

Kyushin Ryu Jujitsu



RISK MANAGEMENT FOR MARTIAL ARTISTS (RMMA) “ARMOUR”

by

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Risk Management for Martial Artists

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INTRODUCTION

Because of the numerous problems confronting today's society, at some time during our lives it is highly likely that we have or will be directly or indirectly exposed to some form of violence. This exposure could be in the form of mental or physical abuse, threatening behaviour, intimidation or even by an unprovoked attack. These are the very real hazards that confront our every day lives. As an example, some of the historical and contemporary sources of these hazards include; the resultant effect of drug and alcohol abuse, indiscriminate crime, domestic violence, relationship stresses, workplace violence, financial problems, socioeconomic status issues, random actions by religious or political zealots and the seemingly increasing disregard for societal values and authority by today's youth.

The consequences of violence vary significantly. Outcomes include death (single or multiple), permanent disfigurement or disability, and long term psychological disorders, short and medium term injuries, financial hardship, family and relationship failures, possible job loss, as well as trust and confidence issues.

Fortunately the likelihood of being affected by violence, abuse or attack is directly dependant on your level of exposure to them. Certain occupations have a higher level of exposure to violence, such as police, ambulance, military, security guards, bouncers, youth workers, correctional officers, etc, and having chosen these professions these people have consciously accepted the possible risks and consequences that come with the job. One of the ways these professions are able to mitigate the associated risks of violence is through job specific education and training. So what about the rest of us? How do we protect ourselves as well as our friends and family against these hazards? One of your most likely responses would be through martial arts training, which carries with it its own list of hazards and risks.

Some of the hazards we have chosen to accept include occupation choice and martial arts training. Other hazards are thrust upon us without warning or consent. This could be by becoming the latest victim of indiscriminate crime, road rage or workplace violence.

What this paper will now attempt to do is convey a methodology that will assist in recognising the hazards and manage the risks associated with becoming and being a Jujutsu or Martial Arts practitioner in today's litigious and potentially dangerous society.

Let us now look at the principles behind Martial Arts Risk Management.

BACKGROUND TO MARTIAL ARTS RISK MANAGEMENT

The undertaking of risk management to control hazards and mitigate the risks of everyday life has been the focus of concern for employers, volunteer organisations and individuals for many years. The concept of Martial Arts Risk Management (MARM) is the process concerned with identifying, measuring, controlling, and minimising the risk of injury, infection or damage during training and real life threatening situations to a level proportionate to the threat to which you or other persons are exposed.

People also respond differently to threatening or dangerous situations. The most commonly known responses can be characterised as the 3 F's' the Freeze, Flight or the Fight Responses. These responses are self-explanatory so will not be explored any further within this paper. Assuming you

are a seasoned martial arts practitioner, the more likely response to an imminent threat of violence would be to FIGHT. Automatically when confronted with this type of situation your adrenalin level in your body (a catecholamine secreted by the adrenal medulla) rapidly increases and puts your brain into overdrive and primes your autonomic nerves for action. You only have seconds to assess the situation that now confronts you. Within a few short seconds, you have identified the risks, analysed and evaluated the risks and decided on a means to control the risks and started to undertake the action you have decided upon. As your response progresses you are regularly checking to see if your actions have been effective. Essentially this is the basis of the Martial Arts Risk Management process. Depending on the situation, the whole process will only take only a couple of seconds to complete, although before and during a martial arts training session, negotiating with your consciously accepted risks may take a great deal longer.



MARTIAL ARTS RISK MANAGEMENT DEFINITIONS

The following is a fundamental list of the terms used in martial arts risk management.

Chain reaction: Where a hazard, if not eliminated, may evolve or compound into an even more dangerous situation.

Consequences: Consequences are expressed in terms of level of injury, disability or infection, and the extent of the injuries or harm that could result from the risk (if it does occur, how serious will the outcome be?)

Exposure: Generally, the longer a person is exposed to a violence hazard, the more likely an incident will occur.

Hazard: A hazard is something or someone who has the potential to cause harm, injury or death.

Likelihood: The likelihood of an event occurring will depend on both the probability and frequency of exposure to a hazard.

Risk Avoidance: Decision not to become involved in, or action to withdraw from a situation

Risk Control: Actions undertaken that implement risk management decisions

Risk: Risk is the likelihood of harm, injury or death, occurring to you or someone else.

MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING HAZARDS

Examples of martial arts training hazards that we as martial artists consciously accept or are potentially exposed to every time we enter a dojo:

Physical Hazards: Kicks, Punches, Strangles, Chokes, Throws, Restraint Holds, Head Butts, Elbowing, Kneeing, Pressure Points

Chemical Hazards: Poisons, Chemical Cleaners, Perfumes, Dusts

Biological Hazards: Blood Borne Pathogens, Viruses, Plants, Parasites

Mechanical/Electrical Hazards: Slips, Trips and Falls, Tools, Electrical Equipment

Psychological Hazards: Fatigue, Verbal Abuse, Violence, Bullying

Dojo Environment: The likelihood that a practitioner might suffer injury due to damaged or improper tatami or flooring

Equipment: Knives, Guns, Sticks, Swords, Batons, Bottles, Syringes, and many others.

Noise: Kiai or pressure locks from a hold



MARTIAL ARTS RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Let us now consider and formalise the steps and principles used within MARM. Please note that for the purpose of this paper, standard risk management definitions have been modified to suggest a relationship with the threats associated with assault, violence and the practising of martial arts.

Step 1 - Cognition & Context

Cognition: To assist in defining this term <http://www.argospres.com/Resources> states that; “Cognition is the faculty of knowing, perceiving and conceiving (conceptualising). In the context of risk management and decision-making, cognition is a capacity that emerges along with consciousness as the awareness of strategic choice. This consciousness occurs at the implicit level, where judgement is being exercised, just as it does at the higher levels where deliberate and conscious choices are made. So the key to cognition lies in the development of consciousness.”

Context: Before any of the other steps is undertaken it is very important to consider the context in which the MARM process takes place. Defining the context includes looking at the intent of the threat being assessed. Are there interactions with other risks? One of the major difficulties in conducting effective risk management occurs when the environment associated with the hazard is not clearly understood or defined. Consider that each threat can have many hazards and each hazard can have many potential risk events. Violence hazards can be categorised as follows:

- The obvious hazard - is apparent to the senses
- The concealed hazard - is not apparent to the senses
- The developing hazard - cannot be recognised immediately and develops over time
- The transient hazard - is an intermittent or a temporary hazard

Step 2 - Identify the risk

In this step, it is necessary to develop an understanding of the relevant threat, the direct environment and interactions within it. It is important to remember that not all threats pose a direct or consequential risk. There has to be an element of increasing exposure before a hazard develops into a risk. There are several ways to identify risks. Cognition, direct observation and personal experience are the primary methods relating to effectively identifying threats, abuse and violence.

When training in a dojo, consultation and making use of different experiences with others can prove effective in building commitment. For ambiguous situations, such as the identification of unknown or complicated risks a more general structure such as ‘what-if’ and scenario analysis can be used.

Step 3 - Analyse the risk

Here you should rate the likelihood and consequences of each risk, and assign a threat response rating to the identified risks. You also need to determine the level of exposure and determine the possible consequences of each risk in relation to your or others vulnerability.

Young practitioners – Additional risk factors for younger practitioners are: immaturity factors, lack of experience, eagerness to perform well, and failure to see potential dangers.

When assessing potential consequences the following factors can affect the severity of consequences when an event or situation happens. Look at it from two aspects of advantage (Defender and Aggressor).

- Experience
- Confidence
- Ability
- Current Energy and Fitness Levels
- Pre-existing Injuries
- Level of Surprise
- The position of the defender relative to the aggressors
- Number of aggressors
- Intent of aggressors
- Individual Size and Strength
- Age and Experience
- Education and Training

- Influences of drugs and alcohol
- Mental Stability
- Disabilities
- Presence of Weapons
- Location (Environment)
- Time of Day
- Perceived Level of Desperation
- Availability of Medical or First Aid Support

Step 4 - Evaluate the risk

This is the process of evaluating the risk and allocating priorities. Risks are either acceptable or unacceptable. The process is to compare the risk with predetermined acceptable risk levels and prioritize all risks for appropriate responses. Prioritising within risk levels may also be necessary.

Step 5 - Control the risk

In addition to the comradeship, discipline, spiritual and physical benefits of being a martial arts practitioner, one of the major outcomes of investing your time, blood, sweat and money into martial arts is that it has enabled you to consciously develop skills and techniques to control the risks associated with unprovoked physical attacks. The more experience, skills and knowledge you have acquired within your chosen martial art, the greater the chance that you can mitigate or even eliminate the risk of sustaining injury and protect others from harm during an attack. In the normal risk management process an established framework called the hierarchy of control exists for managing hazards, These controls can be abbreviated to: Eliminate, Substitute, Engineering, Administration and Personal Protective Equipment. Unfortunately the only response left for us to defend against a violent attack under these definitions is Administration. This means developing experience and undertaking training and education to ethically protect yourself and others.

Accepted Jujitsu (Controls)

The definitions of the following response criteria will be further explained within the risk matrix section.

Response Level 1 = Simple Release & Withdrawal.

Response Level 2 = Release & Retaliation.

Response Level 3 = Release & Dislodgement.

Response Level 4 = GBH & Deadly Force. (Not discussed within the scope of this paper).

Step 6 - Review the risk

At this point you have started to undertake a predetermined response to control or defend against the violence hazard or threatening situation. It is now time to review or re-evaluate your actions.

Questions you should ask yourself:

- Are further actions required?
- If yes, what response level is required?
- Do you have time to seek assistance?
- Were your actions appropriate?
- Were your actions effective enough to minimise or eliminate the risks?

Other things to consider are:

- Do the existing control measures represent good practice?
- Are the existing control measures preventing or minimising exposure to the risk?

MARTIAL ARTS RISK MANAGEMENT MATRIX

Assessing the Risks

Before considering or undertaking any of the response actions identified within this matrix, it is highly recommended that the reader first seek further legal clarification in regards to responding to unlawful assaults and undertaking self-defence against unprovoked assault within Queensland. The writer also recommends acquiring a paper written by Shihan Jim Stackpoole (Kyushin Ryu School of Jujitsu) on “An Examination of the Legalities Associated with Jujitsu Coaching”

Quantifying & Assessing Likelihood

Almost Certain – Injuries, loss or damage can be expected in most circumstances

Likely – Injuries, loss or damage will probably occur in most circumstances

Possible – Injuries, loss or damage might occur at some time

Unlikely – Injuries, loss or damage could occur at some time

Rare – Injuries, loss or damage usually only occur in exceptional circumstances

Quantifying & Assessing Consequences

Insignificant – No injuries, infections, damage or loss

Minor – First aid only, recoverable damage or loss

Moderate – Medical treatment, doctor or hospital visit required, significant damage or loss

Major – Complicated long term medical treatment of injuries or infections, major damage and loss

Catastrophic – Death of yourself and/or others

Martial Arts Risk Management Table

Using the Martial Arts Risk Management Table

Example: Imagine you are in an aggressive situation where the likelihood of an injury, infection or damage is **Possible** and the expected consequences are only **Minor** the suitable response level would be **RL2** which is **Release and Retaliation**.

LIKELIHOOD OF INJURY, INFECTION OR DAMAGE	CONSEQUENCES				
	Insignificant (No Injury)	Minor (First Aid)	Moderate (Medical Treatment)	Major (Serious Injury)	Catastrophic (Death)
ALMOST CERTAIN	RL 1	RL 3	RL 3	RL 3	RL 3
LIKELY	RL 1	RL 2	RL 3	RL 3	RL 3
POSSIBLE	RL 1	RL 2	RL 3	RL 3	RL 3
UNLIKELY	RL 1	RL 1	RL 2	RL 3	RL 3
RARE	RL 1	RL 1	RL 2	RL 2	RL 2

(RL1 = Response Level 1, RL2 = Response Level 2, RL3 = Response Level 3)

Accepted Jujitsu Response Levels

Response Level 1 = Simple Release & Withdrawal. When approached by an aggressor, it is usually difficult to undertake an immediate assessment of the level of aggression offered towards a defender, legally any over-reaction is fraught with danger, and the defender should utilise only that amount of force necessary to nullify the attack.

Response Level 2 = Release & Retaliation. When it has been ascertained that the aggressor is determined to apply force of such a nature that bodily harm or worse may eventuate, the level of response by the defender should escalate. The initial form of attack should be nullified by an appropriate release, and a suitable retaliation applied in order to provide a distraction or deterrent from any continuance. This may take the form of a blow to an exposed target area or the application of a standing restraint hold.

Response Level 3 = Release & Dislodgement. Dislodge the aggressor from the standing position to a position of disadvantage on the ground. In time when fear of severe injury may be identified, it is necessary to nullify the attack, take the aggressor to the ground by means of throw or takedown, and restrain the aggressor in such a manner that no further aggression is able to be displayed.

Response Level 4 = Inflicting Grievous Bodily Harm & Use of Deadly Force. The use of these responses cannot be justified within the scope of this paper, and are only normally considered by the police or the military.

THREAT SCENARIO – A RISK MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Setting the Scene

Imagine you have recently achieved your black belt in Jujitsu – you have trained twice a week in the dojo for many years, regularly practised at home and are feeling confident and physically fit. You are also certain that you can correctly apply the principles of a staged self-defence or retaliation response. This being application of Level 1 – Withdrawal & Avoidance - Level 2 Release & Retaliation and Level 3 Release & Takedown.

Situation

You have just finished dinner in the city with a good friend; your friend is not very agile, does not have any martial arts training and is normally quite timid. You are now walking back to the train station with them. There is no one else around and you are in a relatively quiet part of the city. Suddenly you are confronted by two male youths who stop you and demand money. They appear very agitated and desperate, and one of them (Aggressor 1) is now angrily threatening your friend with a syringe that appears to have blood in it. The other one (Aggressor 2) is trying to intimidate you by demanding money. He is much larger and looks a lot stronger than you are. He also appears to be concealing a weapon behind his back. You are now both in real danger! What happens next is now up to you!

What Happens Next?

So what are you going to do now? Freeze, Flight or Fight?

Obviously there is no one best solution to this scenario – but it is hoped that you and your friend end up home safely without injury and preferably with all your property intact.

If you have decided to stay and fight, you can now take effective control of the situation using the principles of MARM, which are:

Establishing the context?
Identifying the risks?
Analysing the likelihoods and consequences of each risk?

Determining if the risks are acceptable?
Identifying the appropriate level of response?
Reviewing if the response was effective?

Writer's Solution

Determining Context: We have been cornered in a secluded and dark location, isolated from others, the threat direct and immediate and specifically created to cause physical and psychological harm. Are we isolated, unable to call for help and in very real danger of possibly losing our lives? YES!

Identified Risks (Likelihoods & Consequences):

Potential infection, disease or death from blood borne pathogens (Likely - i.e. needle stick injuries, lunges, stabs)

Multiple cuts, lacerations, puncture wounds, permanent disability or death associated with an assault with a deadly weapon/s (Possible - i.e. lunges, stabs, hits, bullet wound)

Cuts, bruises, dislocations, broken bones, unconsciousness, internal hemorrhaging, permanent disability or death from a direct physical attack from multiple aggressors (Possible - i.e. kicks, punches, knees, elbows, head butts)

Cuts, bruises, dislocations and broken bones from direct impacts on the ground, surrounding walls or pole (Likely - i.e. falls, pushes, trips, slips)

Analysis: Because of the seriousness of the context of the situation, previous experience, training and education I have determined that all the identified risks are not acceptable.

Response: The result from using the Risk Management Matrix (looking at worst case scenario)

Likelihood: Likely – injuries, loss and damage will probably occur in most circumstances

Consequences: Major – complicated long term medical treatment of injuries or infections, major damages and loss

Defined Response Level: Level 3 - Release & Dislodgment - dislodge the aggressor from the standing position to a position of disadvantage on the ground. In time when fear of severe injury may be identified, it is necessary to nullify the attack, take the aggressor to the ground by means of throw or takedown, and restrain the aggressor in such a manner that no further aggression is able to be displayed.

Control Measures: Hopefully without hesitating I would try to focus all my physical strength and learned technique Kiai (Loud Shout) into a Oi Zuki (Lunge Punch) to the solar plexus of Aggressor 2, with a rapid follow up Tai Otoshi (Hand Throw) taking him to the ground, then finish with Mawashi Zuki (Roundhouse Punch) to the nose to maintain maximum disorientation or achieve unconsciousness.

Moving quickly to Aggressor 1 I would focus on executing a Mae Geri (Front Kick) or Mawashi Geri (Roundhouse Kick) to the hand holding the syringe, followed up by Empi Uchi (Elbow Strike) to the solar plexus or up into the chin, into Seoi Otoshi (Shoulder Drop Throw) finishing with a Mawashi Zuki (Roundhouse Punch) to the nose.

Depending on the effectiveness of the above responses, I would either remain onsite and attract the attention of others or retreat with my friend to a place of safety. Then immediately report the matter to police and write down as many details and descriptions of the attackers as soon as possible.



CONCLUSION

Most of the issues identified in this paper are common sense, and an overreaction to a situation can land you in serious trouble with the law. With that in mind it is hoped that once the general principles of a risk management approach to self defence is understood, they should only be used as a guide when undertaking a suitable response to any violent or potentially life threatening situation. It is still solely by your judgment within those first precious seconds that will determine the overall consequences that may affect you, your family and friends as well as others needing help or assistance.

REFERENCES

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Australian Sports Commission <http://www.ausport.gov.au/policies/riskmanage.asp>