



**Self Defense
with a stick
for
Seniors**

R&M Michael

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This small volume was originally published under a different title. The reason why it was changed was because it became the subject of attacks by cyber-lunatics, who being the only and final arbiter of all things, objected to us referring to ourselves and other oldies in a wording they decided was demeaning to us(its for our own good, accept it or be punished). They objected to us passing comments about their beloved socialist politicians and their social engineering of society to favour the guilty over the innocence. Oh yes, and they don't approve of humour either! We have not made any changes to please them, simply to make it more difficult for them to trawl the web looking for words they do not find sufficiently pious within their objectionable religion of political correctness. And if they ever do catch up again, we don't believe in Global Warming either, so there. Although we have to agree with the phrase we saw recently, "Save the world, it may be the only planet with chocolate". To those who have already read it under its former title we apologise for the inconvenience, but hey, its free anyway.

Why this was written

After 40 years of being a karateka, that is to say someone who practises Karate, not a type of parrot. (I am not an expert, there is no such thing, it is a constant process of learning) and like most who follow the martial arts, have added on odd bits of other disciplines such as Kung Fu and Aikido. Because of this I have always felt secure within myself and confident physically. A few short years ago, (and they are getting shorter, the weeks certainly are, we seem to move from Monday straight to Friday missing a whole lot of days out in between and then its the weekend on us again, and nothing worth watching on the television) I suffered a number of health set backs, including several operations on the legs, and suddenly I was too stiff and slow to feel confident of taking on anyone physically. This can be quite a downer, a change in self image from not having anything to prove, able to say to anyone, “go ahead ,if that’s what you really feel you want to do”, knowing that the next stage of their aggressive behaviour would be enacted from a position somewhere on the ground. Change this to a situation where any girl guide appearing on the doorstep waving some sort of sponsorship form, coupled with the threat of kicking my lights out if I won’t sign and cough up, could be absolutely sure of winning any altercation we may have about the matter (if you think the girl guides around here are pushy, you should meet their mothers).

After seeing a news item on the television about pensioners being taught to defend themselves with walking sticks I decided to do a bit more research. I had done a bit of baton training some years ago (yes I was a cop at one time, back in the days when serving the public and not persecuting them was the central core of policing, and before upholding at any cost, the human rights of a miscreant to terrorise the public, would have got you a well needed rest in a mental asylum) so I was not entirely without some knowledge in the subject area.

The Current state of Self Defence for the Elderly

The more I researched self defence classes, videos on u-tube books by Barton-Wright , Lang, Cunningham and others, the more it became apparent, that to complete the moves suggested a person would have to be fit and well trained enough *not* to require a stick to have to defend with in the first place.

Example: Thrust your stick between your antagonists upper arm and body, move around to the side of them, hooking the crook of the walking stick around the arm. Now raise the stick so that it moves their arm to a position behind their back. Now grasping the crook of the stick in one hand and the other end in the other, apply forward pressure to force them to their knees. What they do not mention is that the protagonist would have to be very patient to be prepared to wait while you insert the stick between their body and arm, then wait some more while you move around them and lock the crook of the stick around the arm. Oh and I almost forgot a bit slow witted as well as being a bit puny. It is rather cruel to take advantage of this type of vulnerable person and their good nature, not to mention that they were probably fairly inoffensive anyway. If it is really urgent that you get rid of them, you could say that you are David Beckham’s Grandfather and offer to sign an autograph if they promise to leave you alone. Other equally improbable moves involve reversing the stick, hooking an ankle and suddenly jerking it upwards to send someone sprawling, it is a fact that a persons leg is much stronger than their arm and unless you have the strength and speed of a well practised athlete with very strong arms you can only hope that your opponent does not flex the hooked leg and send *you*

sprawling instead. Yet another fallacy is that kicking someone in the testicles is easy, if that were the case then the kick with the instep would be the main karate kick - it is not. The favoured kick is to various targets up the front of the torso and delivered with the ball of the foot and the toes flexed back out of the way. One of the suggested strikes with the stick is slip it in between the legs of an opponent (willing to stand still long enough) and flick it up into the testicles. In actual fact this works well only if you don't really want to hurt him much, it may annoy a bit and cause him to start swearing at you and want to know what the hell you think you are doing you mad old F**T, but sorry to say you probably can not work up enough momentum to do anything disabling, even if you could get the positioning and placement right, and use a levering action as I have seen suggested.

Most stick defence demonstrations in systems like Tai Chi and Kung Fu cane are nice to watch but not very practical for most people, what is needed is to be able to learn something that doesn't involve enormous leaps, kicks and a speed that if you had you wouldn't need a stick. (Also we older people would have to beware of spontaneous human combustion when performing some of these vigorous moves. It has started to worry me quite a bit lately, that's why I sit in a chair, watch Television a lot, and try not to move unnecessarily) Something is needed that doesn't involve learning a lot of routines and attending endless classes. I am not knocking the classes they are quite often a good social occasion. Personally I would prefer to learn something that became effective straight away and allowed me to beat the living bejusus out of anyone threatening me, make his day at least as miserable as he would have liked to have made mine. For this reason I have picked out just two moves, and two retrieval methods should you be unfortunate enough to have your stick seized by an antagonist, and really would like it back before he takes it off you completely, and wallops the living daylights out of you with it.

Self defence and the Law (for what little there is left of it)

Let me first cover a few legal points and a little bit of history. Firstly you must never admit that your stick is anything but an aid to balance and walking. If a member of the police force ever tells you that it is an offensive weapon, point out that an offensive weapon is where it is constructed or adapted solely for the purpose of being used as offensive. Anything that may have another use, that happens to be used or could be used for an offensive purpose, can at best be classed as an offensive instrument not a weapon. It may even be that a pen knife or table knife may actually only be classed as an instrument and therefore be perfectly legal to carry on your person. It comes down to intended purpose. I have had people say to me that they have been thinking of getting hold of a sword stick, nay and thrice or even more times nay I say to you, for that is an offensive weapon even if you state to whoever is just lusting to arrest you that it is just for defence. The offence is to be in possession of an offensive weapon. You are however allowed to use anything that comes to hand to defend yourself if you are in fear of your life or in fear for someone else's. If your stick is handy and by coincidence you get in a couple of lucky blows purely by accident then all well and good you are a plucky hero pensioner. Never be tempted to go in front of a television camera or speak to a local reporter and tell how well you were trained for just such an incident as this, and that young louts in the district had better watch out, you will be looking for them. Better to say that you were in the catering corps and that you were trained to kill, using only your bare unwashed hands and a dose of salmonella, you are in fact a second grade black ladle.

When you see a city gent (unless that is a contradiction in terms these days) with a rolled up newspaper you may be looking at a most potent weapon being carried right out in the open, it should be used for a hard jab in the gut, it is very effective, anyone being on the receiving end of that will be lucky to avoid emergency surgery for peritonitis. Think for a moment, the walking stick has a much smaller end profile than the rolled up newspaper and therefore will have a correspondingly greater pressure in pounds per square inch when it strikes. Think about the damage a stiletto heel will do to a wooden or lino floor when compared to a normal heel. The rule is, for a given amount of force the greater will be the pressure in PSI the smaller the area of application.

If you do get accosted by a uniformed representative of the nanny state who wants to take your stick away from you, inform them that it is an essential aid to your stability and deprived of it you would most likely fall over and hurt yourself. If they persist, then I am sure that as you have only been telling the truth, you are more than likely to actually fall over and start yelling as loud as possible, and of course any attempt to move you before the paramedics and ambulance get there will put you in danger of greater injury. You should always inform everyone who will listen including the misguided enforcers of the will of the all powerful state, that you have the intention of not only suing, but also that your human rights have been violated, you consider you have been assaulted and discriminated against as a disabled person, not to mention illegal seizure of your property. Remember that the political correctness, so beloved of those who have brought about the situation where you have been forced to look after your own defence, and of those who happily serve them, is two edged. And whatever you do never accept a caution from the police so they can give you a criminal record, without bothering with the inconvenience of going to court, giving you your legal rights and perhaps not having sufficient points of proof for a conviction. Nor let some lazy incompetent of a lawyer persuade you to plead guilty of something, just so he can collect his fee with minimum effort.

Its Nothing New!

The situation where the law is no longer being applied because some people who have taken charge have their heads mounted on back to front is not new. It seems to run in around about 100-150 year cycles. The last two occasions occurred in the 18th century and again 19th century. I have a gentleman's dress cane owned by my great grandfather. I gather that he learned to use it at a self defence school formed by a Mr E W Barton-Wright and was instructed by a Mr Pierre Vigny (both famous names). The cane itself has a light but strong shank made of malacca. It originally had a steel ferule and a bone handle. The handle started to craze and the ferule somehow got lost. I replaced the head with one I made out of iroko (An African hardwood from completely sustainable sources, felled by native peoples using only blunted stone axe heads so they can't cut themselves, who are part of a fair trade agreement and fed entirely on organic and non genetically modified muesli, and suitably patronised at every opportunity, and no extra carbon footprint was produced in the making of the head. I just thought you would like to know that.) The ferule I was able to replace without difficulty. I can only trust that it was made from recycled non nuclear submarines, and everyone will live happily ever after.

Like most other people I assumed that this stick was just a fashion accessory of the day and a bit of an affection. Not so, I eventually discovered on researching the matter, that the lawlessness on

London's (and probably every other city) streets was created by the same type of wrong headed attempt at social engineering as we have today, and was out of control. The authorities either would not, or could not enforce the law and chose, just like today, not to do the job they were elected for and being handsomely paid to do, and chose instead to follow an agenda of their own which involved preventing people who were not being protected, from protecting themselves. This was a direct repeat of the situation that prevailed in a part of the 18th century. In both situations people were prevented from carrying sword sticks and such was the alarm of the authorities that people were attempting to defend themselves, in the 18th century they tried to even ban walking sticks but settled for just insisting that anyone carrying a walking stick have a permit. Something similar happened in the late Victorian period but such was the outcry that they were forced abandon plans to ban or licence walking sticks.

During the late 19th century, stick self defence schools sprang up all over, some better than others and some even catering for genteel ladies of good quality and using umbrellas. Although it has to be said that the methods shown were very much the type of defences that involved ankle and wrist locks and various throws which would have only worked if the assailant were either drunk or so taken by surprise they were unable to react, and the lady in question was perhaps the all Japan Ju-Jitsu ladies champion on a good day. It's interesting to note that an unbreakable umbrella is now being carried by a number of security men who are trained to use them (and not just to keep their charges dry) when visiting countries where they are not allowed to carry more obvious weapons. They don't have an excuse for carrying a walking stick (who's going to believe that anyone employs only disabled bodyguards under some sort of mad diversity considerations) so a broolly does just fine.

Getting back to the late 19th century, even a light malacca cane like my great grandfather's, in the right hands would be a formidable instrument. It is probable that far less people were trained in the use of the stick or walking cane than actually carried them, but in the mind of the miscreant the uncertainty factor would have come into play. If you were, what was termed in those days a ruffian, are you going to risk accosting someone carrying a cane when it was common knowledge that a lot of people had undergone training, and find out too late, that you have just made the worst decision of your life by betting everything on the possibility that your victim really was one who hadn't any training? A well handled cane or stick will break an arm or a leg and is almost as effective as a sword. Drive a malacca cane, steel tipped, with some force into someone's stomach and it will in all probability penetrate quite a way through. The message then is this, forget sword sticks and samurai swords (even kept in the bedroom and claiming that you only had it there to keep the wife in line) A stick is an ideal and legal instrument of self defence. In the book by H G Lang he says that weight should be sacrificed to speed if weight will affect manoeuvrability, and I have to say that having used both a stick and a baton, a stick is actually a more effective weapon than a heavy riot baton. OK I know you probably think I am rambling on a bit and not getting to the meat of the subject, old people are allowed to do this, and if you are not an old person yourself, what are you doing reading this, go away.

What type of stick

I have found that the best type of stick to defend with is either a ball or knob end stick ,or one commonly called a crutch head (the knob or ball end is not for striking with). Whilst the

derby style head is more attractive to look at, and hangs on things well, including an arm, the hook at the end of the handle can get caught on a the hand or a sleeve. Many people will go for a hooked or widened hook cane for defence because it can be used for hooking around a protagonists neck to draw them into a chop, Kung Fu short punch, leg hook, elbow thrust, spectacular throw or wrist lock and controlled take down , and it seems to be the favourite Kung Fu cane. All very impressive indeed, but if you are that good, you don't need a cane. In a real situation because you don't need it, you would probably not have it with you anyway, and have available a whole series of conventional moves you have been just dying to try out. My advise to a person who actually needs a cane or stick, forget the stick with a crook, it only gets in the way when used for defence. What the stick is made of is of some interest also and is discussed later.

Some points to bear in mind.

1. Try to always keep your stick out of the reach of your opponent, having to re-take control of it wastes time, and leaves you vulnerable to the attacks of others just waiting on the sidelines to show how brave they are.
2. In a Karate or Kung Fu strike, speed is what does the damage, the same applies for a stick.
3. Try to use subterfuge or distraction. Give the wrong signals. It actually takes a longer time than people realise to anticipate an action and form a plan. Psychologists play pointless little games to determine response times, which they usually find is about half to three quarters of a second, however these times relate to a person wound up like a spring, ready and aware of exactly what is about to happen, and how they are expected to react. In real life it is usually over 2 seconds, and if a game plan has been formed by the mind, even in the subconscious, it takes time to realise that it is the wrong plan and substitute another. This can take up to 5 seconds or cause even a complete freeze up. There is a lot of good hitting time in five seconds.
4. Keep it simple, and really mean it, never bluff. If you are squeamish about hurting somebody who is trying to hurt you or yours, forget it, hire a bodyguard, or hand over your possessions, take your beating and pretend you are being very noble, and liberal.
5. Try to keep your mind calm, and control your breathing. Don't get over excited, try to view things as dispassionately as possible, you will make mistakes if you do not. Watch a couple of street brawlers, they swing a lot of punches, but very few of them actually land with any success. It is usually just one lucky punch that eventually ends it. A trained fighter stays calm and focused and finishes it with the first one.
6. If it is obvious that violence is going to happen, have your game plan already pre-rehearsed, try to get in the first strike, make it as dispassionate as possible, and make it a really good one.
7. In any group or gang action there will be one loud-mouth leader, he usually has two less brave henchmen,(this is a well known group dynamic for gang structures) the rest are just hangers on. Floor the leader before he is ready for it, by this time you should have been able to pick out the henchmen, go for the mouthiest or most senior in the pecking order next, his mate will generally not be a problem. The things which give him authority in the group have been removed he is now a nothing. Then pick on individuals and offer them some of the same if they would like it. Turn your attention very quickly on one after the other, at the same time advancing on each individual. They are not brave and by isolating them one at a time, by making them the subject of the moment, you can start the herd panic type reaction and they will probably just melt away. Recheck at intervals during this time to make sure that if the

leader is not still down, or already run away, he is not trying to get up, he may try to salvage his lost control. If he is getting up, don't hesitate, hit him again. This will also reinforce your standing as being much more ruthless and tough than they believe their leader is, if they fear him they will fear you this will probably lead to a complete rout

8. If you are attacked by a gang all at once, remember there are only so many that can show their courage and manhood at one time, this is a limit imposed by space available at the tearing apart of the prey. Some will dart in, try to strike and then withdraw. The actual limit at any one time is about 5 but they will be getting in each other's way, so that comes to a more practical number of about three. Watch one of the videos made on CCTV and shown on TV, and study the attack pattern, after all, they say these are shown not as entertainment, but education, use them as such.

The Circular strike.

The position to start for this move is either **Figure 1** or **Figure 2**. Raise your stick up to one of the positions shown. In any case if you are starting from **figure 1**, you will be passing through **figure 2** as the sweep continues, it just gives extra distance and speed. (These positions were originally designed as upper and cross guard for those fighting others with sticks or swords) There are two reasons for needing as much distance of travel as available. The whole point of the exercise is to inflict a disabling blow with your first strike. This is produced from creating as much speed as possible. People used to ask me what were the secrets of karate. I used to say several years of training, making sure to live a good clean life and keeping your bowels open. But if I were to be pushed into



FIG 1

FIG 2

defining one thing that everything else in the execution of strikes depended upon, the answer would have to be **speed of delivery**, as much of it as possible. Speed relies on momentum and this like an aircraft taking off or vehicle accelerating, is built up over distance. The further the distance the stick is allowed to travel the faster it will be moving when it strikes. Mass is a two part equation, you can interchange speed for weight and at the point of impact the effect is the same. A fairly light stick moving very fast does the same, if not more damage than a heavier stick moving slower. Personally I favour the best of both worlds, a reasonably heavy walking stick moving very fast. Fibreglass or carbon fibre sticks are very strong, but not heavy, so would require a lot more speed to compensate, perhaps more than you can provide to be really effective. Wood is best, to mention just a few, blackthorn, hickory, oak, beech and Ash are reasonably sturdy with sycamore being a bit lighter. Basically choose something that you can wield without being awkward for you. The second advantage these starting positions give is deception. Most people will assume you are going for the head, but a head strike would not have gained as much momentum, and it would also make your stick vulnerable to interception, and you have already alerted your protagonist where the blow is intended to land. Instead we take the stick in a circular trajectory which not only carries it well out of reach to the side, but allows speed to build.



FIG.3



FIG 4

Look at **figures 3 and 4** these represent the stick building up speed on a circular and slightly diagonally inclined downward path. In fact if you are applying the build up of the strike correctly the stick should hum or whistle (if it starts to sing or tell jokes, you would be advised to sober up before attempting to beat the crap out of anyone).



FIG 5

The target should be the side of the knee joint, seen being struck in **figure 5**. Properly struck it should break or dislocate the joint and seriously take the attacker out of any future contention. If he is only slightly out of it and attempts to get up, don't hesitate, it is you or him. Use the same strike a second time. You could go for the neck, but beware this strike can be lethal. The reasons why we should regard the side of the knee joint as a primary target are several. Of course the best method for both surprise and speed may be to simply take the stick from a rest position, (held in the right hand resting the tip on the ground) and bring it up in one movement so the hand circles the head building speed all the time until it impacts with the side of the opponents knee joint. Just make sure that you do not accidentally impact your own head.

1. The Knee joint is very vulnerable to damage when struck with a side on force
2. Damage to this joint is very painful
3. No one will seriously consider trying to do anyone damage after suffering anything from dislocation to fracture of this joint
4. To intercept your blow, your opponent will only be able to do so at about the point of impact, and by bending slightly, the stick has been well out of his reach and building up speed on its circular journey. If he tries to intercept, by this time it is practically all over. The hand and wrists are more vulnerable to injury than most people realise. In any case after giving him a broken wrist or hand, provided you have not been put off by the screams, bring the stick up to position 1 or 2 and go for the knee again. They say that practice makes perfect, so you should be even better at it the second time. If a job is worth doing it is worth doing properly.
5. You want five? Don't be greedy, you probably won't remember the ones you already have anyway.

You are likely to hear or read about all kinds of strikes against a knife or gun, most are aimed at the wrist or the inside of the arm. But what if you miss? And in any case it is more likely that

you will signal your intentions for your strike set up. Why does it have to be the hand holding the knife? A good fast moving strike to the side of the knee should be more than enough encouragement to forget any intentions of knifing or shooting you. As I have said before, reaction time to form the decision to shoot or lunge or slash with a knife, will probably take about two seconds or more. The good old knee strike will already be well on its way before he even starts to comprehend where it is aimed. The shock of a hard whack to the knee joint will concentrate the mind so well on the pain being inflicted, that I guarantee the only thing on his mind will be screaming for his mum. Forget fancy, go for effective.

The Thrust

The only other strike you will need is the thrust. A karate or kung fu punch to the stomach can rupture the gut and seriously injure or kill. The things that produce the effect required are speed of delivery, and the striking area. The actual strike is made with one or two knuckles. Convert this knowledge into use of the stick.

There are a number of ways suggested to get into the best position for the thrust, some are very impressive to look at, and there are also a number of suggested targets and methods of striking. In fact Mr Pierre Vigny taught students to switch the stick to the left hand at the centre, grasp the end with the ferule with the right hand and strike with the handle (usually a ball). Then grasp the centre of the stick with the left hand again and change ends with the right so the ferule could be used for a jab. This was supposed to happen with great rapidity, even changing hands behind the back. Its quite interesting to watch and looks very graceful.

May I suggest that the most simple will work best. Go straight to it, starting as in **figure 6** representing a normal stance,

figure 7 shows the stick being brought up and **figure 8** caught by the left hand.



Fig 6



Fig 7



Fig 8



Fig 9

Bring the stick back as far as you can as in, **figure 9** remember distance gives speed and speed is what matters.



Fig 10



Fig 11

Then thrust using both hands if you are close in as in **figure 10** and if you need extra reach allow the stick to continue being propelled forward by the right hand and allowing it to slide through the left as in **figure 11**. The sharper and faster the jab the more useful power will be generated at the end doing the convincing.

All manner of targets are suggested in training programs and books/DVD's, groin, throat, reverse the stick and strike for the chin, a manoeuvre where the body is moved in a circular path and stick thrust sideways for the temple. Personally I have always found that a hard jab in the abdomen is difficult to intercept, and usually ends the discussion very effectively. Of course if you want to show off, do all kinds of fancy foot and stick work. If you make a hash of it you could always hope he hands your stick back without too much fuss. However if you unfortunately have your stick grabbed there are a couple of remedies to follow.

Stick retrieval

The fact that whacking people who richly deserve it may contribute to a happier world is all well and good, but a stick ceases to be your best friend, and becomes a huge liability when someone manages to catch hold of it and they just happen to be much stronger than you. Lets face it when you get older just about everyone is suddenly stronger than you.

I looked at all kinds of stick retrieval and break hold methods but most, just like the majority of strikes, required the user to have at least the same, if not more strength and agility than their opponent. There were however two that I found on the internet. One of these I had actually learned years ago as a release for a baton that had been grabbed, and the other was a new one I found. The one I already knew, was suitable where both persons were fairly evenly matched in strength and the one recovering the baton had the advantage of training and speed. I looked at ways that this could be adapted for use by someone weaker than the person doing the seizing and did not require speed. I further adapted a sting in the tail so to speak, by incorporating an old Japanese sword technique as a follow through. The other one was also modified with a follow through.. Each method deals with the most likely two scenarios and both rely on leverage rather than strength.



Fig 12

Let us suppose that as in **figure 12** your protagonist has sized hold of your stick with two hands. The original way I was taught was to make sure that your hands were wider spaced than the other persons to give extra leverage, twist the stick in a clockwise direction to force your opponent to cross their arms and release the stick. The problem is that even if your arms have a slight mechanical advantage by being wider spread, it is often not enough if that person is stronger than you, like my wife is stronger than me these days for instance (although it has to be said that she's an Australian bush girl, and used to gallop to school every morning with a sheep in each pocket for stability and something to have for lunch, and a horse on her back).

How the recoveries are performed

Fig 13

Stick release method 1

We can gain a huge advantage by grasping towards the end of the stick with the right hand and inserting the left arm all the way to the inside crook of your elbow, between the protagonist's hands as in **figure 13** . Clasp your left arm and therefore the stick it is trapping towards your chest. Use the mechanical advantage of the whole body by twisting yourself around in a clockwise direction until you have your back to him (or the stick comes



free), and at the same time pulling down with the right hand. You can see the evolution of

this in **figure 14 and 15** in fact in the transition from **figure 14 to figure 15** you may note that there is quite often a small bonus of hitting your opponent in the face with the end of the stick.



Fig 14



Fig 15



Fig 16

Figures 16 and 17 shows the body continuing to turn and act as a lever and the stick being fully freed. (Don't worry about them grabbing you around the neck or anywhere else, they will have to let go of your stick to do it).



Fig 17



Fig 18

When you have gained control of your stick, immediately take half a step forward, and **figure 17** shows the stick moving up under the arm. **Figure 18** shows the stick fully positioned underneath the arm **Figure 19**, a hard thrust into wherever fate takes the business end. This thrust



Fig 19

technique was borrowed from a samurai sword technique which is probably more effective with a sword than when used with a stick, but hey its not a perfect world and we can't have every thing

Stick release method 2

In this procedure we assume that the protagonist has grabbed your stick lower down the shaft, **figure 20** We are assuming they have taken a two handed grip, what happens if they have only grabbed with one hand ? Use the same method , life just got easier.



Fig 20

Slide your left hand down the shaft of the stick so it touches their hand, **figure 21**



Fig 21

Now revolve the stick so that it is aimed, with you pushing it towards them, **figure 22** to just miss their left shoulder, using your left hand as a pivot.



Fig 22

Follow through and down as in **Figure 23 & 24**



Fig 23



Fig 24

Figure 25 & 26 shows the position

to move the released stick in to the side and back behind you, to make sure that they can not seize it again.



Fig 25



Fig 26



Fig 27

From this position the follow through should be a step back and a thrust or circular strike as in [figure 27](#). You will notice that the stance is pushing away and fending off with the left hand whilst raising the stick. This is the position that police forces teach prior to a baton strike or using a pepper spray. You may ask, what if he grabs your hand? No problems he will soon let go as the pain of a circular strike to the knee joint reinforces the fact that you do not intend to be his victim. If he has not already run away before you can hit him and has tried to grab your arm, this should quite clearly indicate to you that he is not going to run away and intends to do you some damage. In a case like this always follow through with a strike of some sort after a stick retrieval, unless you have decided to try to hug and understand the assailant, and what it was in their life that forced them to go around beating up old people, and perhaps

suggest counselling and a course in anger management, or you could just become a very good sprinter.

Just a point here, with the mind set of the present police being what it is, honed to a perfection of hysteria, it is probably better that you report any such incident to the police before your attacker can go to them with just his side of the story, as the modern day police person probably has a degree in something like performing arts and drama and fully intends to use what he or she was taught to raid your home, knock down your door, and screaming at the top of their voices arrest you at gun point together with anyone else in your house including the cat, and hold you for 48 hours without giving you the opportunity to give your side of the story. Do the rest of us and the legal system a favour, if they don't get a conviction, or just let you go, there are a number of things you and members of you family can charge them with including wrongful arrest. In any case make sure that any breach of the regulations and procedures, (no matter how small) Stalinist though they may be in this day and age, is suitably rewarded.

I am not an anarchist, I am just appalled by the monsters that police have been encouraged

to turn into and the people who now occupy positions that decent honest fair minded coppers used to.

The importance of practice

Try to practice the exercises for a few minutes every day until you can move smoothly and quickly from one to the other without much thinking about it. The excitement and high tension of a real situation is not the place to start your patterning. Patterning is what we do to get the body to learn something that we want it to do automatically, without having to think about how we will get the muscles to move.

In karate we perform all of our practice movements in what is called a kata. These can be fast or slow. We always start the learning of the movements in slow motion, to correct anything that needs attention. In fact that is what we do in any martial art. We perform these forms alone with an imaginary opponent. Slow and deliberate is always the best way to get the brain to pattern. Then as we improve, we speed up. Even when we have it correct and can do it at speed, we still perform the forms slowly occasionally as a regular practice to make sure that we are not introducing laxness and bad practice into the forms.

That's it. "*May the twilight path through the rest of your life have many places to sit and catch your breath and just as many places to stop for a pee*".