change based on the activity levels. Here's an outline of a typical five-meal-per-day

approach to carb timing using meal times:

6 am, 9 am, 12 pm, 3 pm, and 6 pm.

Five evenly spaced meals, eating every three hours; say you prefer to work out first thing in the morning; your first meal would become the most carb-heavy meal, as it follows the most energy you're going to put out through the day when your muscles are most exhausted, and desiring the most nutrients to help rebuild what was just torn down. Your insulin level is highest after your workout, so your first meal would be an opportune time to ingest your largest portion of carbohydrates for the day. A person 150 pounds with maintaining body weight goals, or consuming one gram of carbs per pound, would benefit from dispensing his carbs.

So: 6 am 60 grams, 9 am 40 grams, 12 pm 30 grams, 3 pm 30 grams, and 6 pm 10 grams.



As you can see, the carbohydrates taper off into the evening. A good substitute for carbs as the day progresses is healthy fats combined with high-quality protein sources. The more intense the training, the higher the demand for carbohydrates. The timing of the carbs and tapering them to being consumed sixty to ninety minutes before and after your workout remains the same. This is when your insulin sensitivity is the highest. In your final meal of the day, there should be little to no carbs. Your liver glycogen stores should be full enough from the

prior carbohydrate meals to fuel brain and nervous system function without having to break down protein. Consuming large amounts of carbs before sleeping can also cause massive insulin spikes, which causes the body to stop protein synthesis and repair any of the muscles trained that particular day.



David is a personal trainer who has ten years in the fitness industry. He's worked with several Division One collegiate athletes and multiple competitive mixed martial artists. Certifications include NASM and FMS Level 1.





"This book is now a requirement for all of my staff. These aren't just theories, these are principles the author, Grand Master Stephen Oliver used in his own martial art schools for 40 years!" Jason Purcell, Family Black Belt Academy, Seattle, Wa

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# After-School Programs in Martial Arts Schools

**By Stephen Oliver**

Let's be real. If you're a martial arts school owner, chances are you've felt the pressure to "diversify." We've cycled through "Kardio Karate," "Tae Bo," having to teach BJJ or MMA, or the "Kung Fu Trend" of the 1970s. NAPMA, before I acquired it, used an additional add-on program as its primary solution for generating revenue. There was always another program to sell.

The hot trend right now? After-school care programs with transportation. Sounds simple. Pick the kids up, watch them for a few hours, and collect a check. Easy money.

Wrong.

The truth is, it's a complex, high-liability, low-margin mess that pulls your focus off what you're actually good at — martial arts. And when done poorly (which it often is), it dilutes your brand, burns out your team, and sucks up your time, energy, and profit potential.

The reality is, 99% of the time, when I talk with Martial Arts Schools that run transportation after-school care programs, I ask one question: "Do you want to run a martial arts school or a daycare?" They say, "Martial Arts School."

In most cases, the school that I work with figures out pretty quickly that they can make a lot more





NET PROFIT with dramatically fewer headaches by getting rid of that program and focusing on their “bread and butter.”

To be fair, transported after-school care has a couple of natural advantages.

First, it's easy to see that it can be priced higher than most martial arts schools typically charge if you look around at what the average martial arts school charges and what the average daycare charges – 15 hours a week of daycare is higher than a couple of hours of martial arts instruction.

Second is student retention. Parents don't pull their child from daycare just because they are no longer entertained. They still need daycare, and, really, are the alternatives any better?

And, in many areas, third, there's a supply-demand imbalance that makes marketing daycare, especially this time of year, as schools get ready to go back to session, seem pretty easy.

### WHY YOU'RE BETTER OFF DOUBLING DOWN

#### 1. You Can Charge More — And Justify It

If your school is known for top-notch martial arts instruction, parents will be willing to pay more. Why? They're looking for someone to build character, confidence, and discipline in their kid. Stay in your lane and position yourself as the expert in martial arts. That's how you earn and keep premium pricing.

#### 2. Students Stick Around

Martial arts done right isn't a “drop 'em off, kill time, pick 'em up” service. It's a structured journey. When kids make real progress, when parents see black belts in the making, not just kids burning energy, they stay. And they bring their friends.

#### 3. Lower Overhead, Higher ROI

Skip the after-school chaos and avoid the headaches of extra space, extra staff, extra vehicles,



and extra liability. That money? Spend it where it matters: improving your team, your facility, your marketing, and your bottom line. Even the best transported after-school care programs run MUCH higher expenses for staff and require a lot more square footage for each active child.

### THE DAYCARE TRAP: WHY MOST GET BURNED

#### 1. You're Opening Yourself Up to Lawsuits

When you start shuttling kids around in vans, you're not just a martial arts instructor anymore — you're an underpaid transportation. One accident, one insurance claim, and your entire business can be in jeopardy.

#### 2. It's a Logistical Nightmare

Coordinating pickups, maintaining vehicles, and hiring drivers, it's a full-time job. And when something inevitably goes wrong? It's your name that takes the hit.

#### 3. You Water Down Your Purpose

Martial arts is about focus. Discipline. Progress. Try juggling that with snack time, bathroom breaks, and coloring books. Your staff gets distracted. Your classes get sloppy. Your students notice.



#### 4. You Need More People — And That's Not Cheap

Every new childcare headcount adds complexity and cost. You're now managing more schedules, more personalities, more problems, none of which have anything to do with martial arts. In today's market, there continues to be a labor shortage. It's most acute in jobs that typically pay less, such as daycare, and are often occupied by younger people. It's becoming increasingly difficult to recruit for many of these positions. The minimum wage is escalating. By the way, being a Martial Arts Instructor is very cool. Babysitter – not so much.

#### WHY SCHOOL OWNERS MAKE THE JUMP - AND WHY IT'S THE WRONG FIX

I've seen it too many times. A school is struggling with low enrollments, weak retention, and cash flow problems. So, what do they do? They pivot to daycare, hoping for a quick financial boost. But that's a band-aid, not a solution. The real issue is that they've never been taught how to run a profitable martial arts program.

Top-earning schools have mastered the fundamentals: laser-focused marketing, pricing that matches the value, a structured curriculum that keeps students hooked, and world-class service that parents rave about.

#### HERE'S HOW YOU ACTUALLY WIN Specialize and Get Good at It

Offer competition teams, adult programs, or advanced black belt prep. Build something elite. Something that commands a higher price and delivers real value. Be known for excellence.

#### Market the Real Benefits

Martial arts builds discipline, confidence, self-respect, fitness, and yes, even safety. That's what you're selling. Make it clear in your marketing, and parents will choose you over the glorified playroom down the street.

#### Be the Community Leader

Run workshops. Partner with schools and local businesses. Show up at events. Let the community see you as a source of strength and leadership, not just after-school supervision.





### Deliver a Killer Experience

Blow them away with service. From day one. Make your students feel like champions. When parents see their kids thriving, they'll stick with you. And they'll bring their friends.

Bottom line? Stop chasing distractions. The daycare model might sound like easy money, but it's a slippery slope. Build your school into a powerhouse of martial arts instruction. That's where the impact is. And that's where your legacy lies.

Our schools typically focus on one program.

Sometimes Taekwondo, others Muay Thai or BJJ. They aren't trying to be all things to all people.

Once they master three key elements — Marketing, Student Value, and Student Retention — they can become very profitable. 50% or more to the bottom line. Streamlined and simple operations. Mastering one thing and doing it extremely well.



Stephen Oliver is the leading coach to top-level martial arts schools internationally. His Martial Arts Wealth program coaches school owners into high levels of student service tied to direct net profits.

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By Go2 Karate

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# Steps and Benefits For Getting Your School Listed

By Go2 Karate

Are you looking to expand the reach of your martial arts school and attract more students? Listing your school on Go2Karate.com is an excellent way to enhance your visibility and connect with potential students in your community and beyond. This trusted platform allows you to highlight your offerings and join a broader network of martial arts professionals. Here's how you can get your school listed and its advantages.

To get started, visit Go2Karate.com and navigate to the "Add Your School" section. Creating an account is straightforward; provide your basic contact information to begin. Once registered, you'll be prompted to submit key details about your school. This includes your school's name, address, contact information, and a description of the programs you offer. Highlight what makes your school unique, such as specific martial arts styles or special training programs. Adding photos and videos is highly recommended, as it allows prospective students to get a feel for your facility, instructors, and class environment.

After submitting your information, please review your listing for accuracy. Once approved, your school will be live on Go2Karate.com, ready to attract new students and opportunities.

The benefits of listing your martial arts school on Go2Karate.com are numerous. First, it significantly boosts your visibility by placing your school in front of individuals actively searching for martial arts training in your area. Additionally, the platform enhances your online presence by improving search engine optimization (SEO), making it easier for potential students to find you. Being featured on a trusted platform also lends credibility to your school, reassuring prospective students that they're making the right choice.

Go2Karate.com is more than just a directory; it's a lead-generation tool that connects you with people genuinely interested in martial arts. Beyond attracting new students, it offers an opportunity to engage with the broader martial arts community, promoting events, certifications, or unique classes you may offer.

Don't miss out on the chance to grow your martial arts school with Go2Karate.com. By taking a few simple steps, you can position your school for success and experience the transformative impact of an expanded online presence.



Go2Karate is the ultimate online platform for martial arts schools, helping owners increase visibility, attract students, and grow their business. By listing your school, you gain access to powerful marketing tools, SEO optimization, and a trusted network connecting martial artists worldwide. Whether you're looking to expand your reach or enhance your school's credibility, Go2Karate provides the resources and exposure needed to succeed in today's competitive martial arts industry.



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