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## HAPKIDO PROTECTION TECHNIQUES

*with*  
**Chong S. Kim**

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## Hapkido's Advanced Methods for Keeping Your Family and Friends Safe From Harm

by Steve Petermann

Your reaction time was perfect. Your techniques were performed with skill and precision. You're standing up and two others are lying unconscious on the ground.

All you can think is, "I failed!"

Instead of protecting your friend from that attacker, you executed a technique that slammed the attacker into your friend. Otherwise, your buddy would be standing next to you, clapping you on the shoulder and saying, "Well done." Instead, for the rest of your life, you're going to hear him say, "Remember that night you knocked me out?"

### ALTRUISTIC ART

Hapkido has a well-rounded curriculum of self-defense techniques. Much of it can be applied, with minor adaptation, to a variety of situations in which you must fend off an attacker. However, *jang mu won* hapkido, founded by Alhambra, California-based Chong S. Kim, is unique in that it teaches a collection of techniques and concepts specifically designed for protecting another person. This subset of the art can be used in bodyguard work, in an intervention aimed at protecting an innocent bystander and in an attempt to save a loved one.

Martial artists frequently speak of using their skills to protect the innocent, but rarely do they discuss the difficul-





# he innocent

ties inherent in keeping another person safe while fighting off a hoodlum. Instead, they tend to drift back into the comfortable world of what they would do if they were attacked. Moving from the realm of self-defense to the realm of defending another human being adds layers of complexity to the equation. This article will outline those complexities and describe the solutions that jang mu won hapkido teaches.

## PRELIMINARIES

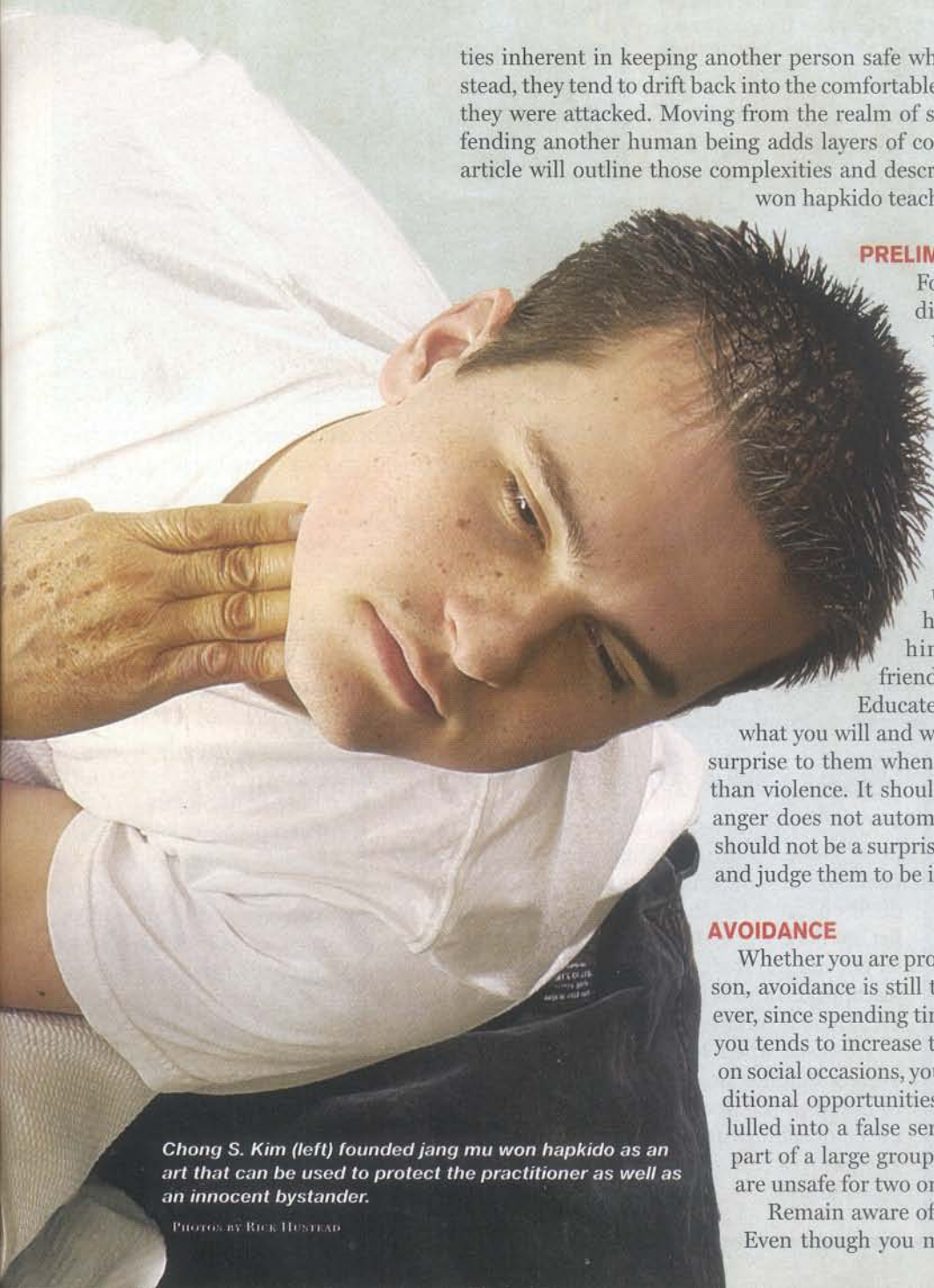
For some martial artists, the most difficult aspect of protecting a friend is the recommendation to pick friends who are worthy of protection. If you have a loud and obnoxious friend who is a magnet for trouble and you cannot bring yourself to dump him, you should carefully manage your interaction with him. Imagine trying to break up a shouting match involving him and a stranger and hearing him announce, "Yeah, well my friend is a black belt, and here he is!"

Educate your family and friends about what you will and won't tolerate. It should not be a surprise to them when you choose negotiation rather than violence. It should not be a surprise when their anger does not automatically become your anger. It should not be a surprise if you analyze a confrontation and judge them to be in the wrong.

## AVOIDANCE

Whether you are protecting yourself or another person, avoidance is still the best way to stay safe. However, since spending time with people who are close to you tends to increase the likelihood of your going out on social occasions, you should be prepared for the additional opportunities for conflict to arise. Don't be lulled into a false sense of security because you are part of a large group. Places that are unsafe for one are unsafe for two or more.

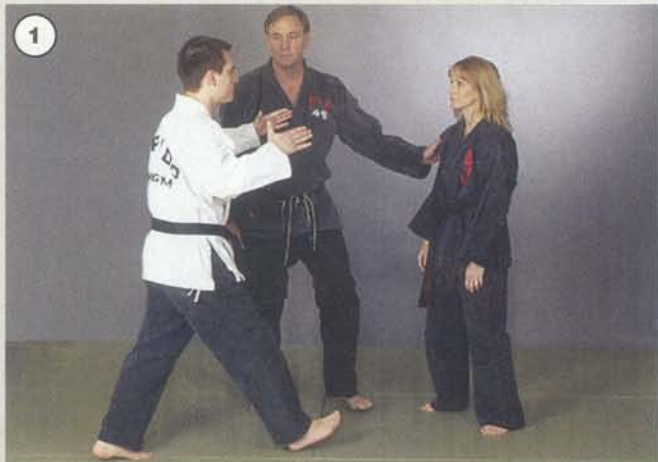
Remain aware of things happening around you. Even though you may wish to horse around with



*Chong S. Kim (left) founded jang mu won hapkido as an art that can be used to protect the practitioner as well as an innocent bystander.*

PHOTOS BY RICK HUSTEAD





**1** The aggressor approaches Jeanette Reed, and Steve Petermann (center) moves her out of reach (1). Petermann then delivers a throat strike to the assailant, sweeping him off his feet (2). Once he hits the ground, the hapkido expert drives his knee into his ribs (3).

your friend or stare longingly into the eyes of your spouse, you still need to take stock of your surroundings. Early identification of potential problems can give you time to relocate or otherwise improve your defensive capabilities.

## DE-ESCALATION

When things start to get ugly, keep calm. Provide guidance when a friend gets both of you into a difficult situation. Encourage him and the other party to walk away. The angrier they are, the less they will listen to reason. Don't be surprised if your efforts are ignored or if you're insulted. Don't become a participant in the argument; there's no sense in losing your cool, too.

If, in your opinion, the discussion is progressing toward an attack, keep your eyes on the other person while you gently but firmly guide your friend out of the line of fire. Say, "I need to talk to you!" and maneuver him 12 to 15 feet away. Force him to break eye contact with the belligerent person. If your friend tries to look over his shoulder at the other guy, obscure his vision with your arm. Focus his attention on you and keep telling him that fighting isn't worth it.

Your friend might react poorly to being moved. He might resist you, push back or sidestep you. He might even forget about the other person entirely and turn his anger on you. Be prepared, for he may not see de-escalation as the best choice—especially if he thinks your skills are his ace in the hole.

No matter how he reacts, don't abandon him just because he rebuffs your efforts to de-escalate the situation. Your goal is to create a cooling-off period. By definition,

that means tempers are hot. If you are prepared for an angry outburst from a friend, you are more likely to continue providing the support he so desperately needs.

Concentrate your de-escalation efforts on your friend because that is where you have the best chance of being successful. The time you spend talking with him gives both sides a chance to rethink.

If you're having a good day, tempers will cool, sanity will prevail, and one or both parties will consider leaving. Don't let your guard down because you're not out of the woods

yet. Distance creates comfort and enhances bravado, so you must be prepared for that parting verbal shot that will bring them back into the fray. If that happens, talk over the top of the final comments to garble them. Keep guiding your friend away from the other person and talk to him so he can't hear any last words.

## POSITION AND ATTITUDE

Assuming that both parties have rejected your attempts to de-escalate and have taken up positions facing each other, you should

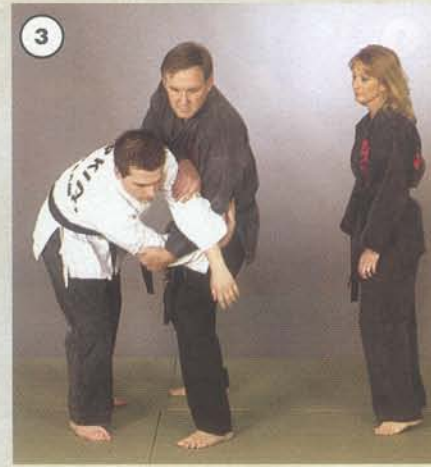
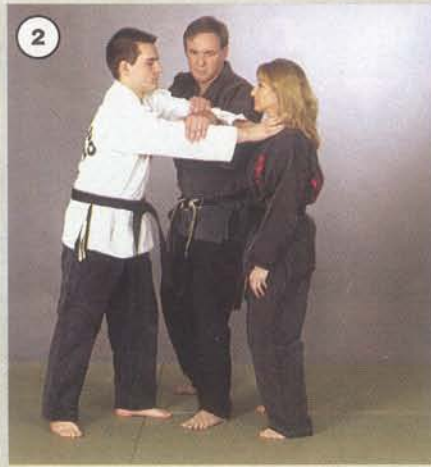
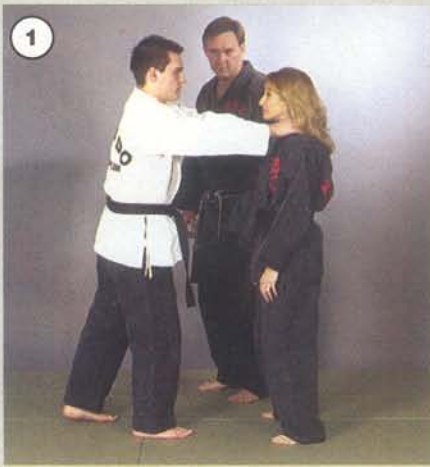
## Get the Point

One of *jang mu won hapkido's* most important self-defense lessons involves angle of attack. If an opponent throws a punch straight at you, it is harder to deflect because the angle of approach lets you see the fist but not the arm. It's like seeing the point of a pencil but not the shaft, Steve Petermann says. The fist just appears to grow bigger and bigger until it hits your eye. There is no lateral movement.

However, when you're standing off to the side to protect another person from an aggressor, it is easier to intercept the punch, he says. "You are not seeing the point of the pencil; you are seeing its entire length. The entire length of the attacker's arm or leg is exposed to you."

—Robert W. Young





Daniel Aul attacks his victim with a choke (1). To eliminate the threat in a controlled and safe manner, Steve Petermann reaches under the assailant's left arm and places his left hand on the other man's right elbow while grabbing the assailant's left arm with his right hand (2). After sliding in, Petermann pushes the arms down and away from the victim's neck, and she immediately backs away (3). The hapkido instructor then continues to apply pressure, launching the assailant into the air and onto the ground (4). As soon as he lands (5), Petermann finishes him with a spearhand to the armpit (6).

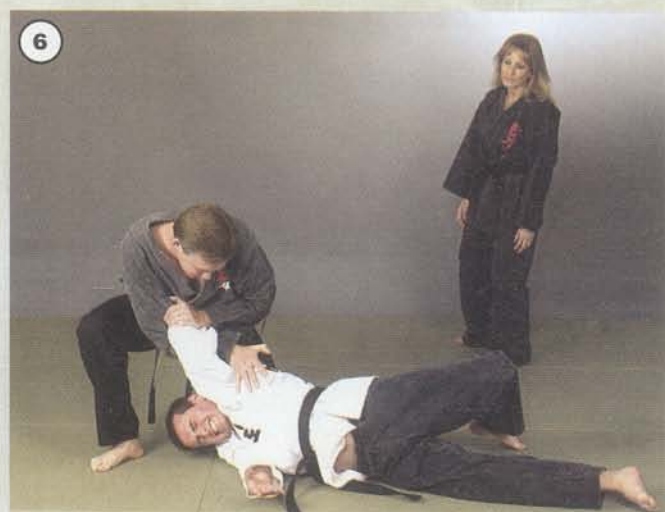
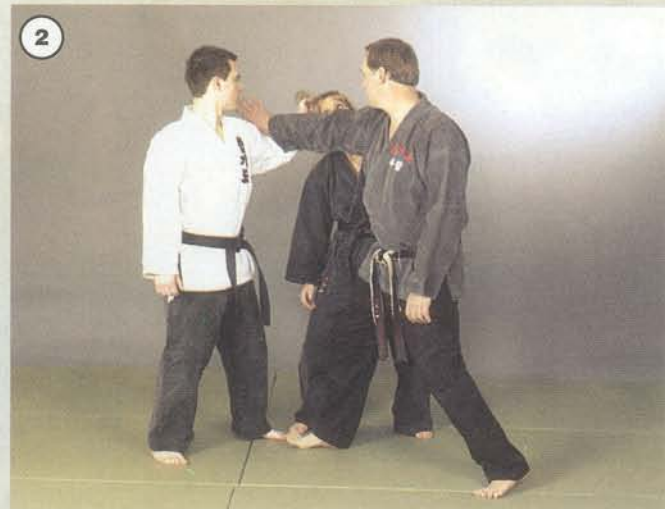
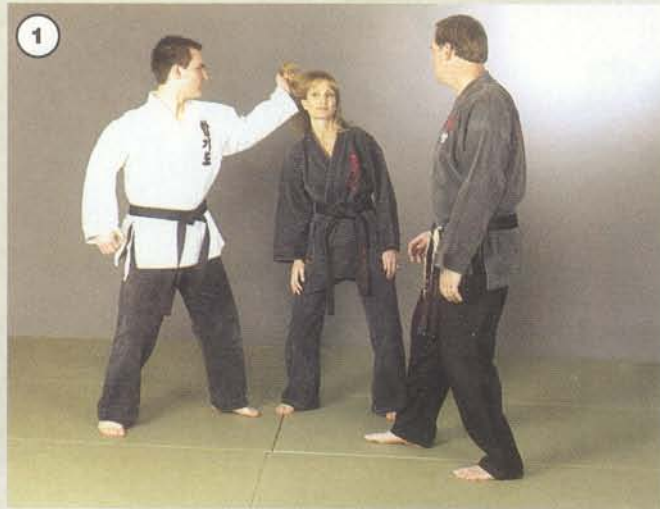
orient yourself so you can intercept an assault directed at your friend. Continue to appear non-threatening. Remain relaxed and quiet. If you talk, use a low voice. Do not try to score debating points, for that will only fuel the flames. Your goal is not to win an argument, but to avoid a fight or frustrate an assault. Should the focus of the other person's aggression turn to you, simply continue trying to de-escalate and increase the distance between him and your party.

Don't stand where the belligerent can easily see you and your friend. Move to his side and stay close enough that he must shift his eyes to watch you. That will encourage a breaking of eye contact with your friend. It will also cause the aggressor to step backward or turn slightly so he can get both of you in his field of vision. Be prepared for him to ask, "What are you doing?" Answer with, "I'm trying to stay out of the way." If he then encourages you to stay out of the way somewhere else, calmly say, "No, thank you." With their gazes shifted to you and the subject changed, you can once again

try to de-escalate. If you fail and his attention returns to your friend, reposition yourself again so he can't see both of you at the same time.

By properly positioning yourself, the assailant will have to go by you to get to his target. That does not leave you a lot of reaction time, but your chance of successfully defending your friend is actually better. Because your angle on the assault is from the side, you have an improved chance of reacting in a timely manner. In addition, since the attack is not directed at you, you're less likely to suffer from the debilitating effects of fear.





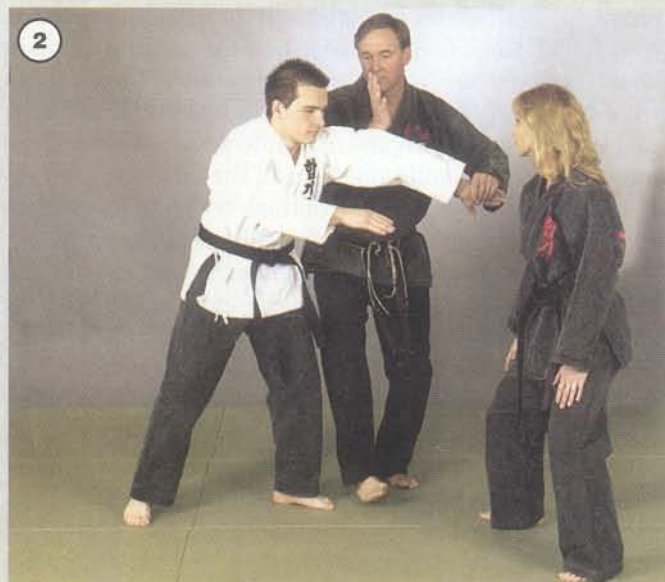
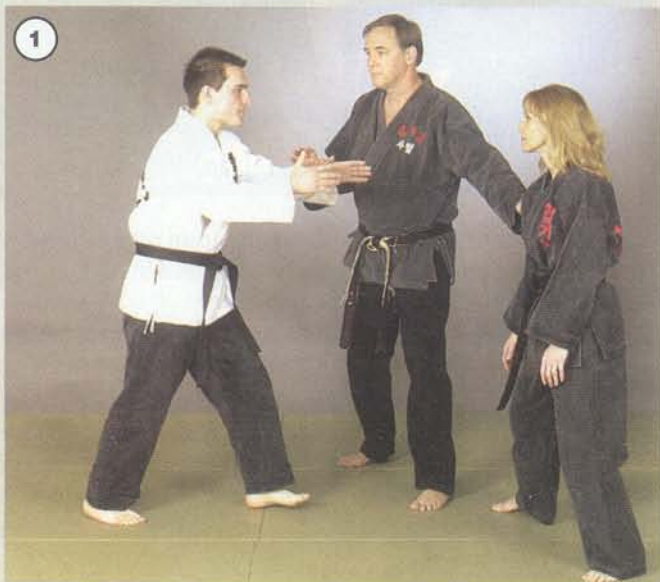
### INTERCEPTING THE ASSAULT

If your best efforts to avoid a fight don't seem to be working, be prepared to move your friend out of harm's way. In some instances, it will be appropriate to push him out of the path of the assault. Making the attacker miss his target is an effective defense, and it gives you more time to select the proper response.

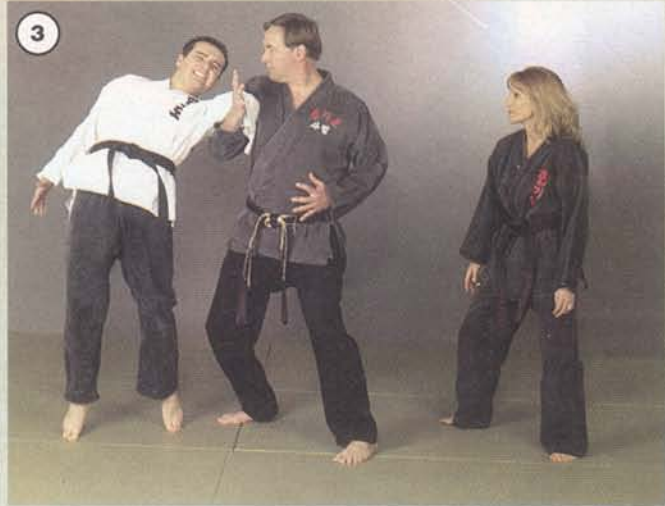
Carefully but quickly push your friend's shoulder to move

him out of danger. This is a lot more difficult than it sounds because when the adrenaline is pumping, a kindly push can turn into a straight-arm blast. Pushing your friend backward with pressure on the chest is fine if the friend is male, but you may have some explaining to do if you try it on a female you're not too familiar with.

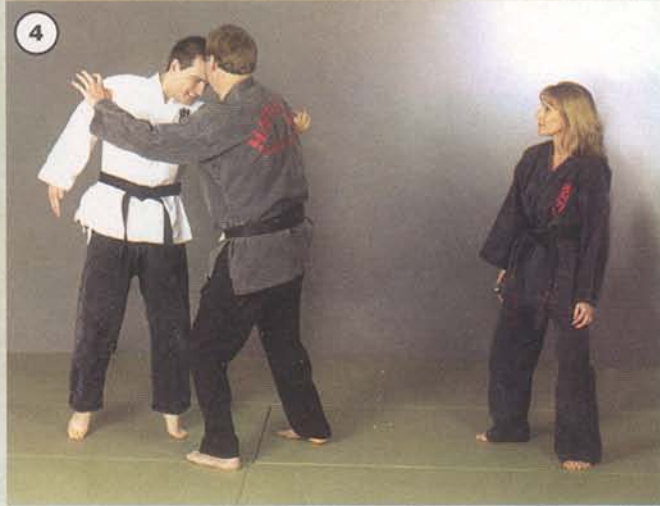
Part of the interception phase occurs after you move your friend. When you advance and intercept the assault from







**3** The attacker grabs the victim's hair (1). Steve Petermann interposes (2) and wraps his right arm over and around the attacker's left elbow (3). After locking the limb, Petermann begins a clockwise motion and delivers a left forearm strike to the other man's neck (4). The hapkido instructor then tosses the attacker to the ground (5) and restrains him with shoulder/elbow lock (6).



breaking your loved one's jaw.

When the attacker has a hold of his victim, you have an added advantage: Some of his weapons are already occupied, and his concentration is focused on the other person. That will enable you to more carefully choose an effective defense.

the side, you deflect the attack. That moves it off-target and increases the distance between the assailant and the victim because you have changed the attack from a straight line (the shortest distance between two points) to an angle. Consequently, the initial attack will never reach your friend, and your follow-up technique will neutralize the threat.

### BEST OPTION

The single best way to protect friends and loved ones from danger is to encourage them to study a martial art such as jang mu won hapkido. Once they become proficient, you will have assisted in giving them the best protection of all. Not only will they have developed the physical skills needed for self-defense, but they will also have learned the mental skills of avoidance and de-escalation. And then if you get into trouble some day, your loved one will be able to come to your aid. **X**

### CONTINGENCY PLAN

Sometimes an assault does not open with a punch or a kick. The bad guy might grab the victim's clothing, hair or windpipe. In such cases, simply executing a self-defense technique against the third person may prove inadequate. It is crucial that you perform the right technique in the right manner, for that may be the difference between thwarting a choke with no injury to your loved one and thwarting it while

*About the author: Steve Petermann teaches jang mu won hapkido in San Dimas, California. He has trained under Chong S. Kim for more than 28 years. To contact Petermann for seminar information, write to Kim's Hapkido, 1437 West Arrow Highway, San Dimas, California 91773. Or call (909) 305-0700.*

*When the assailant lunges for the victim's neck, Steve Petermann moves her out of reach (1). Petermann then uses his left hand to grasp the attacker's left hand and his right forearm to apply pressure on the attacker's left arm (2). The hapkido master steps forward with his right foot and completes the armbar (3). He finishes with an elbow strike to the spine (4).*

