

VOLUME 1

THE Jiu Jitsu

ANSWER MAN

- Pointed / Intriguing Questions
- Thought Provoking Answers
- Fascinating Stories / Articles
- More Efficient Training
- Fewer Injuries
- More Fun



by Roy Harris

The Jiu Jitsu Answer Man

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“Have you ever taken the time to REALLY think your way through the various aspects of training in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu? If you haven’t, I guarantee you will gain a new perspective on developing useable and repeatable skill sets in Jiu Jitsu after you’ve read this book!”

Roy Harris

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Author's Background

Hi, my name is Roy Harris. I began my study of martial arts back in 1981. Since then, I've been involved in the training and study of twenty-seven different styles of martial art. My involvement in these various arts was to see how the different arts trained, sparred and dealt with some of the more common forms of attack (*e.g. straight and round punch, straight and round kick, a grab, a weapon attack, a ground attack, a multiple assailant attack, etc...*).

Since I began this journey, I have logged thousands of hours in the various arts. Some arts, I only trained in them for one to two years (200 to 500 hours). Others, I trained for four to five years. And others, I trained for more than three decades.

Here is an overview of all that I have been involved in:

- 1) Defensive and offensive firearm training
- 2) Defensive and offensive blade training
- 3) Cloth, rope and chain fighting
- 4) Kickboxing training
- 5) Clinch training
- 6) Functional trapping training
- 7) Close-Quarter Battle (CQB) training
- 8) Throws, sweeps, reaps and takedowns training
- 9) Nerve strikes and manipulations training
- 10) Arrest and control training
- 11) Hard Style Kettlebells training
- 12) Scenario based training

As a result of all this training, I have obtained multiple black belts and instructor certifications.

To view a short overview of my life, [click here](#).

To see a more extensive view of my diverse martial arts background, [click here](#).

Preface



I began my training in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu back in January 1991. I was fortunate to begin my journey at the Gracie Academy in Torrance, California. I was even more fortunate to begin my training with Professors Rorion and Royler Gracie.

When I had graduated from their thirty-six-lesson self-defense program, I was admitted into the group classes. Even though I lived more than two hours away from the academy, I attended group classes and private lessons as often as I could, which varied from once a week to three times a week, depending on my work schedule.

Once I began training in the group classes, I was introduced to Professors Royce and Rickson Gracie. Those were some very fun and memorable days. I miss them!

To this day, I am very thankful to Professors Rorion, Rickson, Royce and Royler for introducing me to their method of Jiu Jitsu. I have so many fond memories of my days training at their academy. Professor Rorion was...

Questions and Answers

Question #1: From your experience, what should a white belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu focus on in his training?

My Answer: Here are a few of my thoughts on the topic:

For starters, I believe a white belt should keep in mind that his or her involvement in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is primarily for **personal growth** and **enjoyment**. In other words, Jiu Jitsu is a hobby and a sport. It is something to be enjoyed; something we do for fun in our spare time. As a hobby, the student should focus on having fun while he or she progresses within the art-- regardless of how fast or slow progress occurs.

Too often, white belts get focused on the "tap," or the pecking order, of students at their academy. And while I certainly understand this, it must be remembered that all of your teammates are *family*. Try not to get sucked into the line of thinking that compares student to student with a "who is better than whom" mindset. Instead, focus on progressing within the art and having fun!

I write this because it has been my experience that this line of thinking can lead to negative attitudes and behaviors within the academy, like complaining, bickering, gossiping and bad mouthing. These attitudes can lead to misunderstandings, hard feelings and unnecessary injuries.

It is also important to point out that these attitudes come about as the result of two things: (1) The students focused their attention on the "tap" and/or pecking order at the academy, and (2) the instructor allowed these attitudes and behaviors to remain within the walls of his academy.

To avoid these problems, make sure you focus your mind and heart on enjoying your journey in Jiu Jitsu. It will help you and the others who train with you.

The second thing I would stress to the white belt is this:

Make every effort to stay healthy.

Why is this so important? Consider the following...

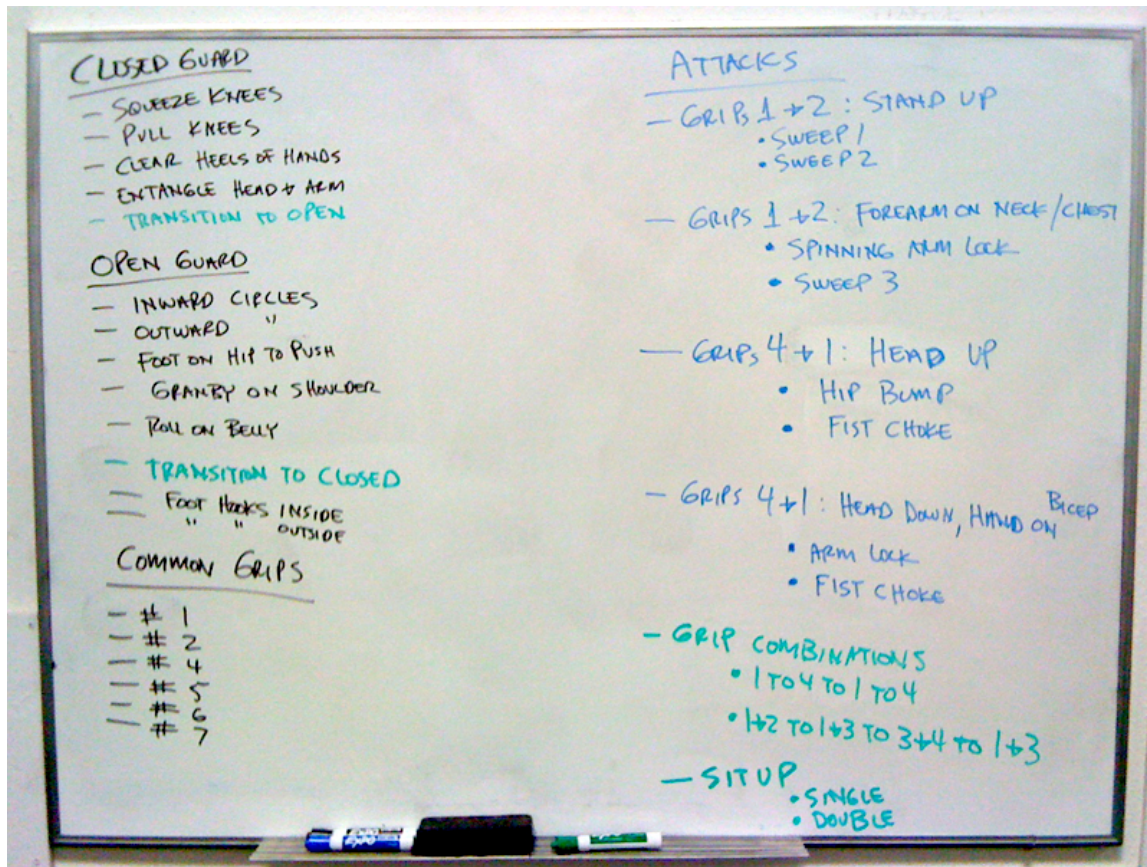
Moving on...

The third thing I would tell white belts is to focus on their fundamentals.

What exactly are fundamentals? I'm sure if you ask ten different instructors, you

might get ten different answers. Here are the ten areas I consider to represent the fundamentals of Jiu Jitsu...

Here is a picture taken from the Harris Academy many moons ago...



When I teach, I prefer to use a white board to visually illustrate my ideas. This way, many students can grasp a hold of abstract ideas much better than just hearing my words. Also, when it comes time to finish class, it helps students to remember what we've gone over.

NOTE: Good teaching has two primary goals:

1. Understanding.
2. Retention.

If an instructor is not helping his or her students understand the material that is being presented, or if the instructor makes no effort to help the students retain the information, then the instruction given has been mediocre at best!

Over the years of teaching group classes and seminars in this manner, I have heard a ton of positive remarks about my use of this method. Also, I have a happy to know that I have inspired others to use similar methods to help their students understand and retain what has been taught!

Here I am standing watch over two seminar participants. The weapon in my hands ensures they are performing the techniques properly!



I share this photo with you to help you understand how I view Jiu Jitsu as a hobby. And, as a hobby, it should be fun, enjoyable and entertaining. Also, instructors should lighten things up a bit and find opportunities to add humor into the training.

Over the years, I have told many fun and fascinating stories to my students - like the time I accidentally farted so long and so loud at a woman's self-defense seminar that I sent the women scurrying faster than [Speedy Gonzales](#)! I was terribly embarrassed by "the event", but hey, life happens! When I've told this

story around the world, I've gotten some pretty good laughs! Telling this story was a conscious effort on my part to lighten things up for my students as well as show them that I am just as human as everyone else.

Question #8: In your mind, how do you see the progression in Jiu Jitsu?

My Answer: Having trained in twenty-seven styles of martial art, with fifty-one different instructors, thousands of hours of firearms, stick-on-stick, stick-on-knife, knife-on-knife, empty hand versus live blade, kickboxing, trapping, clinch work, throws and takedown, ground fighting, environmental training (e.g. *kickboxing on a stairwell, Jiu Jitsu on asphalt, CQB in a restroom stall, etc...*) and a lot more, I see the progression like this:

Level One - Making the effort to be effective with one's training.

Level Two - Making the effort to be efficient with one's training.

Level Three - Making the effort to be playful with one's training.

Level Four - Making the effort to personalize one's training.

In another section, I will describe each of these training levels in greater depth. Right now, I just want you to see that there is an actual progression in Jiu Jitsu training, as well as all of the other styles I teach. I will show you a little about each. Ready? Here we go:

Beginner level students should focus their efforts on becoming effective with the basic techniques they have learned. They should also remain consistent in their training and their focus. I write this because beginner level students sometimes lose focus and concern themselves with what the intermediate and advanced level students are doing. Many of these beginners say to themselves, "*I don't need to focus on these basic techniques. All I need to learn is what the purple and brown belt students are learning. That way, I'll be equal with them, won't get caught in any of those sweeps or submissions and won't have to practice these boring basics.*" However, what they don't understand is that the basics are what lay a foundation for all of the "cool things" they'll learn in Jiu Jitsu at the intermediate and advanced levels. For example, many of these beginning level students want to learn drills and combinations right from the start, but yet they have no idea why they want to learn them, other than the fact that the purple and brown belts are training them. They miss the fact that drills and combinations have prerequisites. Below is a short list of skills needed for drill and combination training:

1. Attention to detail for extended periods of time.
2. Knowledge of the basic movements and techniques.

3. The ABC's of training (*i.e. "Awareness, Balance and Coordination"*).
4. General strength and flexibility.
5. A great attitude.
6. A great training partner.

Without this foundation, all the beginning level students will be doing is going through the motions and pretending they are at the level of the purple and brown belts.

Once a student has a few years of focused and disciplined training under his or her belt, the student can then change his or her focus to becoming more efficient with their current skill sets.

Being more efficient means changing one's focus from (A) being able to perform the basic techniques to (B) being able to perform them with grace, finesse and smoothness and in a shorter period of time WITHOUT speeding up. This type of training involves a compression of the basic mechanics of each of the basic techniques. What does that look like? Here's a glimpse...



Here I am standing in front of one of the Federal Air Marshal Service training facilities. All I can say is WOW!

I am very thankful I had a chance to meet and train these guys!

What kinds of things do I teach to law enforcement personnel? I teach them things that are practical and useful for their jobs. I teach them techniques, training methods and tactics that I do not teach to the general public.

Because law enforcement personnel are forced to confront violence from time to time, they need a variety of tools to make sure (a) they get their job done and (b) that they go home at the end of their shift.

So, because I have studied 27 styles of martial arts, because I have trained with 51 different instructors, and because I have read thousands of articles and books on martial arts / self-defense / defensive tactics / combatives, because I have a very large video library, AND because I have been a police officer myself, I can offer them techniques, training methods and tactics that very few other instructors can...

Article #10: Apprentice Grappling Instructor Manual Excerpt

In the middle 1990's, I began answering questions online about Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, Jeet Kune Do, self-defense and other martial arts related topics. In answering tons of questions, the idea of developing a structured progressive method of instruction for Jiu Jitsu kept coming up in conversation after conversation. Since I was powerless to affect the powers that be in the Jiu Jitsu world, I decided to do something about this missing piece of the puzzle. I decided to write a mini-manual and teach a basic grappling instructor's course. I called it "The Apprentice Grappling Instructor Course" for the following reasons:

- I used the word "**Apprentice**" because I wanted these instructors (*and the general public*) to understand that they were becoming a part of an apprenticeship program. While no one can make a competent instructor in a week or a weekend, I wanted the general public and the students who took the course to know that they were beginning a journey with me - because the word "Apprentice" implies that a person is just beginning to learn the process of becoming something.

- I used the word "**Grappling**" because I wanted to give credit to the styles of martial art, and their instructors, who had helped me become the grappler that I had become. I disliked how the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu community on one hand was very critical of other styles of martial art, but on the other hand were training the leg locks of Sambo and the throws and takedowns of Judo and Wrestling - but yet they were still calling their style "Brazilian Jiu Jitsu." So, to give credit where credit was due, I used the word "grappling" because Brazilian Jiu Jitsu did not train leg locks, throws, takedown or holds in the 1990's. So, in my grappling course, I gave credit to the styles that positively had impacted my method of grappling - specifically Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, Judo, Greco-Roman Wrestling, Freestyle Wrestling, Sambo, Dumog and Chin Na.

- I used the words "**Instructor Course**" because my courses are different from others. Instead of just teaching a bunch of techniques to the students, I wanted them to learn HOW to teach. In other words, I wanted them to know the science and art of effectively communicating their thoughts and ideas, how to control and influence group dynamics, different methods of effectively dealing with the myriad of problems that present themselves at an academy (*e.g. hygiene / gender / money / attitude issues, problem students, etiquette, getting / keeping clients, teaching to various groups, understanding the unstated needs and demands of the clients, etc...*).

Here is an excerpt from the manual:

Now that you have completed the Apprentice Level Grappling Instructor Course, and have logged a handful of hours of the teaching and training the techniques you've learned, I'm sure this question has crossed your mind: "What's next?"

Here is an overview of how I want you to train for the first few years as an apprentice instructor in my association:

1. Develop good fundamental movements.
2. Know, and more fully understand, the mechanics of your basic techniques.
3. Practice your basic techniques to the point of reflex.
4. Put the basics together into simple combinations.

Now, let me go into further detail on each one of these.

For starters, the basic techniques and training methods you've learned in the Apprentice Instructor Course will help you lay a solid foundation in the grappling arts. These basics develop the fundamental movements of grappling. When I say fundamental movements, I am referring to core movements that are found in every technique. Let me give you a couple of examples of this:

The bridge and roll escape from the mounted position is technique designed to help you develop high and powerful vertical hip movement. Without this kind of hip movement, your escapes will depend on the strength and endurance of your shoulders and upper arms.

Additionally, the bridge and roll escape will help your offensive game. By developing a strong bridge, your ability to finish your submissions (*i.e. straight arm locks, chokes and leg locks*) will become stronger.

Here's another example: The elbow / knee escape from the side mount position. This particular escaping technique is designed to...

Story #1: Slammed Unconscious in Eastern Europe

Several years ago, I taught a seminar in a particular country in Eastern Europe. At the end of the seminar, I asked if there were any questions. No one raised his or her hand. So, I thanked them for their time, walked over to my gear bag and began packing up. The seminar host walked up to me and told me there were three guys who wanted to spar with me. He asked if it was OK. I said it was fine.

So, I walked out onto the mat and the first guy greeted me with a handshake and a smile. Within a few seconds of shaking hands, we were tied up in the clinch. Immediately, I felt he was a wrestler. Knowing my wrestling skills were a 3.5 on a scale from one to ten, I knew I wasn't going to try and take him down. So I let him

take me down.

As soon as we hit the mat, I started working for my favorite technique - the antidote to big, strong and athletic wrestlers: The triangle choke with the legs!

It took me a minute or so to find the opening. When I saw it, I entered into the triangle choke very quickly. I applied a good amount of force to the choke to let him know that I had sunk it in very well. I mistakenly thought he would give up and tap out to the pressure. Instead, he did something I never considered. He picked me up and slammed me on my head and shoulders, similar to what Quinton Jackson did to Ricardo Arona. If you haven't seen this fight, you can view it [on YouTube here](#).

As soon as my head and shoulders hit the mat, I saw a white flash and then total blackness. I have no idea how long I was unconscious; however, when I woke up, my opponent was still wrestling with me. So, either he was totally clueless to my being unconscious, or I wasn't unconscious very long. Regardless, once I had gained my wits about me, I was now very upset. I remember thinking, "*Oh, so that's how it's going to be? OK!*"

As soon as my mind was clear, I noticed my opponent was side-mounted on top of me. So, I immediately performed my favorite side mount escape and placed him back inside of my guard. From there I...



Here is a picture from my very first academy, PFS San Diego. It is also a picture taken from the filming of the very first instructional I produced on my own, **Arm Locks Volume One**. Helping me that day were Darby Darrow, Darin Goo, Susan Gross, Matt Stansell, Michael Regala, Ken Leung and Preston Rawlings.

Secret #1

As many of you know, I started the BJJ over 40 craze back in 2003 when I created an informative instructional that **scratched an important itch** within the Jiu Jitsu community. And, if you have been following my work in this area, you've noticed that I've been teaching several BJJ over 40 workshops and seminars around the world. Their popularity has caught on.

They have caught on because I have put together a “**BJJ over 40**” curriculum - not just a series of random, unrelated techniques. I have been presenting the extreme basics of this program since early 2013. While I have showed a limited amount of information to the general public, I will now show you the video that I have shared with many who have attended these workshops. While you can find the condensed version of this video on YouTube.com, below is the complete version.

[Click here to view the video](#)

Well, I hope you have enjoyed the sneak peak of my new book!

Please note that the links have not been activated on the free version. Also, because there is so much information throughout the book, I have only shared “excerpts” in this free version.

Here are a few stats about my new book you may find interesting:

- Almost 60,000 words
- Nearly 200 pages of content
- Over 30 color photos (most you’ve never seen before)
- Nearly 150 web links
- A couple of handfuls of “Secrets”

Also, volume two is in the works! And now that I’ve been through this process at least once, getting volume two out the door will be much quicker!

Thank you for your time,

Roy Harris

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