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\*FAST Times Newsletter January 05\*

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A warm and heartfelt Happy New Year to you all! 2005 is shaping up to be the most powerful year ever for FAST Defense. As well as a great new group of Instructors to be trained and certified this year, FAST Defense will have a number of new events and items to showcase this innovative technology. A new DVD series on Adrenal Stress Response Training co-authored by myself and Peyton Quinn will be available early in 05. My long awaited book "Fighting Fear " will be turned into my Publisher in March and will be available for sale soon thereafter. This book is the most comprehensive work ever done on this training. FAST Defense will be showcased at the Martial Arts Super Show in Vegas on April 29. The annual FAST Extravaganza Staff Retreat will take place in Baltimore some time in June. All this and more will make 2005 a banner year for FAST Defense!

FAST Defense MYTH: "If you kick a guy in the groin, he'll gain superhuman strength and kill you."

It feels silly to even write about this, yet this myth is still perpetuated by various sources. I can see a basis for this line of thought, inaccurate as I believe it to be. Looking to understand the thinking that leads people to make these statements and theories, I find there is usually (though not always) some logical thought process behind this. Personally I have used snap kicks to the groins of attackers in real fights twice with remarkable success. I have also been on the receiving end of more than one groin kick and have found it to be quite an effective target, much to my chagrin.

One source of this misinformation that I experienced was a local Police Officer who trains Swat Teams in Self Defense by hard sparring in the conventional martial arts manner. Since sparring is done as a mutually agreed upon training exercise (symmetrical vs. asymmetrical), the participants should and do learn how to protect the groin area. Whether the groin is deemed an acceptable target or not, male students tend to

naturally protect their groin in this type of training. When discussing the groin as a target, this Police Officer was emphatic about his inability to deliver an effective strike to the groin in his training sessions. His officers were able to protect their groin very effectively while sparring. I know I certainly did in my days of sparring.

However, sparring is quite different from real fighting. Even heavy sparring employs a degree of conscious thought process and physical dexterity that is simply not available in the full adrenal rush. I have seen many a skilled technical fighter stand flat on their feet and throw ineffective haymaker punches in real street encounters. Many of these incidents end up in a clinch with both fighters standing squared off trying to get leverage over the other. To the aware fighter it is often a simple task to throw a front kick or a knee into the groin of their opponent. It sure has worked for me, sometimes to my amazement as my foe dropped like a sack of potatoes from a relatively light force strike. The groin can be a very effective target. Hardcore no-holds barred fighting contests do not allow full contact strikes to the groin for this very reason.

Another source of this misguided wisdom is a woman who owns a martial arts school near me in Colorado. This woman emphatically tells her students to never kick a man in the groin. She sites examples where women have been severely beaten after attempting ineffectual strikes to the groin. This is akin to saying never fight back, which law enforcement agents used to say and have now totally reversed their stance. Now, I would imagine some poorly trained women and men in the past have had this negative experience by not fighting back with total conviction. But this is typically a result of no or poor training, not the particular target. The overwhelming evidence is that the groin is an excellent target.

My third source is from a friend who grew up in New York City. It seems he feels that growing up in 'The City' demands he be rough and tough macho. His stories of his fighting exploits are elaborate and in my book unrealistic reports of flying spin kicks and other highly technical techniques that he's supposedly used in real fights. Always taking his accounts with a grain of salt, the clincher came when we were sharing experiences one evening. He was visibly offended when I mentioned having used groin kicks in real fights. This was apparently outside his code of ethical fighting, and he said as much. I remember being amazed by this coming from someone who supposedly was such a tough fighter. Inner-city survival would be pretty rough under such a code. My sense is that he learned much more about street fighting from watching movies and hearing the many embellished stories than actual fighting on the streets. In other words, my good buddy likes to "tell stories" to some degree!

My stance is that there is no such thing as a 'bad' target if the defender strikes with conviction and power. There may be better targets than others. But when it comes to the male groin, no manner of conditioning or weight training can make this area impervious to strikes while under duress. Although some guys have certainly tried!

Continuing Education: FAST Solutions For Life Video

This video is a best seller on the Fast Defense website due to its excellent and entertaining portrayal of the FAST methodology. Viewers learn firsthand about the entire spectrum of Self Defense as conveyed in the FAST Defense system. In addition to learning invaluable awareness skills, verbal tactics to stop an assault before it begins, and colorful physical defense drills, live footage from past Instructor retreats is included where FAST Instructors fight off armed attackers, multiple attackers, ground fighting, and more! If you haven't picked up this gem of a video, you can do so at: [http://www.fastdefense.com/training\\_videos.html](http://www.fastdefense.com/training_videos.html) and it will be shipped out to you expediently!

#### FAST Success Story - Julie Barnes/FAST Graduate

I took a FAST Defense Basics course in October of 2003. At the time I was in an abusive marriage with an alcoholic husband. Due to his drunken fits of foul language and physical abuse, I was finally convinced to take a FAST Defense course by my court provided counselor. She said that the course would change my life and was just what I needed. Terrified, I found myself showing up to take a course offered in the Denver Colorado area. I was joined by approximately 12 other women and 7 men, as well as 4 instructors. After learning how to avoid and deter a possible attack with good body language and verbal defense skills, we learned some very simple strikes. The instructors said that the eyes are very good targets to go after if attacked because humans are hard wired to protect them. They also said that a powerful voice is the key to unleashing my inner power. I didn't believe I could actually protect myself. But I was committed to try and see what would happen.

By the end of this short course I had fought against the "Bulletman" twice with full power strikes to his body, head, and groin. It was amazing how quickly the teaching methods and support of my classmates instilled a warrior spirit within me. Afterwards we watched the videos of the fights and felt the adrenaline kick in all over again! I truly was amazed at the transformation we all experienced.

That very evening, I returned home from the class. My husband as it turned out was hiding in the bushes waiting to ambush me and "test" what I had learned in the class. I had previously told him I was planning to attend and he just laughed at me. The moment my keys were in the front door lock, he rushed up behind me, yelling obscenities and reached to grab my hair. Without a single thought or moment's hesitation, I spun around and thrust my fingers towards his eyes as I had done in class. Most surprisingly I heard my voice boom the word "EYES!" in unison with my strike. I watched in amazement, kind of like a slow motion movie, as he reared backwards in fear. His eyes were as big as dinner plates. I never got any closer to his eyes than maybe a foot or so. It didn't matter. He reacted as if I had jabbed a sharp knife into him bringing his hands up to cover his eyes as he fell backwards. Down the steps he fell and landed with a dull smack as his head bounced off the concrete walkway. He was knocked unconscious.

I called the police and reported the incident immediately as we had been instructed to do in class. For some reason I was very calm and clear. He was still lying on the ground, conscious but very groggy when the police

arrived. That very evening I packed my belongings and went to a local safe house. I was soon divorced and am now remarried to a wonderful man who respects me the way I deserve.

How can I measure the value of this short self defense experience for me? It allowed me to break through over 30 years of powerlessness and victimization. It made me truly realize that I am worth fighting for and ready to do so if ever need be. Life has opened up for me like I never believed possible. Thank you FAST Defense!  
Julie Barnes - Thornton Colorado

Upcoming Events:

Instructor training - Atlanta January 22

FAST Basics - Fort Collins Colorado January 16

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