

PRACTICAL KARATE FOR WOMEN

What is practical karate?

Practical karate is the traditional art, being able to stop an attacker with one simple and functional technique. Sadly, over the past sixty years, many schools of karate have evolved a source of self-defense into sport karate and aerobic exercise programs.

Why should women study karate?

With karate a person weighing 100 lbs. can generate 300 lbs of force against an attacker. What women lack in upper body strength, they can make up for with superior technique and body training. Karate power is generated from the hips and not the shoulders. It has been my experience that women make beautiful and wonderful martial artists. Plus, they study the art for the right reason, protecting the innocent.

In a perfect world, the strong would protect the weak, but we do not live in a perfect world. In this world all too often, the strong prey upon the weak. Many insecure men abuse women and sometimes children when they feel pressured by what life throws at them.

When I was a young man just out of the Submarine Service, I got involved with a motorcycle club. It was a violent culture that most people only hear of or read about. I witnessed many things, but most disturbing of all was violence toward women. When I became the President of the club, I told all the single women who attended our parties to say that they were with me if anyone gave them a hard time. A decade later, after many years of Karate training and opening my own dojo, I decided that I would try to make a difference in my community by making it safer for all women.

In the 1990s, my wife Ranelle and I started **R.A.P.E.** a program for the Shirley Police Department and for the Lunenburg High School that my son attended. This program focused on Rape Awareness and Preventive Education, but also covered how to avoid any and all aggressive action. We held public seminars for four years, but it didn't generate the interest that I had hoped for. In 1994 we appeared on a local talk show '**Barbara & You**' trying to reach a larger audience. Ranelle had rightly theorized that many women don't want to have to protect themselves. They want a strong man to protect them from danger. Unfortunately, they sometimes choose the wrong man and become the victim of his abuse. Our job was to educate women with simple and practical techniques that they could practice when partnered with a friend or loved one. Doug Riley, one of my students and his wife Teresa, who had no training in karate performed on the TV show with us. Barbara Roy is a talented interviewer who brought the best out of us. We demonstrated and discussed self-defense techniques for the next hour. It turned into a very entertaining and informative program. I highly recommend it for anyone interested in learn self-defense for women. I plan to make a DVD of it available to High Schools and libraries in my area and in as many other communities as possible. At a later date I will make it available for purchase.

Footnote: Practical techniques are not restricted to the physical. When being attacked, a woman should scream '**FIRE**' to attract attention. Everybody is at risk when there is a fire. By yelling that one word, she will bring help from anyone within earshot.

Gordon Fisher