

STEPHEN K. HAYES • JOE NIEHAUS

# DEFENSIVE TACTICS

for Today's Law  
Enforcement



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*This is dedicated to the men and women  
who are the Thin Blue Line.*

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**Stephen K. Hayes** has spent his entire adult life in the pursuit of perfection through the study of the Asian martial arts and spiritual traditions. He was born in Wilmington, Delaware, in 1949, and grew up in Dayton, Ohio. He has lived and traveled throughout North America, Japan, Europe, the Arctic, China, Tibet, Nepal, and India. A husband and father of two daughters, he is a writer, teacher, and ardent student of life. Stephen K. Hayes began his martial arts career in Ohio as a teenager in the 1960s. In 1985, he was elected to the prestigious Black Belt Hall of Fame for his years of pioneering work introducing the Japanese ninja martial arts to the Western world. In 1993, Grandmaster Masaaki Hatsumi of Chiba-ken, Japan, awarded him the extremely rare honor of ju-dan 10th degree Black Belt in the nine historical traditions of the Bujinkan Dojo martial arts.

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Apprentice in the home of the grandmaster of the ninja in Japan

Bodyguard for Nobel Peace Prize laureate the Dalai Lama of Tibet

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*Marksman* Volume II. He has authored eight books including *Investigative Forensic Hypnosis* and *The Sixth Sense: Practical Tips for Everyday Safety*. He is currently an adjunct professor at Ashford University, San Diego, California; American Public University System (APUS), Charles Town, West Virginia; Tiffin University; and Sinclair Community College, Dayton, Ohio.

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# Introduction

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I did not consider myself a fighter when I became a cadet with the Cincinnati Police Department in 1975. I had no prior training in fighting and what I knew I learned on the school grounds as a child. So when I entered the field of law enforcement, this topic quickly became something that I wanted to know more about.

My father was a police officer for 27 years. He went into the profession after serving in World War II. He was a carpenter by trade but work was hard to find in those days, so he noticed an ad for police officer with the City of Deer Park in Ohio and applied, landing the job. He jokingly described his training to me as, “I was sworn in, they gave me a badge, gun and a ticket book and said go get ‘em.” The idea of training even with the basic tools was very limited in his day, although he did go to the range and qualify several times a year.

So when I entered the police academy at Cincinnati, I quickly realized that I was not truly prepared for a real street fight where my life would be on the line. When we would go to the gym, the instructors were martial artists holding black belts in various arts. To say I was intimidated would be an understatement. When my name was called to face one of the more impressive black belts, I wanted to turn and run out of the room. But I knew as an officer that was not an option, so I stood there. As he moved in and took a swing at me, my head said I should stand my ground like the other cadets had done and meet him head to head—and lose as the others had done! But my body told me something else, it said move away and to the side—so I did.

I had successfully slipped the attack and had I been more aware I would have had the presence of mind to see the advantage I now held by facing his back and could easily apply a control hold or engage in a more aggressive manner. But after I had escaped, I was perhaps wondering what I should do next—and the look on the instructor’s face as he looked back at me showed the shock and frustration at my move. It was not what he expected.

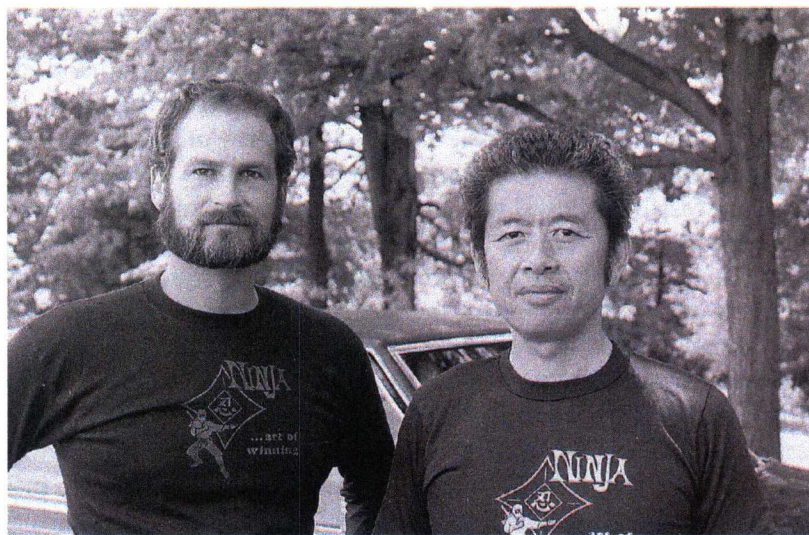
The session ended of course—and not well for me. The instructor wanted to make a point about my escape as there were a few snickers in the gym. I was left however with a lot of questions. To seek out answers, I also enrolled at a martial art studio in Covington, Kentucky. The art was Chito Ryu and was a fairly standard martial art, but it did not help me with my questions about moving around an opponent rather than meet them face on—strength to strength.



Later I became a Kettering Police officer in Kettering, Ohio and shortly after graduating from the Ohio State Patrol Police Academy, Columbus, Ohio, I enrolled at a Kung Fu studio to continue my martial arts training. This was similar to Chito Ryu and also did not provide the answer to my question from the training at Cincinnati and that is when things changed.

When I first met Stephen K. Hayes, I was barely into my police career of 36 years. At that time, I had just read a small paperback book that was a biography of various martial arts masters, and there was a chapter on this man who had brought Ninjutsu to America. So it was ironic what happened next.

I was working the dayshift when I was dispatched to a residence on a burglary alarm. I got there and was told by my dispatcher that backup was not available. So I checked the exterior of the residence and found it was secured. The dispatcher advised me that a family member with a key would be there to check the residence. As I was walking around the house, a man approached wearing a T-shirt that had a small ninja figure and the words “Ninjutsu the Art of Winning.” I will add here that I thought the shirt was pretty cool and was going to ask him where he got it but thought that might not appear to be professional. The man looked familiar, but I did not put two and two together yet. For those of you who are officers, you know how annoying that is when you cannot put a name or reason with a face—we have no idea of course if they are friend or foe! We had a nice conversation and I learned that it was his parent’s house, that they were away on vacation, and that he was close by.

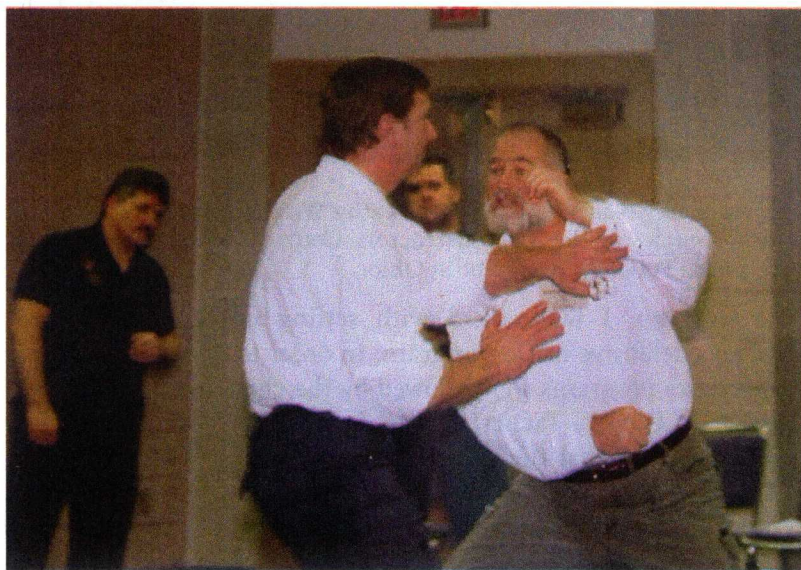


Stephen K. Hayes and Dr. Masaaki Hatsumi wearing the “really cool” ninja shirt.

It was not until a dispatcher showed me the neighborhood paper later that week that there was an article on Stephen talking about him training in Kettering. That is when I realized I was talking to Stephen K. Hayes. The article in the paper gave some contact information, so I made the call and we met to train in of all places an old gravel pit near a cemetery.

From the first training session, I knew I had found something very applicable to the street and law enforcement. The art that Stephen taught was not the static arts I had experimented with before. It taught a whole new way of hitting using your whole body to carry the attack to your opponent and was completely revolutionary for the time. Being that I was not one of the biggest officers in the department; this certainly came in handy. Most importantly, when he demonstrated what he called the “wind” technique I knew I had found my answer. That is exactly what I did in response to that attack in the Cincinnati academy years before. You will find this later in Chapter 5.

Over the years Stephen would offer various techniques, but one thing he stressed was that we were not to take his word that the techniques were effective. He said that we should test them ourselves. Test them I did. I would be involved in various situations on the street and would apply some of the techniques that I had learned in class and was impressed that they worked. I would return to class and tell Stephen how I used this technique or that and under what circumstances.



Stephen and me instructing a class for ASLET (American Society of Law Enforcement Trainers) in Mobile, Alabama.



Over the years, Stephen's interest in law enforcement and applicable techniques increased. He would come to the department and climb into the cruiser with me for a shift on the street to see firsthand what an officer faces and how he could help improve on our ability to deal with it. Stephen even attended a national law enforcement training conference with me, and he even attended the RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) course that the Kettering Police Department would offer to the citizens. While at the conference Stephen was an avid student of the courses offered by other police trainers and when we would discuss them he would show how each of these could be enhanced using the body's natural tendencies.



Stephen, me, Larry Nadeau (instructor), Kathy Wright (instructor), and Rumiko Hayes after completing the RAD Instructor's Course (Rape Aggression Defense) at the Kettering Police Department in Ohio.

As time went on, I was tasked with setting up the Kettering Police Department's defensive tactics program. In order to do this, only approved defensive tactics programs were allowed by the chief. We brought in PPCT (Pressure Point Control Tactics) created by Bruce Siddle and what I found very interesting was that the approach to striking in that method verified what I had been learning from Stephen all those years.

While I developed the program at Kettering we introduced several other police defensive tactics programs and took what fit our program and refined our methods. What we found from developing this course was that the programs that followed the principle of keeping things simple and as natural as possible were received and implemented the best by our officers. This became

an important part of what we sought to do with the program, keeping it as simple and close to what someone would tend to do naturally without extensive practice and training.

Even so, with all of this, something was missing. We developed one of the nation's first Integrated Use of Force training programs taking officers from verbal to deadly force in a training scenario. This greatly enhanced the abilities of the officers who underwent the training. As we offered this to other agencies, we quickly saw how better prepared Kettering's officers were because of the training program we had developed. But even so, something was missing.

The problem was that all of the programs we brought treated male and female officers the same. Large and small officers were expected to perform the same techniques no matter who they were going against. The level of force was the only change for officers depending on who they were facing.

I knew there was another way, a better way, to allow for our natural tendencies and physical differences. The art of Ninjutsu provided a method that allowed an officer four choices of applying the same technique depending on how they were reacting to the threat. Stephen and I presented this concept at a national police trainer's conference and received very positive responses. As a result, we present it here for you to add to your repertoire of abilities to keep you safer on the street and to enhance the tactics and training that we already have received or will receive in the future. But heed Stephen's words—do not take our word for it—test it for yourself and see if it makes you a more complete fighter.

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# Why Change Defensive Tactics Training

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# 1

The best defense against a surprise attack is not to be “surprised.”

—Bruce Lee

*Bruce Lee's Fighting Method Basic Training, 1977*

The subject of force and law enforcement has always been one that seeks constant improvement. Dealing with rapidly evolving situations, law enforcement personnel have had a variety of tools and skill training provided to them over the years. Some have been effective, and some have provided poor or mixed results. This quest for the most effective method of dealing with aggressive behavior is constant as our times and technology evolve.

The concept of police defensive tactics is a relatively new approach to the police and physical encounters. Basic police academy provided some training in such things as punches, kicks, dealing with choke-holds, and grabs. There was training in the handheld weapons such as a baton to deal with more aggressive subjects, but the idea of on-going training and improved training was not truly developed before the 1980s. New recruits were expected to already have had some kind of skill training in that area whether it came from the military or they earned it on the street. However, it was presumed that if you wanted to be a police officer, then you would have the ability to handle yourself in a physical encounter. However, the further police recruits moved from World War II, the Korean Wars, and the Vietnam War, the less likely a new recruit would have this skill set. There was also a shift in the hiring practices, and in an effort to become more professional, police departments sought more college graduates rather than people with military experience.

In the early 1990s, the Los Angeles Police Department set out to make a defensive tactics program that would encompass all of the skills that officers would need in facing the criminal element. They gathered martial arts experts in many different fields and brought them together to create this new and improved system. However, before they did that, they searched their use-of-force records to find the most common occurrences of force application for officers, as this would help determine what kind of techniques should be adapted.

The Los Angeles Police Department found the following situations:

1. The officer grabbed an individual by the arm, and the individual pulled away.
2. The suspect ran at the officer and attacked with arms and legs.
3. The suspect ran from the officer, which resulted in both officer and suspect going to the ground.
4. The suspect assumed a fighting stance but waited for the officer to approach.
5. The suspect was about to be handcuffed.

This resulted in the development of a program that included not only standard defensive tactics in punches and kicks but also ground fighting because that was often lacking in basic training programs for law enforcement. It is interesting to note that those same situations are prevalent today in suspect-police encounters.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the development of many effective defensive tactics programs that were based on practical street applications and experiences. Some of the major development programs were ones like Bruce Siddle's Pressure Point Control Tactics, which were adopted by many departments as basic academy defensive tactics training. Modern Warrior in New York created many realistic training opportunities by bringing more realism to the training and developing ground fighting and weapons training. Tony Blauer introduced his SPEAR technique to deal with the sudden assault situations that officers may face. FORCE created a, by the numbers, method of dealing with active aggression during arrest or violent encounter situations. Many other innovative programs were developed as well during this time. It seemed that the field was rich in the development of effective training for officers to deal with active aggressive suspects. Even so, with all of this development and skills, there were times when officers found themselves on the losing end and their skills failing them. The training and techniques were sound, so where was the weak link?

Law enforcement personnel did not always have to rely on just their hands to take on aggressive suspects. Throughout the years, different tools have been provided to them, which the public supported. The most common tool, of course, was the baton, which has evolved over the years from a wooden stick to the martial-arts-inspired PR-24 to the now metal collapsible baton. Once items such as saps and sap gloves were permitted, but these have been banned by most departments today. Even the flashlight was used as an impact weapon if the situation called for it. Many officers carried three and four D-cell flashlights that provided the required light at night and could be used as an impact weapon, but now that tool has been replaced by the smaller and more powerful tactical flashlight. The creation of mace was thought to be