

16th Edition ~ June 2016 2016

英國詠春功夫會

UK WING CHUN KUNG FU ASSOC



STAND UP FOR YOUR BELIEF?

Do you accept something that you feel is very wrong?

Here James Sinclair discusses 'Naivety and Passion.'



It appears that a number of our students enjoy the 'tales' from the past and have asked to hear another. In the hope of not being too egocentric James Sinclair has given in and will tell another tall tale of something he experienced and how it changed him. The idea is that there are lessons to be learnt. James apologises for all the old photos, he felt they gave a picture of the boy he was.

Martial Artists love to 'exchange lies' about their fights and exploits. Of course I am not saying they are really lies, it is just a bit a fun way to say "lets reminisce and chat".

In 1977 I attended a large Martial Art demonstration in Crystal Palace London. As a young and somewhat naive man, I was nervous and excited, in equal measure, even though I was only a spectator. Arriving early my fellow kung fu brothers and I secured seats right at the front. The building was packed and the demonstrations were eagerly anticipated.

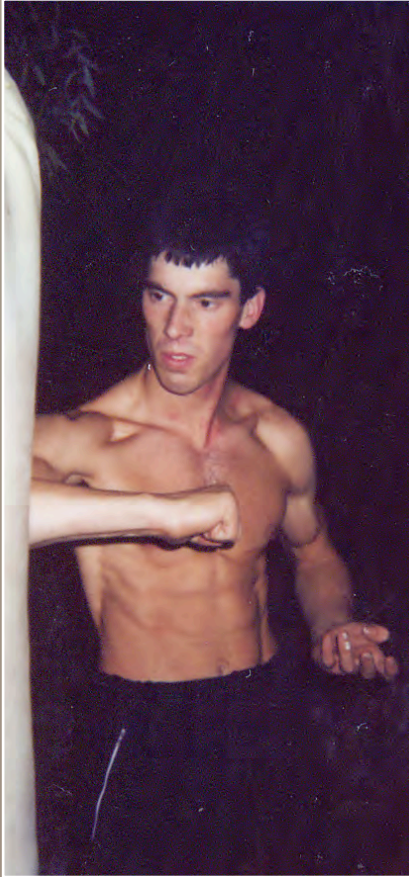
As a young person, life is very simple, good and bad, happy and sad with very few 'grey areas'. Being young and quite simply stupid, I had been to see a Bruce Lee film before the age of 18 and had bought posters of martial artists, magazines, and all the paraphernalia including the



James Sinclair
Founder and Chief Instructor since 1985.

James has been training and teaching since the early 1970's. He first qualified as a registered teacher of Wing Chun in 1977, through the Martial Arts Commission. With plenty of notice James can be available to conduct seminars and club visits.

TRAIN HARD



James Sinclair

The heavy bag was filled with off cuts of plastic and was very very solid, certainly not recommended for modern training.

nunchaku which I practiced diligently. The problem was that I had unrealistic expectations of what martial arts really were, built from celluloid images.

As I waited in anticipation I had no idea of the events about to unfold.

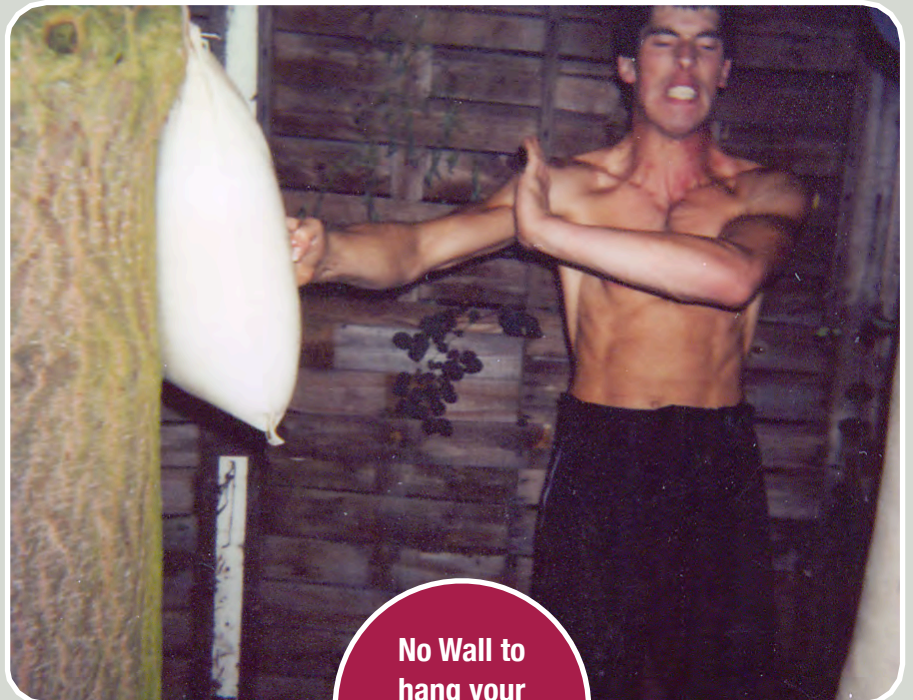
I was astounded to see a well known 'Master' at that time place about 20 people in a line and 'push' them over without touching them. They were all thrown backward and lay in a mess on the floor. I did not believe a bit of it, and some members of the public were also unimpressed. However, I was surprised by the amount of people that appeared to 'want' to believe it. A song kept going through my head 'The King Is In The Altogether'....from Hans Christian Anderson tale 'The Emperors New Clothes'.

However, it was not all fakery and tricks. I may be wrong as it 40 years ago but I recall seeing people pass iron nails through their forearms and hang a bucket of water on it? I still don't understand why!.

Another took a sword and sliced easily through a water melon but it did not slice through his abdomen. Apparently only the end is sharp and the rest dull. Yet another broke a coconut with his hands, something I tried and succeeded in doing before I learnt there is a 'trick' to it! And yes it hurt...

You could take a look here to to see [science and scams explained](#).

There was an enjoyable demo from Jeremy Yau's Lau Gar practitioners who demonstrated good athleticism and skill.



No Wall to hang your wallbag? Use a tree!

Later a team led by Lajos Jakab came on to the floor to give a demo of self defence. The violence and aggression were intense and in direct proportion to their lack of skill, control and martial art etiquette. There was real blood, people getting hurt, and all this to promote a teachers ego. One student even took a kick to the groin.

When the 'fighting' was over, Mr Jakab moved onto power demonstrations. He set up a frame and placed a house-brick on it. He broke the brick, to loud applause. He then asked if a member of the audience wanted to have a go to prove he was for real.

I had been sitting in the audience quietly watching and sorely disappointed. The next

thing I knew I had accepted and walked across the floor and took the brick he was holding. I placed it on the frame and broke it from only a few inches. The brick broke but did not fall off the frame, the audience sighed. I then took the two parts and held them aloft to a huge applause. The teacher swore at me. I walked off. One of the students was upset and threw a punch at me, I ducked as it caught my peripheral vision purely out of instinct and he fell over. The audience laughed, maybe they felt this was part of the show.

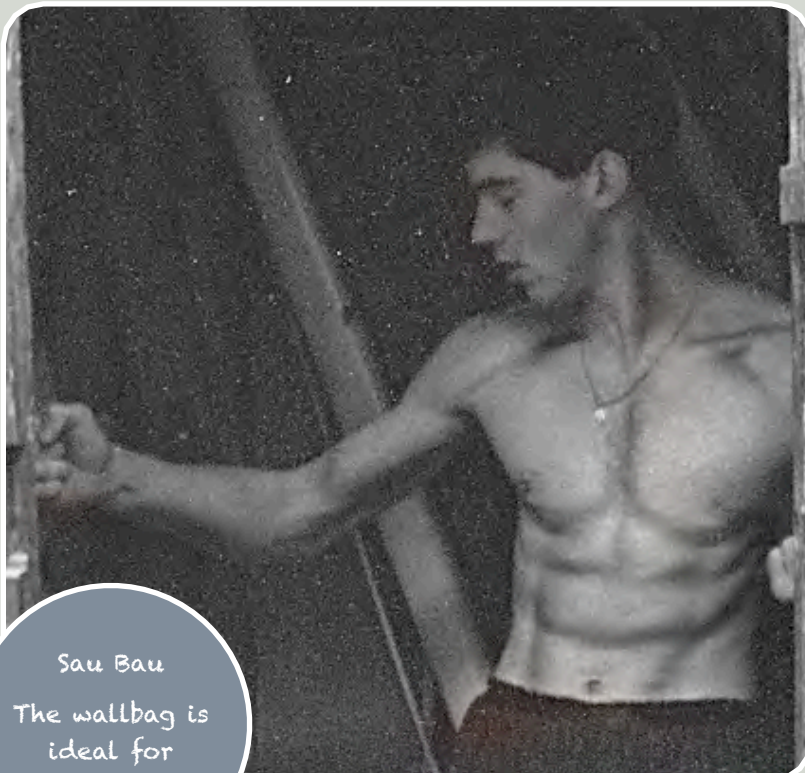
I arrived back at my seat to have my friends / fellow kung fu brothers astounded and stating "we couldn't believe it, you just got up and walked out there", they were so excited, far more than I. I was now not so sure it was a good idea.



Young James Sinclair

Train hard with focus. Always have a goal and and train with direction.

1. Striking the Heavy Bag
2. The End Phase of Cham Kiu, note broken knuckle!
3. Live Demo in St Pauls Square, London 1978.



Sau Bau
The wallbag is
ideal for
limited space!





James Sinclair demonstrates Kick Combinations in St Pauls Square, London 26th July 1978

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'The Harder You Train, The More Luck You Have'

Mr Jakab then set up his big finale and placed a very thick piece of wood on the frame. He called across the large hall and challenged me to break it. I knew I could not and stated so.

Mr Jakab preened and built the atmosphere and tension, preparing by exaggerated breathing exercises and silent pauses.

He eventually sidled up to the the frame and took a huge swing with his arm at the wood. Nothing happened. He tried again and

again and obviously hurt himself. He then lay the wood from the floor to the frame at an angle and tried kicking it. Still the wood would not break. He was eventually jumping up and down on the wood and literally bouncing off. A member of the audience then shouted "get a saw" or something similar. I was getting very nervous as each time he failed I noticed some of his students staring at me with real menace.

Relief came for me when my former teacher tapped me on the shoulder and led me away to the walkway above the seating. I felt so happy

**IF YOU THINK
YOU CAN OR THINK
YOU CAN'T,
EITHER WAY YOU
ARE RIGHT**

MASTERCLASSES NATIONAL HQ THIRD SUNDAY 1-4PM MASTER JAMES SINCLAIR £50	JUNE 2016 POLE FORM	JUL 2016 CHI SAU THE ESSENTIALS	AUG 2016 SPARRING THE LINK
	SUN 26th Learn how to use this weapon and build your power at the same time. Chi Kwan will be covered too. Book Now...	SUN 17th The most essential training in Wing Chun Kuen is within Sticky Hands. Develop these skills to unlock your potential.	SUN 21st The most beautiful and dynamic aspects are covered to help you spar using Wing Chun specific skills. Practical Wing Chun in action.

as, without being too ridiculous, I put a lot of (misplaced) faith and trust in him at this time. Also present was the former head of the Martial Arts Commission (David Mitchell) and my elder kung fu brothers.

I had not know that my teacher and seniors were at the event and I have to say I felt better.

The naive actions I had taken had obviously caused some stirrings. After a period my friends came up to the walkway. This is where all the promotional sales stalls were. I continued to watch the demos across the barrier and every now and then looked around. I thought I could see Mr Jakab's students around the various stalls. They soon surrounded me. I am not sure how many, but well in excess of 20. They spat at me, punched me in the face and back from behind, kned my legs and kept swearing at me for disrespecting their teacher. They punched me in the back and kidneys a number of times. The audience continued to looking the other direction at the demo's.

What was most disappointing was that my friends had abandoned me and I was totally alone.

The men surrounding me were taunting me, saying that I was not so tough now. When I turned around to face them in an attempt to explain I had only accepted an open challenge to the audience I remember seeing my friends and teacher staying far from the trouble I was now in. I guess my fear and pleading eyes for help

made no difference. It was very lonely place to be. There was one exception, one of my senior kung fu brothers (Mick Garvey) was attempting to help me and was intent on getting involved.

I was very shocked to see him held back by the other senior student (Jagjit Ram). I also remember my kung fu brothers all stepping away and not offering any help at all. All their pride and statements at what I had done appeared to have melted, along with their courage. I now knew I was all alone and had to be prepared for the beating to come. It is very melodramatic to state this truth, I was no longer scared and realised that you fight for what you believe whether you win or lose is not important. This was a



Stretching
remains
Important

clear case of actions and consequences, and I had to take the responsibility for my actions.

Then Mr Jakabs Wife came up and slapped my face repeatedly, and I remember her scratching me on the back of my neck. Unlike the others she was shouting "who do think you are, you are nothing, he is a great man..." or words to that effect.

The group were still taunting me, saying that I was not so tough now. I was still pleading that I only accepted an offer to the audience and nothing more. Then the group parted and Mr Jakab came through and immediately tried to grab my throat, I dropped my chin instinctively and he then grabbed my hair. It is still the only time that my scalp has bled from such a thing. I was bent forward and was going to grab his groin if this continued. He then asked me to accept the challenge of breaking an engineering brick or fight him.

I said I could not break this type of brick and would fight him, but not all of his students, I was sure it would be all of them onto me as they had already been beating me like cowards.

Mr Jakab was an adult but was incensed with me. He continued to rant at me. He then asked me what style I did. With ridiculously innocent pride I stated "Wing Chun Kung Fu". He then asked who my teacher was, I answered. He let go of my hair and stated very clearly he would kill me, but not in a stupid hollow manner, but a real threat. Now I was scared.

He stormed off, all of his students followed.

You can read a [magazine article](#) that covered the event, but obviously does not all the consequences that were to happen to me, that day.

So why tell this story, what did I learn?

In that moment I learnt that martial arts is a selfish activity, that you aim to be as good as you can be, for yourself and to protect those you love. It did not matter whether my teacher and seniors were good or not, I had my own fights to come and needed to develop my own ability.

My teacher later told me that Mr Jakab had been in newspapers stating [he could kill people with his nose](#), and that he and Joseph Cheng went to see him to challenge him to a fight. Apparently he ran out the back of the building. This is why he let me go at hearing my teachers name. Of course I do not know if

that is true, and tend toward disbelieving it. I feel that if my teacher had an existing gripe with him he had been given the perfect opportunity to deal with it and also protect his own young student. A double whammy.

As a result of the incident we were escorted by the police to our car and we were further escorted by a police vehicle for some distance until it was deemed we were safe.

[The British Kung Fu Council](#) wrote chastising me, but The Martial Art Commission went

further and banned me from training for about 6 months for bringing Martial Arts into disrepute. I was heartbroken as I took the letter to my teacher at the class in Basildon. I left welling up inside. As I walked away he said "where are you going, yes you are banned, but not by me".. So my training continued unabated. I cant find that letter as my teacher kept it.

This incident also led to me changing my surname!



ERIC WILSON



HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Eye Gouging is not something spoken about lightly and not delivered without due reason. Elbow Strikes cut, bruise and stun opponents. Good for close range. A kick in the groin is effective, and very dangerous, with potentially fatal results!

To this day I feel I was only guilty of being young and naive in the politics of martial arts. However, It seems I am an incredibly slow learner as I have continued to abhor politics and make mistakes over the next 40 years.....!

Martial Arts is full of colourful characters who talk in childish terms of killing people and that if they do this, or do that, you would never stand a chance. You would be dead or maimed etc.

My problem with this inarticulate tripe is that, firstly they:

- *Are irresponsible to talk with such looseness about taking a persons life*
- *Project as juvenile, hormone led animals*
- *Express Narcissistic and Misogynistic tendencies.*

This behaviour demonstrates that their own claims to be 'Masters' are completely deluded. One should never aim to master others, and they prove they are not even masters of their own mouth!

As I have expressed many times before, martial arts give a great opportunity to help a person change for the better. However, it appears these higher goals are no longer what attracts attention in the modern world.

If self defence is very dangerous it begs certain questions:

- *How much is too much?*
- *How far do you go in hurting an opponent?*
- *What mental state is required?*
- *How should the coaching reflect real world violence?*



Female Self Defence is NOT the same as Fighting

How Much Is Too Much?

British Law gives you the right to defend yourself. You can use 'reasonable force'. This is hard to define and has led to many decisions that land the would be victim in Court.

- *It is 'reasonable' to fight when there is no opportunity to escape.*
- *It is reasonable to kill if your own life is at threat.*
- *It is reasonable to strike first if you honestly feel that you are in imminent danger.*
- *You do not need wait until you are struck.*
- *If you truly believe a weapon is present you can be ruthless in your defence.*

How Far Do You Go?

Self defence is about your own safety

- *Avoidance comes first. Avoid high risk areas.*
- *If confronted escape as soon as possible.*
- *Fight to prevent physical harm to yourself.*

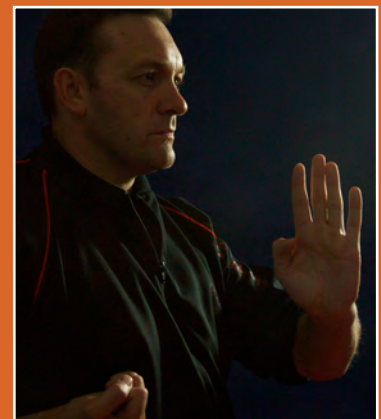
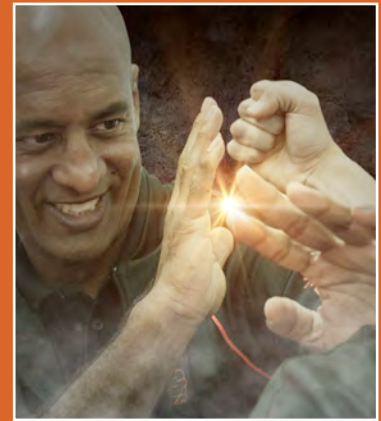
The last stage is the most dangerous and fraught with potential legal problems.

You simply have to fight to stop the danger to yourself. This may mean an assailant gets killed, but an 'intention' to kill could lead to major legal ramifications as that is classified as murder..

If you were confronted by an armed intruder in your kitchen and grabbed a knife to deter them from you, and this led to you stabbing and killing the intruder, it could be considered reasonable if you had warned them and had tried to keep away. If you felt your family were at



ART IN ACTION



The Open Hand

Wing Chun is known as a Chinese Boxing style. Not a fist based approach, it is a close range hand art with plenty of chops, slaps, palms and more.

[Master Mark Phillips](#)

[Sifu John Cossentine](#)

[Instructor Mark Blackburn](#)

risk of walking in on the scene or the intruder threatened violence on them, you will make your own mind up and take any measures you need, and leave the Courts to decide. It is reasonable to believe you would not have been in a normal state of mind due to terror, which can rapidly change to aggression. Most people would do anything to protect those they love.

There is no crime of passion law in the UK.

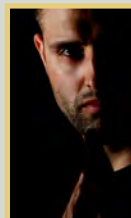
A crime of passion, or crime passionnel (from French), in popular usage, refers to a violent crime, especially murder, in which the perpetrator commits the act against someone because of sudden strong impulse such as sudden rage rather than as a premeditated crime.

What mental state is acceptable?

Training to deal with a violent individual does not require you to become a crazed person too. Our mental hospitals and prisons would be even more dangerous than they are now if this were the case. Nobody would know who was the inmate and who their guardian.

Should coaching reflect real world violence?

It is impossible to simulate real word violence in a controlled environment, as the whole point is that real violence is all too often uncontrolled and has no rationale whatsoever. You can make the training ,mentally and physically demanding, but it must remain controlled as the safety of yourself and other classmates is still of utmost importance. Shouting and swearing are commonplace in arguments and the build up to 'fights'. However, I learnt many years ago that a person who shouts goes deaf, shouting back and trying to plead reason does nothing. Saying that you do not want trouble and preparing for physical action is your real priority .



Sifu Nick Martin was recently filmed by the BBC for a television news show featuring his Stay Safe UK campaign he currently runs within schools in London and Essex. Nick has been working tirelessly for many years on this project and it is a passion close to his heart.

The UKWCKFA continues to support Nick in every way we can and wish him continued success.



Sifu Mark Solomons and Sifu Tony Jaywant conducted a popular 'martial art experience day' to promote the release of Kung Fu Panda 3.



Feedback has been great. Well done to them for keeping the reputation of the UKWCKFA so high.

The UKWCKFA is on another growth spurt with a generation of new teachers opening classes. It is good to see their dedication and enthusiasm for the Art we all love. As usual Master Abid Mahmood continues to work extremely hard to build the base in the Midlands.

Master Mark Phillips is releasing his popular [YouTube videos](#) and building a large fan base. He recently taught in Portugal and is becoming increasingly in demand. He simply needs another few hours in a day.



INTERESTING: [Watch this great video on Hong Kong](#)

YOUR STORY

We welcome your comments and would like to hear from you. If you would like to add your own contribution, ask a question or make a suggestion we will give due consideration.

We look forward to hearing from you.



UKWCKFA CONTACT

National HQ

Unit 7, The Planks, Lubards Lodge
Hullbridge Road
Rayleigh
Essex SS6 9QW

info@ukwingchun.com