

Smart Defense Part 2, De-Escalation

De-Escalation. If it's not imperative that we physically engage an opponent in order to survive or protect ourselves or our family, then it would be wise for us to de-escalate the situation if possible. Why continue to squabble and create potential mayhem when there is no positive advantage in doing so?

The first thing to do to be safe at such a moment is to “create distance” of at least a two arms length from the other person. Three arms length is better if we have the room. As Kiado-Ryu curriculum teaches, “Distance is the First Security.” When we're out of range of a kick or punch we have time to react if the opponent attempts to attack us. And as we're creating space, we must remember to never drop our guard. Stay focused and aware and never lose our concentration.

Next, speaking in a calm and adult manner, we should try to create a dialogue with the opponent, saying that we can discuss our differences, that there is no sense in fighting; both of us may get severely injured or we may even end up in jail, and for what? Getting mad; being out of control; wanting to spew hate and anger and bask in the futility of our rage? How's that going to solve our dilemma? Of course it won't. The goal of the predicament is to quiet the situation, not amplify it. If a simple apology will quiet the situation, great. The goal is to bring the situation to a level of peace and calm, not play winners or losers. Frankly, nobody wins in these scenarios if the situation ends up in a fight.

And let's not forget the legal aspects of getting in a fight, which was discussed in *Part 1, Legal*. Back in the 1950s, 1960s, etc., the hammer of justice was not as duplicitous and corrupt as it is now. In today's wacky world the bad guys are often seen as the good guys while the good guys are judged to be the bad guys. It's insane. The following quote is from the Bible—Isaiah 5:20

*Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light
and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!*

In other words, someone who attacks us may be judged to be the good guy while we, who were just protecting ourselves from an obvious lunatic attack, may be judged the bad guy.

Let's remember, too, that legal problems based on us getting in a fight will cost us financially. Why get involved with the judicial system when our common sense and ability to De-Escalate can keep us out of trouble?

Therefore, if we find ourselves in a confrontation, the wise choice is to back off, create space, stay aware and focus on staying calm and balanced and attempt to mitigate the situation by using some common sense.

But, you may ask, what if an assailant does not want to calm down but “mix it up” instead? We'll discuss that in **Smart Defense Part 3, Posturing**.

© Richard Andrew King and KIADO-RYU martial arts.