

Pretend that you have to endure one of the following scenarios.

Imagine yourself on that fishing boat that was battered in *The Perfect Storm*. Or worse, picture yourself jumping overboard into the cold Atlantic and trying to swim through those monster swells.

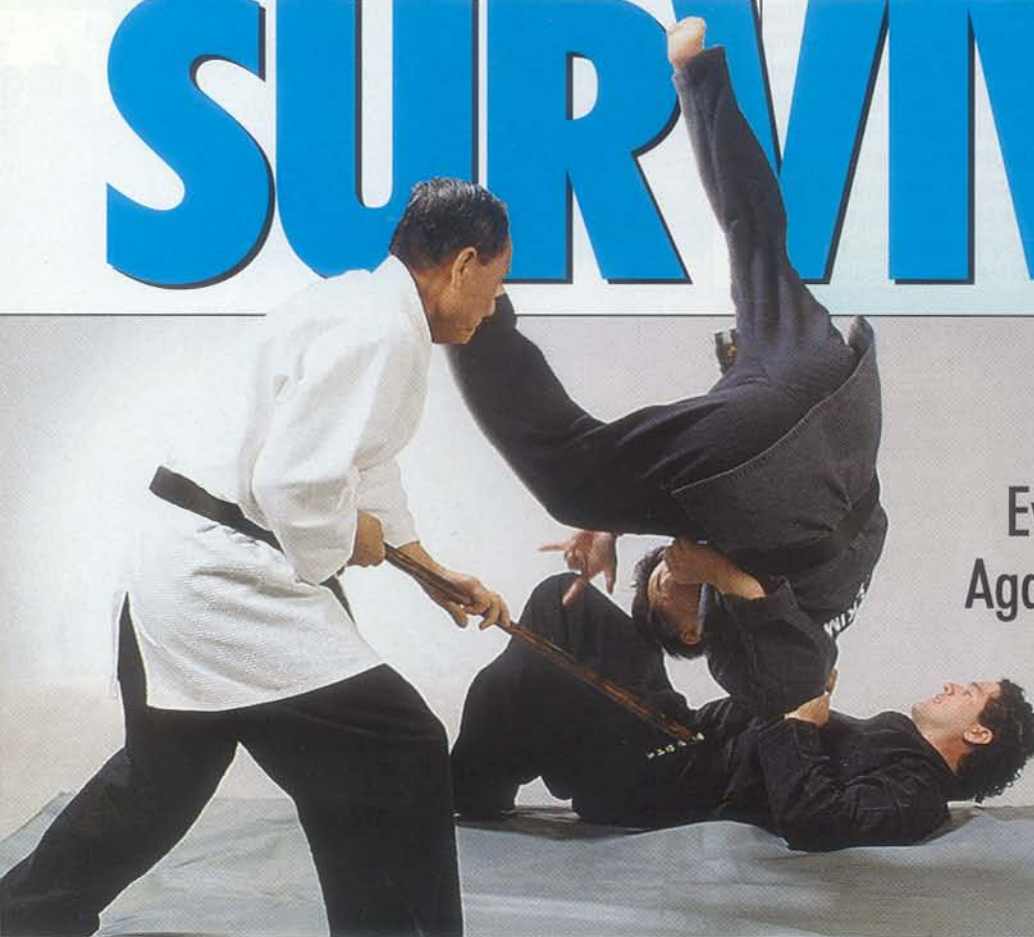
How about this one? You've got two broken legs, the building is on fire and you're the only one present.

Finally, you're leaving a restaurant in downtown. It's late. Your friend takes a cab. You have to walk one block to your car. When you get there, there are three guys leaning against your SUV. They've got tattoos, shaved heads, they're in a bad mood and they attack you.

To be sure, these are all horrible situations that you hope you never experience. If you had to choose one, however, it would probably be the encounter with multiple attackers, right? At least you can train for that. And that's exactly what they do at Kim's Hapkido in Southern California.

"Regular training is one of the best ways of surviving multiple attackers," says Steve Petermann, who runs one of Chong S. Kim's seven schools in the Los Angeles area. "It's probably your best chance to survive. Of course, given a

I MUST SURVIVE



Hapkido's
Methods to
Even the Odds
Against Multiple
Attackers

BY BYRON
CHRISTOPHER



choice, we would all rather avoid multiple attackers. Once that desire is denied, however, would you rather face that encounter [multiple attackers] trained or untrained?"

MULTIPLE ATTACKER DRILLS

To prepare their black belts for more than one angry attacker, the 47-year-old Petermann says they have several training drills. The first one is called "Escape and Evade."

"This is essentially old-fashioned tag," says Petermann. "The idea is to avoid getting tagged, and that's a good philosophy to have in a multiple-attack scenario. Barring the presence of a weapon, if you can maintain a certain amount of distance from the attacker, you are safe."

They also practice "Tag Plus." This is similar to the first drill, but this time the students try to throw the attackers off-balance and redirect their motion.

"On the street, you want to redirect the attackers into objects like fire hydrants, cars or other people," he says.

Third, they employ "Kicking Shield Squish." Two "attackers" try to trap their "victim" while he uses strikes to protect himself.

TIPS TO HANDLE ATTACKERS

While the black belts at Kim's Hapkido train specifically to handle multiple attackers, there is something very important that should always be done first in a real encounter — avoidance.

"If you can, avoid the situation," says Petermann, who has been training in the arts for close to three decades. "First, don't go to places that are known for their problems. If you see a group of people who look dangerous, go the other way. Move to the other side of the street. Walk into a store. Trust your instincts."

If these efforts fail, you have to employ the next strategy, which is de-escalation.

"If someone is mad at you for some reason, provide some mollification," he says.

Remember, getting angry can be employed as a strategy to confuse you. These guys will try to intimidate you into a disadvantageous position.



When two assailants grab Steve Petermann's wrists (1), he responds with a reverse round kick to the attacker's groin on his right (2). Petermann then grabs the other assailant's wrist and begins to move under his arm (3). When he completes the turn, he executes a shoulder twist (4) and sends the attacker to the ground (5).

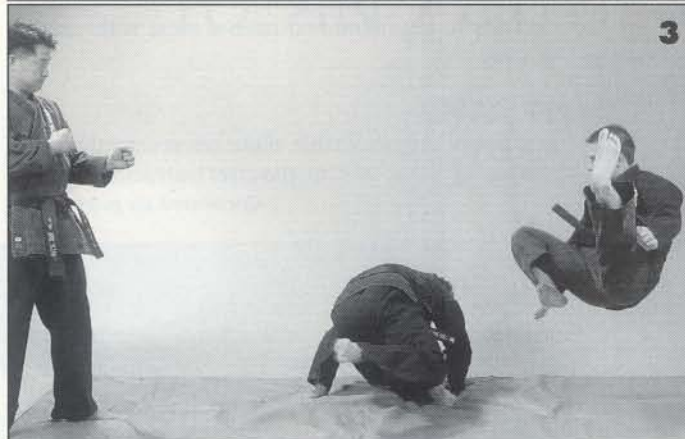




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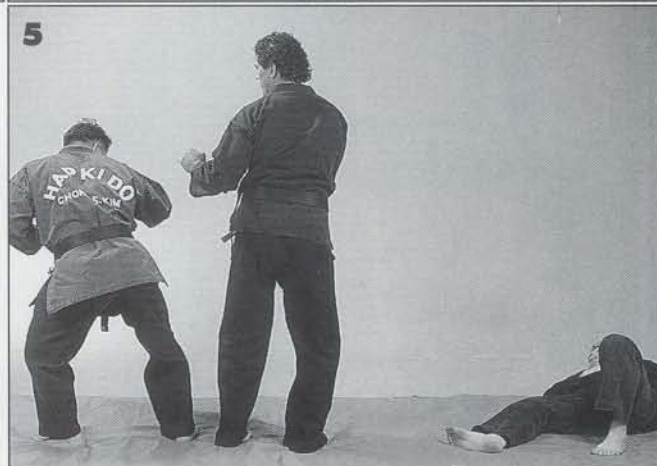
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The Necessary Mind-Set

If you're forced to defend yourself against multiple attackers, it's imperative that you show an "indomitable spirit," says Steve Petermann.

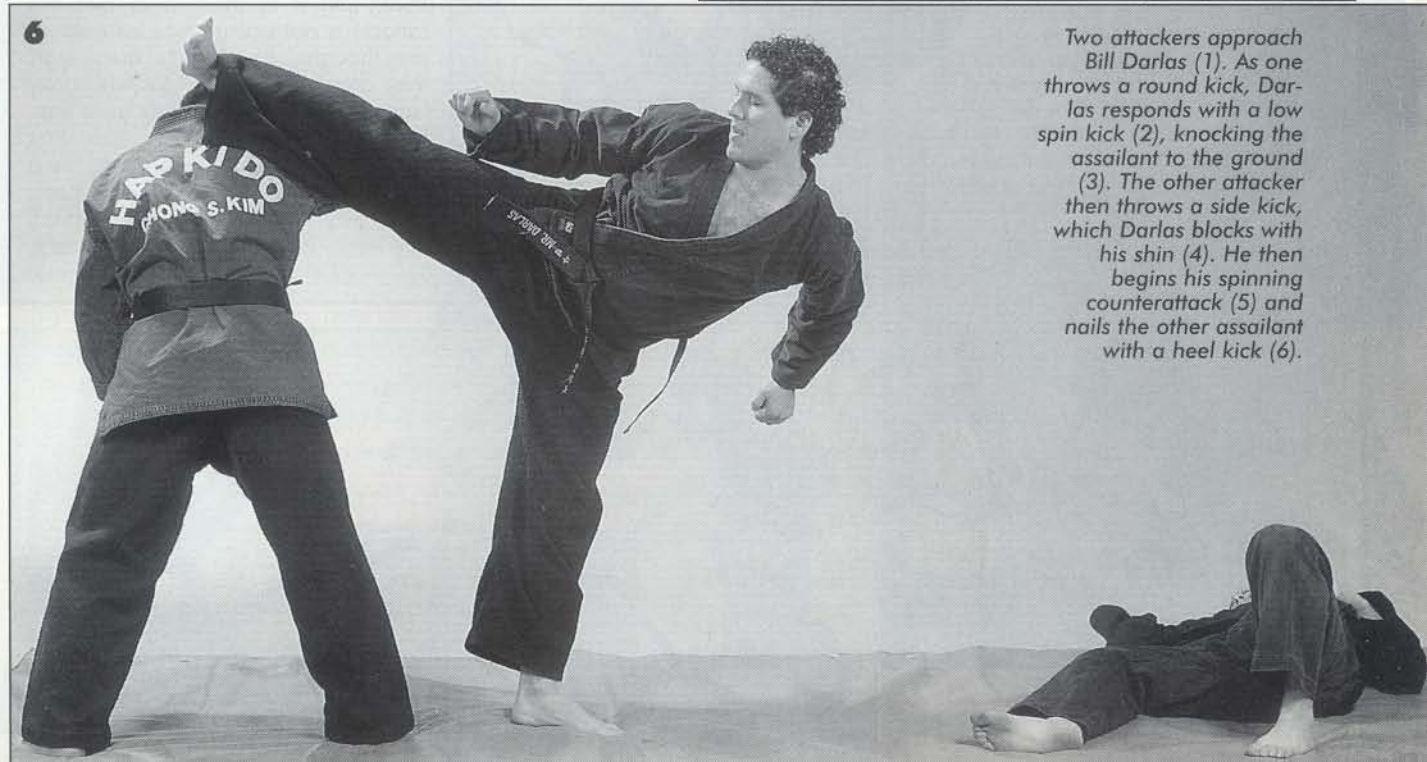
"If your brain starts to tell you that it's all over, you might as well submit," he says. "That is the real enemy. You have to push that back."

Therefore, you have to think positive. Believe in yourself.

"You need more punch, one more kick, one more twist or one more 'No' than they have 'Yes,'" says Petermann.

That's where the training comes in.

"It's counterproductive if you don't experience some difficulty and pain," he says. "You can't build a strong spirit by sitting and watching the martial arts."



6

Two attackers approach Bill Darlas (1). As one throws a round kick, Darlas responds with a low spin kick (2), knocking the assailant to the ground (3). The other attacker then throws a side kick, which Darlas blocks with his shin (4). He then begins his spinning counterattack (5) and nails the other assailant with a heel kick (6).

"You don't want to be coerced into a car or off the main street," he says. "Don't surrender a good situation for a bad one."

If the situation continues to escalate, you want to "appeal to humanity."

"You want to ingratiate yourself with the strong guy and attempt to put second thoughts into those who are weaker," he says.

You can do this by smiling and telling them you don't want any trouble, he says. Tell them this is wrong.

If this doesn't work, loud, informative commands are next.

"You need to yell short and loud words that indicate that you need assistance," he says. "It won't necessarily do any good to just yell. Make sure there's no doubt to those around you that you need help."

If or when you get a chance to run, take it.

"It's not undignified to run," he says.

If you do run, keep the following points in mind:

First, do not run to exhaustion because your mind and body will surrender, he says. "You don't want to be there," says Petermann.

Second, don't just run away. Head toward increased safety, such as a location that is well-lit or has lots of people.

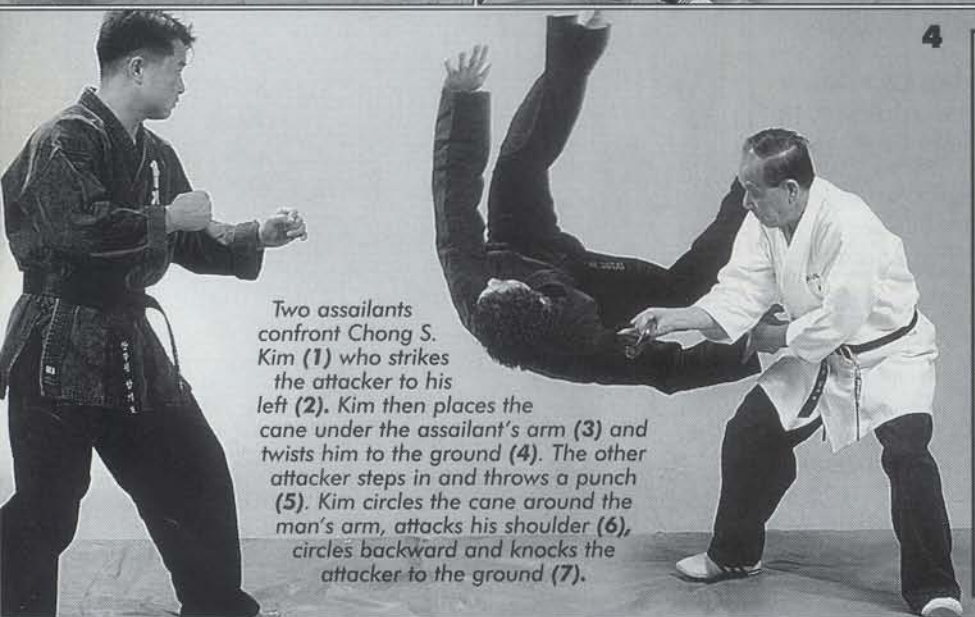
Of course, if they want your jacket, give it to them. If they want your purse, give it to them. When you give them the item, throw it on the ground and then run, he says.

"Your goal is to get home and have a meal with your family," he says.

THE LAST RESORT

Finally, if a fight is unavoidable, there are several things to keep in mind, says Han W. Kim, the chief instructor at the

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Two assailants confront Chong S. Kim (1) who strikes the attacker to his left (2). Kim then places the cane under the assailant's arm (3) and twists him to the ground (4). The other attacker steps in and throws a punch (5). Kim circles the cane around the man's arm, attacks his shoulder (6), circles backward and knocks the attacker to the ground (7).

The Worst Thing You Can Do

According to Steve Petermann, the worst thing you can do when confronted by multiple attackers is to show fear. That's what they are counting on.

"[Once there is no alternative but to fight,] put it in their mind that this [attack] is not going to be as easy as they thought," he says. "Let them know they are not going to get what they want easily. The sooner they know that, the better."

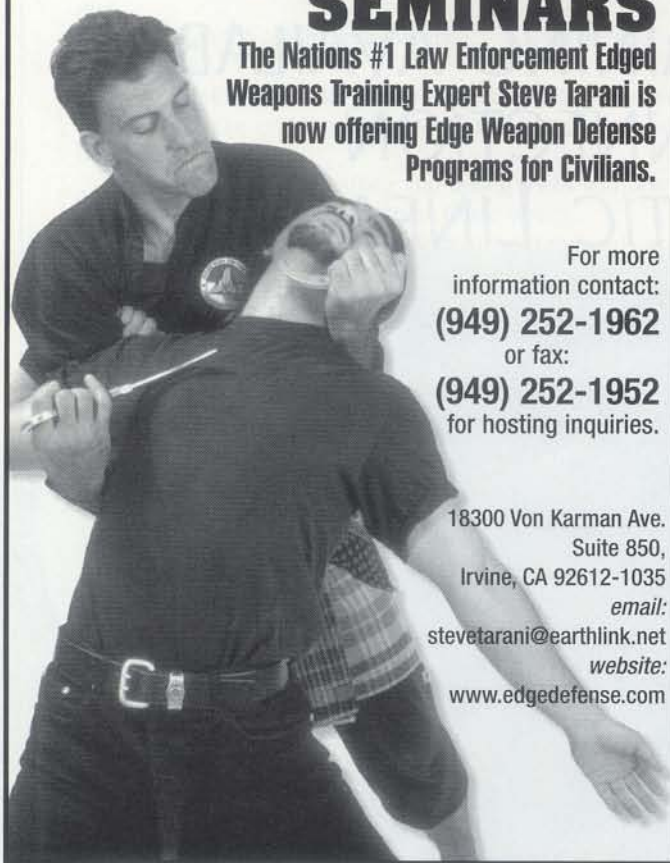
At the same time, do not instigate a confrontation by verbally abusing them.

"If they had no intention of attacking you and you act like a pompous fool, you might encourage the act," he notes.



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I MUST SURVIVE

South Pasadena school.

• First, positioning is of the utmost importance. To maintain the proper positioning, move in a circular motion — not back and forth.

"This movement enables you to watch the attackers better," he says. "You want to face as many as you can."

• If possible, stand in a location that does not enable anyone to get behind you. Ideally, you also want to position yourself so there is something between you and your attackers, he says.

"Take advantage of the environment," says Kim, 30.

• Next, don't stay in one position too long. When you're stationary, it's easier to be attacked and hit.

• To stay prepared, don't react to every small movement the attackers make. If you do, you won't be ready to respond when they come with their best techniques.

• Next, determine who the leader is and try to take him out first. You might demoralize the others if you can accomplish this.

"If you get rid of the boss, you're chances of success improve significantly," says Kim, who has been training for 13 years.

• Do not use of strength to deal with multiple attackers.

"We want to move to avoid one person so we'll be positioned to handle the next," says Petermann. "We want to avoid or slip the attackers."

• When you do attack, go for one of their weak body parts. Aim for a pressure point, a knee or the groin.

"You're looking for one punch or technique to dispose of the opponent," says Kim.

At that point, you can either make an escape or deal with the next attacker.

• It's unlikely that you'll have time for submission holds and chokes because they may give the other attackers a chance to overwhelm you.

A Closer Look at Hapkido

Hapkido Defined: "The way of coordinated power."

Country of Origin: Korea
Introduced to the United States: 1955

Principles of the Art: This art features the water, circle and power principle. Thus, you would yield as water to an adversary's attack with just enough force to deflect his momentum in a circular motion. That will cause him to overextend, giving you the opportunity to counterattack with a strike, twist or throw.

Techniques: The art features kicking, punching, twisting, joint locks, throwing, grappling, weapons, dan jun breathing and pressure-points.

For more information, contact Kim's Hapkido Headquarters at (626) 284-4440.

THE WILL TO WIN

Unfortunately, we live in a world in which there are no guarantees. As nice as it would be to live without robberies, kidnappings, assaults and other crime, that just isn't the case. So if you ever do find yourself up against multiple attackers, use the most "devastating techniques you have," says Petermann. And don't forget that mind-set.

"When you are dealing with multiple attackers, you must think, 'I must survive.'" ☯

About the author: Byron Christopher, who has trained in a variety of arts, is a free-lance writer based in Los Angeles.