

HSFA Insider

The Texas Martial Arts News Source

To Engage, Educate, And Inspire



Volume 3, Issue 1

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Teaching martial arts is a way of sharing knowledge and skills that may one day be used to protect oneself and others. Martial arts seem to be filled with so many instructors saying that their school or art is the definitive answer to self-defense and/or fighting. As such, we must hold ourselves, as teachers, to a very high standard. We must set the standard not only with our skills but with our teaching abilities and how we interact with our students. I, myself, have three pillars that I strive to accomplish in teaching everyone that walks in my school: Engage, Educate, and Inspire.

I work to engage every student that attends my classes. To engage means to occupy, attract, or involve (someone's interest or attention). Once I've engaged a student, through the "why, what, and how I teach," then I can educate them and eventually inspire them to explore and grow in the martial arts. Engaging someone is not as hard as some may think. If you believe in what your teaching and share it with enthusiasm and confidence, engaging students is not difficult at all. You want them to buy into not only the art, but you as a teacher. The "why" I teach is simple. I teach because I truly believe martial arts should be for everyone. The ability to protect yourself or loved ones should be available for any person to learn, should they choose to do to so. The "what" I teach is Chung Do Kwan Tae Kwon Do, Giron® Arnis Escrima, and Galleon Clan Escrima. "How" I teach is

a matter personal to me. I do not think classes need to be overly formal or ritualistic. I want my students to feel comfortable in a disciplined, safe, and enjoyable environment that will help them on their martial arts journey.

Educating or teaching someone in martial arts is not to be taken lightly. Educate means to give (someone) training in or information in a particular field. You are passing on knowledge and skills to protect oneself. Passing the knowledge, skills, and ability to do so is not something to take lightly, but you should enjoy sharing this knowledge. If you have the skills, the knowledge, and the ability to convey those in a way others can understand and attain them from you, why wouldn't you want to teach? I love teaching martial arts. Teaching is more than a hobby, it's a passion, a part of me, a part of my life.

Being able to inspire others is an incredible gift that can not and should not be squandered. Inspire means to fill (someone) with the urge or ability to do or feel something, especially to do something creative. Inspiration is what causes us to rise above and go beyond what we initially thought we could. Teaching martial arts has taught me that when a student is inspired, they push beyond what they think they can do. They grow. They begin to think and train outside of their comfort zone. When a student is inspired, they grow as not only as a martial artist but as person. Why would anyone not want to cul-

tivate and grow inspiration in their students? It's a crazy thought.

I teach, I engage, I educate, and I inspire, but I do not and can not take them fully on their martial arts journey. Students must discover their potential. As students become more aware of the martial art world and everything in it, they see that there is much more than just what you, as a teacher, has to offer. My job as a teacher is to open their mind, body, and spirit to the multiple opportunities this journey offers. I can show them there are many routes to take as they grow. I cannot tell them where to go or even which path is the right one. Making that decision is all part of the journey. If there is one thing I have learned from teaching martial arts, it's that I am not the only one engaging, educating, and inspiring. Every student I have had has engaged me, has educated me, and has inspired me. My students engage me by getting my attention and interest in them, and they inspire me to want to teach them. My students educate me by forcing me to grow as a teacher. Each one is unique in their mindset and abilities. My students inspire me to continue my martial arts journey and never stop growing. The more I grow, the more I can share. The more I share, the better I make this world by touching the lives of countless people through martial arts in a positive manner.

- Jason Evans,
Houston Martial Arts Academy

Hip's Fitness Corner - Ab Roll Outs

Filipino martial arts, like all martial arts, require a powerful, explosive mid-section to perform correct, functional movements. One of my favorite exercises for the core area is ab roll outs.

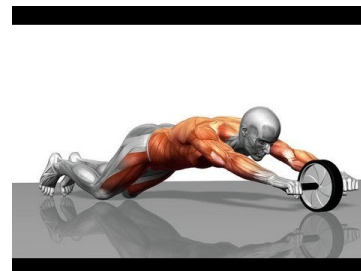
Ab roll outs are an old school movement that works better than most core exercises. The reason being is the number of muscles engaged as well as the nerv-

ous system. I feel the muscles of my arms, shoulders, back, and all my mid-section when doing roll outs.

Technique is crucial when doing this movement. You start on your knees with your hands on the handles. Lean forward and stretch forward allowing gravity to take you to the ground. When you fully extend, use

your core to bring the ab wheel back to start position. The key is crunching your stomach intensely as you exhale. Start with just a few reps to learn correct technique and build up to 3 sets of 10 over time.

- Hip



Theoretical Black Belt

I've coined a new phrase. Theoretical Black Belt. What is a theoretical black belt? Obviously, one who's a black belt only in theory. How many martial artists out there today are black belts but have never sparred? How many out there don't even own sparring gear of any kind? They've obtained their rank through shadow boxing, or forms, or kata, or patterns. Someone who's gone through all of the techniques and may do those techniques very well but has never tried them against a resisting opponent.

If a student is lazy or doesn't show up to class, and doesn't know the material for their rank, who's fault is that? It's the student's fault. An instructor is only a street sign. They can tell you where you are, where you've been, and where you could possibly go, depending on what road you take next, but they aren't actual vehicles that can take you from place to place. A student

must do that themselves. An instructor can't go and run for you, or lift weights for you, or kick a bag for you. That's the student's job. If a student is bad, it's the student's fault. If a black belt is bad, who's fault is that? The black belts because they didn't train hard enough or put in the hours and reps to develop the skills they should have? No, it's the instructor's fault. There's no way someone should be able to rise to the level of black belt while having bad techniques.

Black belt means something to every single martial artist out there. Moving from brown belt to black belt is special, more so than any other rank they could ever possibly get. More than 6th degree, or winning a world title, or becoming an instructor or school owner. Those are all just things you did. A black belt is something you become. It's life changing. It's a story you can tell for the rest of your entire life. You can tell about the other black

belts who were there at the test. How each one questioned every move you made. How each one took their pound of flesh from you and the bruises you had for the next month. How you were exhausted but kept going. How you almost...or did...vomit. How you wished the test would be over and kept looking at the clock and hated every single judge because they kept wanting to see what you'd just done, again and again. And how after 7 or 8 hours of testing, you were handed your new belt and welcomed to the club. It doesn't happen at 2nd degree or 5th degree or 8th degree. Although you may have hard tests, nothing feels like tying on that black belt for the first time and knowing you earned it. As you look back through your life at the end and think of all the great moments you've had: children being borne, marriages, first drink or paycheck, in the top few of that list is, you're a black belt. It's not what you did, it's who you became. CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...

“Our whole being changes at black belt. Something no under rank could understand, or no outsider would ever get.”

Have you ever gone out to buy a new suit? Tried it on with a starched shirt and your favorite tie? Put on your polished shoes and looked at yourself in the mirror? Then thrown a few punches and a couple of kicks just to see how the suit would look in combat? Of course you have. Why? Because it's who we are. It's not what we do. Our whole being changes at black belt. Something no under rank could understand, or no outsider would ever get. At black belt, there are no race issues. As black belts, no one is closer to us than other black belts. Not family, or friends, or neighbors. We understand each other in ways the regular people can't understand us.

Today, some are given this rank with little understanding or meaning behind it. Many schools out there are businesses only and promote students who just show up and pay their money. The only way they could fail their test is if their check bounces. They're not given the chance to earn their place in history and gain the respect and trust of others who've cried, bled and been torn down only to reinvent themselves from the very best parts of what was inside of them.

I was told, a few days ago, that bills need to be paid and that gaining rank gives a student confidence, and that most times that confidence is enough to give someone an "air" about themselves that will project their strength to an aggressor, making

that aggressor choose another, "easier" opponent.

I don't believe that at all, in any way, shape or form. Most attackers aren't aware enough to notice someone's stride or confidence level. All that's happened is the theoretical warrior has gained a false sense of security that may get them, or their family killed.

As martial artists, we have a job that we're being paid for on a monthly basis. We are the employee hired to do a job—to train someone in the warlike arts. If we hired a fence builder and they left gaps or the top was uneven, we'd refuse to pay and fire them. If we took our car into the shop and it came out with 4 flats and wouldn't start, we wouldn't pay, and we'd go someplace else.

We need our students much more than they need us. Within a few miles, there's another martial art school, willing to be hired. For us though, if they're giving us their money or not, our rent still must be paid. Our light bill, insurance, cleaning supplies, etc., all needs to be paid. We need those students. They expect us to give them what they paid for. It may be more than they can handle, and that's fine, but we're here to do a job—to give the new student a part of who we are so they can find who they are. Just like our instructors did with us.

"I'm a master swimmer and I can teach you the best way to swim. My swimming school is

better than the swimming schools in the area and we can teach you or your child the most effective ways to swim.

I mean, I've never been in the water before, and honestly, I don't even own a bathing suit. However, I've studied all of the swimming techniques here on dry land by paddling my arms and kicking my feet, and if I ever HAD to get into the water, I'd know exactly what do you and would out swim all others in the pool."

Sure, take my money. I don't want my kid in the water either, but I want them to be a master swimmer.

Jump in the water. Get wet. Go under. Jump off the high dive and see how long you can hold your breath while you're down. You can certainly learn to swim without drowning.

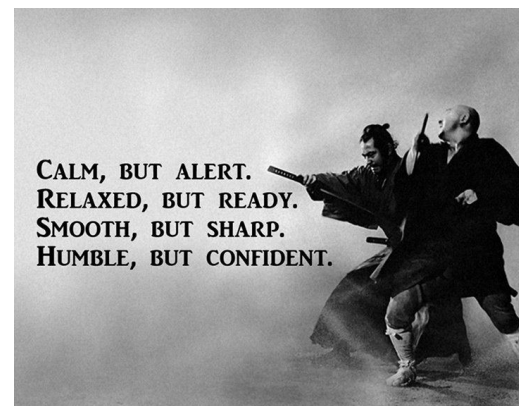
Our goal as black belts should always be to produce literal black belts, not theoretical black belts.

- Curt Doyle, North American Self Defense Institute

Be featured in Our Newsletter!

The *HSFA Insider* is a newsletter dedicated to sharing martial arts news, insights, and events that happening in Houston and throughout Texas. If you know of any events happening, let us know and we will advertise for you. If you are interested in writing an article for the *Insider*, you can contact us at

info@houstonstickfighting.org to submit an article. You can also email us if you have any questions about what type of articles we are looking for. We are looking for any articles on martial arts and fitness. This can be over the physical, mental, or spiritual aspects of both topics.



Winning, Losing, And Participation Trophies

When I was nine, I started playing football for the first time. I was the only new kid on the team so I thought it was great that the coach was picking me up for practice with a few other guys. Only one day, he didn't show up, and when my parents asked him what happened, he said that I wasn't outside waiting on time and that two more strikes and I was off the team. Well, the next practice day, I was waiting outside for him an hour early. I stood out in the hot Texas sun in my full gear for hours until I finally got heart stroke and throw up in the street. He never did show up. It turns out there was a kid who had signed up late who he wanted on his team and this kid was huge! Of course it wasn't long before he had me off his team and on to a new one. It was a team of kids like me who had mostly never played before, and we got smashed all season by the more experienced teams and eventually came in last place. Now, it would have been easy for me to quit after that, but I went on to different and better teams over the next few years. I went from a last place team my first year to

making the all-star team as a center just a few years later. What carried me through that transition was encouragement from my parents and learning to really enjoy the game more than I enjoyed the winning. If I had obsessed over the winning and the losing, I may never have gotten back on the field and come to realize my own potential. This mentality of simply doing something physical because I enjoyed it became important for my continued training in martial arts.

In America, there is a certain philosophy of competitive thinking that says that anyone who doesn't think they are/will be the champ has a "loser's mentality". The opposite of this is of course the "champion's mentality," which can actually carry people very far, but we've all seen what happens to those types of people when they fail. Being totally unprepared for failure often has serious metal repercussions, and these people sometimes never recover from their first big loss. I'm sure anyone who follows MMA can think of at least one example of a champ who never bounced back after his or

her first defeat. One quality they often seem to lack is true enjoyment in what they are doing, while they are doing it. From the training to the competing, we need more than just a love of winning but also a love of our art to carry us through the highs and lows. The best way to instill the virtue of enjoyment in our students is of course to start them young. Like a lot of people, when I heard that certain children's sports leagues don't keep score, I rolled my eyes and said, "But that won't prepare them for the real world!" I was wrong. In the most recent winter Olympics, a country of 5 million (Norway) beat out a country of 300 million (you know who). How did a country with such a small population beat a much larger and richer nation in every medal category? Well it could be in part that they don't allow children's games to be scored until they are 13. This policy that I hated at first seems to foster a love of just playing and a healthy attitude toward winning and losing later in life. I think the Norwegian model can be a good example for those of us who teach and train young children moving forward.

At the end of my first season playing football, they gave us a

small participation trophy. These trophies are much-maligned these days, but at the time, it was at least something. The trophy didn't give me any false ideas about how we did as a team that year or myself as a player. As an adult I can see that it was meant as a bit of encouragement for at least doing something. It pains me to hear people dump so much hate on the concept of rewarding children just for participating in a sport or activity when there are so many children out there doing nothing! There is a third option between winning and losing—not doing anything at all. Doing nothing at all seems to be the ever increasing trend these days, and if a little trophy, ribbon, or certificate can help in some small way to encourage young people to keep training then I think it is ultimately good for our kids and our society. We all want to teach our kids to grow to be warriors in the martial arts, but let us teach them to be doers first and winners second.

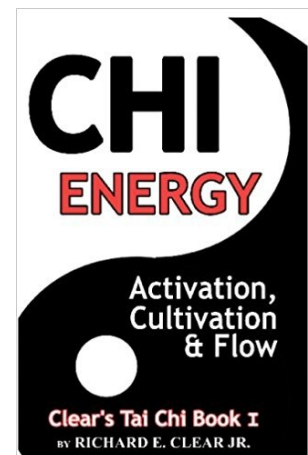
Billy Atwood, Davis Martial Arts Academy

Recommended Reading — CHI Energy

This book explains real high level practices of Chi/Qi/Ki (Life-Force) activation, cultivation and flow that allow you to personally experience, build and work with Chi energy. Practices are explained in simple detail so that the average person can fully utilize and understand the knowledge imparted. There is a chapter on the role the mind plays in Chi Kung energy

work and a basic definition of the word Chi and related terms. There are also specific chapters in the book on mind intent, breathing, body states, physical alignments, Wu Chi, Bone Marrow Washing, Kidney Breathing, the Energy Ball, Rooting, Body Connection secrets, the Dan Tiens, important energy points, the 3 Dan Tiens Linear and how to get the maximum benefits

out of your Tai Chi Training. We are pleased to offer a text for Westerners to get a real understanding of Chi energy that will give beginners and more experienced practitioners enough working knowledge to truly advance their studies in this fascinating discipline.



Past Events



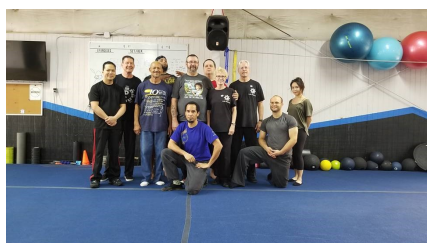
Tuhon Harley Elmore of Sayok Kali taught a Sayok Kali seminar on January 14-14 at Ground Dwellers BJJ at 9222 Louetta Rd Spring, TX



Houston Stick Fighting Association held their 1st quarter Gathering for 2018 on March 10th at Ground Dwellers BJJ.



Kang Kai taught a Pencak Silat Panglipur workshop at Houston Martial Arts Academy March 24-25. It focused on Entries and Takedowns



Sifu Dug Corpolongo taught a two day seminar on Xingue and Bagua at Houston Martial Arts Academy February 24-25.



The 2nd Alamo City Stick Fighting Championships were held on March 3rd in San Antonio, TX

Upcoming Events



Houston Stick Fighting Association's 2nd quarter Gathering will be held on June 16th, 2018 12-2 pm at Gracie Barra Westchase Houston, TX



Art of War Part II featuring Harimau Berantai Silat will held April 8th at 6134 Airline Dr, Ste 20J in Houston, TX.



The 3rd Annual Texas Stick Fighting Championship will be held May 19th in Laredo, TX

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htownstickfights



[JasonREvans](https://www.youtube.com/user/JasonREvans)

The Houston Stick Fighting Association ("HSFA") founded in 2006 is an association for like-minded martial artists that engage in simulated combat to test and improve their skills in the blade-based and stick-based fighting arts. Membership in HSFA is open to martial artists of all styles, all systems, of all ages, from beginner to advanced levels. Members of the HSFA are striving to develop and improve their skills through simulated combat to see what works and what does not with a resisting opponent. Along the way, we build friendships and camaraderie with our sparring partners and share our respective arts with each other.

Schools - Associated with Houston Stick Fighting Association

[Houston Martial Arts Academy](#)

[Ground Dwellers BJJ](#)

DAMAG-INC Kali Combatives

Combat Nation

[Texas Jeet Kun Do](#)

Southeast Texas Escrimadors

Westchase Warriors GB Westchase

[TX 3rd Coast MMA](#)

North American Self Defense Institute

SwordtoSword