

# Paleo Solution - 391

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Robb: Hey, folks. Welcome back to another edition of the Paleo Solution Podcast. Robb Wolf here. Today's show is with New York Times bestselling author Tim Larkin. Tim is a really phenomenal guy. He has written a book *When Violence Is the Answer*.

Tim has a fascinating background. He is a defensive tactics in hand to hand combatives expert who's worked with a remarkable number of people and entities including the US Navy Seal teams, Seal Team Six, US Army Special Forces, FBI Hostage Rescue Team, Department of Treasury, Department of Energy, US Marshals and it goes on and on and on.

Tim is a lifelong athlete, served in the military, has been interested in combatives and martial arts literally his whole life. We had a really fascinating conversation around this topic of violence and aggression. This is another one of these podcasts that for some people maybe a little bit upsetting. It may take you into some places that you're not entirely comfortable with.

I try to live as peaceful and butterfly and unicorn life as I possibly can. But I've been in a couple of situations. I was, I guess, the victim of an attempted mugging once and managed to navigate that situation pretty effectively and in many ways could have been very lucky because the individual was not armed either with an edged weapon or a firearm or anything.

That situation forever changed the way that I approach getting into and out of a car in a parking lot, approaching an ATM, navigating my family around different environments. Tim talks about this stuff in the book. The book is really fascinating in that he breaks things down and talks about things like social aggression versus asocial violence.

It may seem like a spurious distinction but it's really, really important to understand that. I think for many people who have never experienced some sort of a violent attack and thank God the vast majority of us have not and in general the world is a safer place than what it's been in the past but these things do happen. I think it's worthwhile just noodling on some of this stuff.

Tim, in addition to making a really strong case for developing some basic physical skill sets, he makes the most profound argument that your mindset is going to be the thing that makes or breaks a situation like this. Part of this is just

understanding that some people are capable of just absolutely horrific acts of violence and may visit this upon people for literally no reason whatsoever. There can be no rhyme or reason to it.

Oftentimes, when people are faced with these situations, in the back of their mind they're spending time thinking about like why is this happening to me, what's this person's problem with me instead of immediately going to a spot where they're considering that this person may try to kill them and being prepared to deal with that.

I don't want to give away too much of the interview. Again, then name of the book is *When Violence Is the Answer*. Tim Larkin is the author. I think you'll find this fascinating. I really enjoyed chatting with Tim. This is one of those shows that I think if you folks really enjoy it, this would be worthwhile to have Tim back on later. If you find some interesting questions, please do drop those in the comments. It'd be great to have a further conversation with Tim around this. I really enjoyed the show. I hope you do too. Let me know what you think about it.

Hey, Tim. Thank you so much for coming on the show today.

Tim: Hey, thanks for having me on, Robb. I appreciate it.

Robb: A huge honor to chat with you. I know that we have an interesting Venn diagrams of overlap. That's odd that I'm sarcopenic nerdy biochemist and you're military background and self-defense and tactics expert so it's odd that we know anybody in common but I do have a ton of interest in all the work that you do.

Your most recent book *When Violence Is the Answer*, it's just a fascinating read for me. As the father of two young girls, these topics of handling oneself in a modern environment is just really near and dear to my heart. It's interesting and I'm curious if what some of the response has been. In your very first chapter, you opened this thing up with violence is a tool.

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In today's day and age, I could almost see people running for safe space bunkers and needing counseling just to even throw that message out there. What are you saying there with this notion that violence is a tool?

Tim: For that very reason, what you're talking about, because right now what -- And I had to fight, Robb, to get violence in the title. I had to fight Little Brown, the publisher.

Robb: I believe it.

Tim: It's funny. We were having this conversation and I had a couple of my guys that were on my team and we were arguing about it. Then the Pulse nightclub happened. That was first in a series. And then they quickly understood that violence -- Because people were using violence as a topic. It was after the, not the Nice but the Paris truck attack that one guy, I think he was interviewed, I think either in CNN or Fox, but he was a pretty well-known terror commenter.

He said, he goes, "It's finally happened because they're using the one weapon we can't predict nor defeat, the human mind." That was my message, is that inherently we all have the ability to use a tool of violence. Unfortunately, what happened is we stigmatize that word violence in the meaning criminal and to discarding it because we feel none of us want to be criminals, therefore, there's no good information here. So, I'm going to go look for information over here. I'm going to call it self-defense. I'm going to call it X, Y or Z. I'm going to call it the anti-violence training or whatever.

What's interesting is we just need to reeducate ourselves to understand that violence is a tool that can be used by either good people or bad people just like any other tool can be used. How it's used will be determined whether it was a justified use of the tool or it was a criminal use of the tool. And we have to start out with that premise so that we give ourselves permission to look at violence. Because when it comes to your own self-protection, you want to be able to use the tool of violence. You don't want to have to rely on anything where any of the outliers of violence are taken out.

Something like a controlled sport event or anything that conveniently takes out a lot of the outliers that we see in the street. What I tell people all the time is any client that comes to me, the assumption in the training is always going to be the threat you're going to face is always going to be bigger, faster and stronger. The threat is always going to carry weapons and there's always going to be more than one. If you take that approach, you understand, okay, there's lots of outliers that I have to be concerned about and then you have to look at some unlikely places and unlikely sources to get the best information.

Robb: Right. And, man, I mean, clearly, I kind of, pun intended, put bread on the table by talking to people about nutrition which is a contentious topic at best. It seems like you are fighting a monumental battle here in that on the one hand violence and aggression is an innate human trait. You can get into game theory and make some arguments for -- This is kind of baked in our genetic cake to some degree because whether from an aggressive standpoint or a self-defense standpoint, there's going to be some give and take on that aggression spectrum that has clearly been beneficial to the species over the long haul.

There's horrific characteristics and outcomes for it but it's baked in the cake and yet we have a societal meme or idea that we need to do everything we possibly can to root it out. So, what's being suggested there is we're going to try to fundamentally change our human nature. What I find happening in that process is that people are doing a bunch of mystical stuff that has no efficacy in the real world and that they are left even more exposed to these potentially violent situations. What are your thoughts around that?

Tim: Yeah. It's weird. We're allowed to have that worldview that you're talking about. I understand exactly what it is, the idea. Even looking at the subject somehow, there's that -- Oftentimes you'll hear the spiritual sense. I don't mean this in a denigrating way but you hear it kind of in a, the idea of karma and the idea of well, if I think about violence and I start setting it, it's going to bring it into my life.

My argument for that is, well, do you have a -- Most cities have a code where in your kitchen you have to have some form of a fire extinguisher in case you have fire.

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Does that mean by having a fire extinguisher that you are wanting to bring fire into your life? It's just preventative. There's no downside to looking at it. The reason we're able to have this, what is really an outrageous, when you think about it that we sit there and think, well, we shouldn't have to know anything about violence and makes us bad people.

Just because we're so damn good at violence. If you live in the United States right now, we have been so good at using the threat of and the tool of violence worldwide and yet we have some physical situations with the placement of our country in the oceans and everything that make it harder to get to.

We're in this unique position where there's no country in the world that's ever been able to have three war fronts going simultaneously less than 3% of the population involved in it and no rationing, no nothing. We literally -- A couple of years ago we had three war fronts going and our country for the most part wasn't affected in its day to day operations. Most people had no idea it was even going on.

That's unheard of and that's because we're so damn good at violence. I don't mean we're violent people. There's a huge difference. Being able to use the tool of violence does not make you a violent person. As a matter of fact, as I argued in the book, in my world, the people that are the best at using justified lethal

force, that are trained to the highest levels tend to be the calmest people and live the most fulfilling lives for the most part.

Because they've looked at the subject, they understand what it is, they absolutely understand what they have to react to and what they don't have to react to and they've made a conscious effort amongst most of them to live their lives to the fullest and to minimize any chance of violence ever entering your life. That's their hope. Through that preparation, that they're able to have this outlook.

The argument, the hard part is that people have to understand the reason we are the superior species as far as the dominant species on earth is because we're so good at violence. It's not because we're the biggest, fastest and strongest. That's the hope that I throw out there for everybody.

If we had to be the biggest, fastest and strongest, we wouldn't be here. Oftentimes I joke at some of my seminars. I tell people, "Okay--" I get some pretty alphas in my classes. I'll say, "Okay, hey, I got a ten by ten cage. I got a 65 pound mountain lion that hasn't eaten in three days. Who wants to go two rounds with him?"

You're looking at these guys who are just these behemoths, these genetic freaks. Nobody wants that. Because we are just, if we have to rely on our physiology and the way we're built, that's not the way it is. But it's our mind, the human mind that makes us dangerous. That's our most powerful weapon. I know that's a cliché with a lot of people but it's actually the case. Meaning, our weapon is our mind. You can't control intent, intent to do harm.

That's what we're up against. What we're up against these days are now people that are using low technology high concept. They're using everyday materials and everyday accessible tools to create terror situations, shootings, things of that nature. We need to understand that that can also work in our advantage too to protect ourselves, is that if we correctly train our mind, we correctly coordinate our bodies and understand that we want to learn the skill sets of destruction not competition, we have a really good chance that should violence enter our lives we have a good chance of changing things in our favor.

I've had some of the most unlikely people be able to do that. But you're absolutely right. The reason I wrote the book and the reason it's so great to get an audience like yours to be able to hear this is I'm sure many of the people out there would not willingly check this topic out or they'd already have their assumptions.

The fact that I have the opportunity to discuss violence at this level, not on the punching and kicking level, we could talk a little bit about that, but just the idea of saying, "Hey, guys, don't fall for this stigmatization. Don't let people think--" Because what we're doing by stigmatizing violence is it's now only available to the predators.

Robb: Right. Would you make that point in chapter six -- Which is it? Man, I'm missing it here. It's basically the worse -- Oh, there it is. Chapter four, the worst people have the best information which is, I think, kind of your point there.

**[0:15:02]**

I have a three-year old and a five-year old daughter, doing my best to navigate raising them. I want to them to be aware but I also don't want to like scare them such that when the lights go out at night that they're incapable of sleeping in their own bed and everything.

It's interesting because, on the one hand, I try to tone back either one of the girls tooling off on each other. Although funny enough, the three-year old is much more aggressive and much more assertive than the five-year old and kind of runs roughshod on the five-year old.

On the one hand, I tell them it's not good to hit each other and we need to communicate and use our words and find other ways of dealing with this. At the same time they'd been in a couple of situations whether the playground or once or twice at school where some kids have started off with some kind of verbal stuff and then it's escalated into a push or something like that and I've given them kind of a rubric to work out of with that which is say no, move away, run away and then beyond that, basically, go for the jugular and try to kill that kid.

Maybe it gets into this social aggression versus asocial violence. Could you talk a little bit about that? And if you can, maybe dovetail in the kid element too because, I mean, this is -- It's a calculus problem for me. I'm not that good at it, trying to figure out what is the appropriate course of action and all that particularly with trying to raise kids.

Tim: Yeah. I have twin four-year old daughters and a seven-year old and my oldest is 21. My oldest didn't get this information until he is about 17 and a half. I didn't want him navigating high school with the training. That was a personal choice. Most of my instructors felt the same way. Girls will train as early as 11 because, unfortunately, sexual assault is happening against girls in an unparalleled--

My book before this was about that, about women self-protection. The research was just horrific when I looked at it. I had no idea. I know it's bad. I had no idea it

was that bad. So, my thought process with women is there's a couple of big positives with women. One, they pick it up way faster than guys. And I find that most of -- Most women, if they learn to shoot, if they learn to do anything, they tend to pick it up faster than most men because they don't have the situation where men--

Men, we have two things working against us. We feel we should already be good at something so we pretend we are. And then we muscle things. We'll just muscle things. It takes a while for us to get into the pure technique aspect of things. Whereas women basically don't have that. When you ask them to perform something, they pretty much, for the most part I found it across the board, most of my female students get it really quick.

They understand because they're not trying to rely on muscle. They're not trying to rely on a lot of things that we as males. And they don't have to -- The other reason I'm okay training women early is because young men have this navigation where we use violence as guys sometimes to communicate with each other.

We have this locker room mentality where there's just confusion. Is this real or not real? Is this territorial? And that goes into what you were just talking about which is another big premise in the book, is defining for people the difference between antisocial aggression which is imminently avoidable and asocial violence which is basically you have to be able to take action.

One of things that I put out, I've had this quote for years but basically when people come into my training they see a quote that says "Violence is rarely the answer." Everybody loves that part of the quote because we all understand, yes, that's absolutely true. But the second part of it is, "But when it is the answer, it's the only answer."

And really what we're talking about is we're talking about the first part of that is asocial, antisocial aggression. Violence is rarely the answer. It's basically never the answer in the antisocial aggression. The second part is asocial violence. But when it is the answer, it is the only answer. If I can define that for people and they really understand that with no physical training whatsoever, it will help them navigate and minimize most of the big mistakes people make when it comes to violence and getting themselves involved in something where they think they're getting themselves involved with their version of whatever they think the situation where they think, "Oh, this is just a verbal argument that's going somewhere." And they have no idea the person on the other side is going to have disproportional response because they don't know how to read the difference between antisocial aggression and asocial violence.

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Really it comes down, when people sit there and say, "Okay, am I going to give you some big laundry list on how--" I hate when people do that. I hate when people make things harder than they are. And so really what I just tell people, it literally comes down to choice. If choice is involved in any of the step where you can willfully make a choice to disengage and leave then it's not the time to use violence.

That's going to be really hard for a lot of people because that's going to involve a lot of ego, dissatisfaction. It's going to be -- People are going to be put in situations where they feel maybe humiliated or embarrassed or they feel they have to take action, something wasn't justified. This is where I go in the book really in depth and say, okay, antisocial aggression everybody wants to respond with violence. Asocial violence, everybody wants to talk.

What do I mean by that? A guy knocks in; he spills the drink on you. You're all hyped up. You're ready to go. You want to get in that guy's face. And I'm just throwing it out there. People like that. You're going to defend that. Are you going to defend the fact that I got a drink spilled on me by this guy so I'm going to make him pay for this. I'm going to make him either humiliated or I'll challenge him to a fight.

Same guy late at night, two in the morning, door gets kicked in his bedroom, three guys with shotguns in balaclavas and one guy with a duct tape, and what does he want to do? "Who are you? Why are you here?" He wants to engage them verbally. Probably not going to get a good result that way, not the time to use verbal in a situation like that.

The idea is the only time that we use violence is when we are facing imminent grievous bodily harm and we are devoid of choice. If there were any options to leave, we would have any options to talk our way out of it. If we don't take action, we're basically participating in our own murder. That's that rare black swan event when violence would be the appropriate action.

When you look at that, you then want to make sure that, okay, if I need to use tool of violence, what's the most effective path to me shutting down his most valuable weapon which is the human brain? And that's when we look at the injury to the human body. Now, antisocial aggression, if you have to ask yourself, "I really want to hit this guy but I'm not sure it's the right time," it's not the right time.

What most people don't understand, even if you want to go into the legal aspect, the only time I get -- It's very interesting. I travel around the world and I do this all the time. The only place where I get any questions about the legality of

something, the legality of, "Oh, hey, is it legal for me to protect myself here?" It's only in the US. Everybody else worldwide understands because of what they live with. They understand. As soon as I define antisocial aggression and asocial violence, they get it. They go, "Yeah, that's what I'm talking about. I need to know what to do when I'm devoid of choice. Show me what to do."

And then they completely focus on that because they've already worked it in their mind. They go, "Yeah, I don't respond to this. I don't respond to this but I'm worried about this because I've seen this happen before to other people or it's happened so now I need to know not only what to do but what can I do to minimize the chance of this ever entering my life." That's my real goal with everybody.

My real goal is, the reason I teach them physically how to literally do heinous things to the human body and permanently injure a sensory system or a structure of the human body is to let them know that, hey, if you ignore all the warning signs prior and you choose to not disengage and get out of there prior to something happening this is what you're going to have to do to get yourself out of this.

What's interesting about that is then once I take them and they physically had to go through and learn injury to the human body and what it takes and how to do it, there's a systemic change in somebody after they've done kinesthetic learning. They're all of a sudden, when I say things, "Don't go to the ATM after 8:30 at night," and I show them a couple of videos, boom, and they go, "Yeah, I heard that. I heard that."

After the physical training, now, they really heard it. They understand. They go, "You know what, I'm going to stop sleeping with my--" What I told my clients is my goal is to make sure every client comes to me that by the time they're done with me they've taken their head off the railroad track. They're not sleeping on the railroad track anymore. Avoid all the avoidable. That's really what it is.

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What's interesting is you can't get there just through conversation. It really, for me, it's that physical kinesthetic work they have to do that they then sit there and go, "Oh, man, yeah, this is what I would have to do because I was too stupid to walk away when I had the chance." And, for me, what's cool about that is when people go through this process, I've had people even reading the book and writing me back and just thanking me saying, "I've completely changed a lot of the things that I used to do where I was taking unnecessary risks. Some of them I knew were risks. Others of them were pointed to me in the book. I've changed for that."

That's my big goal for everybody. My big goal is not to have everybody become well-versed practitioner of using the tool of violence. It's basically educate themselves to understand that this is a subject, this is something that if it comes in your life it literally can turn your life upside down in seconds. 70% of the people that know me, they know my name, know me because something's already happened to them. That's the base of my clients. Majority of them have had violence enter their life or have had somebody in their life experience violence and then sought me out after that.

It's like only 30% of the people that are proactive that are coming in violence hasn't entered their life yet and they're just looking for some proactive information. So, reaching groups like yours, I'm hoping that I can at least spur some thought process on the subject because I've never seen anything and I mean I've dealt with clients that are the most elite tier one guys all the way down to or all the way over to the most ambitious effective entrepreneurs, a lot of the Silicon Valley guys and stuff like that and down to soccer moms.

What's interesting is violence has no demographic. It doesn't discriminate against political stances, color, race, create sexual orientation. It affects all of us. And it's something that very few of us have taken a look at.

Robb: It's interesting with the crowd that follows a lot of my work, they're putting a lot of time and thought into the foods they're eating, sleeping, physical body maintenance, exercise, but if one were to face this catastrophic event of needing to use physical violence to save oneself or save one's family members or mitigate a dangerous situation I think a woefully small number of people have even -- You talk about mindset so much.

It's important clearly, and we'll get into this a little bit, like some of the physical training, but just psychologically being prepared for the fact that somebody you don't know, they don't know you, you couldn't imagine why they would want to hurt you and they do, you have no idea what the path is that brought them to you. Maybe they don't even want to rob you. They're just in this mode where they want to hurt someone for whatever reason.

That's a really scary and very novel thought for a lot of folks and particularly when they're putting a lot of time and effort into kind of personal development and creating a good environment for themselves. But to your point, we can do all kinds of mitigated strategies. I like to joke that if you don't want to get in a fight or you don't want to get mugged, you're not at the bar at 2:30 in the morning with a wallet hanging out of your pocket with \$100 bills dangling out.

If you want to field test your stuff, that's an amazing way to do it. If you want to avoid that at all cost then that's perhaps something to not do but it's definitely something that is not in my opinion adequately on most folks' radars. To your point about running through all this stuff, what do we do with kids when they're at school to mitigate the downside risk of having a fire? We do fire drills.

We do fire drills multiple times a month, I think, in most schools and then we get out and we live our regular lives and there is no fire drill for us around what if somebody tries to corner you at the ATM? What happens if somebody's approaching your car when you're loading your kids up at the parking lot of Whole Foods and stuff like that? There is no fire drill for that stuff that we routinely entertain.

Tim: Yeah. I try to tell people it's a double-edged sword with training kids.

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But you absolutely have to do it. What I try to tell parents all the time is the most important thing when you're looking for kids to get trained is not that they're trying to get trained in what I'm talking about. You want to start introducing concepts to them, physical concepts early. One of the things I got my son involved in right away, my seven-year old, he's been doing it for four years now, is gymnastics.

The reason I got him involved in gymnastics is because my experience has been that people that have picked up the training the best that I've had in the past had been gymnasts and dancers. Their knowledge of their body and their gravity centers is really interesting. It's a very interesting thing. I know that getting that done in a child prior to seven years old, there's some research that says it sticks with them. It becomes part of them during that time.

I did that early on. I had him do one jujitsu class which I think is great for kids. I think jujitsu is awesome for kids. I think jujitsu -- I got to be careful. I think jujitsu is awesome. I got a lot of buddies in it. It's fantastic. But for kids especially it's a great introduction. The problem is you got to -- It all comes down to everything is the instructor.

If the instructor is not a good kid instructor, it's just terrible. The first guy that my son had just wasn't good and now we got a new guy that's coming in and this guy's amazing with kids and so I'll get him back in with that. But the idea that I want to just get across all the parents, this is the disappointing part, I wrote a blog post about this years ago, we have to remember that it's ultimately as parents our responsibility and it doesn't mean that we have to be these hobber parents, but we just have to be very realistic that whenever you've seen anything

like, with those drills that they do sometimes on the news where they train kids -- They take them for a day and they train them, saying, "Hey, stranger, danger," and they do the whole thing and then they have the kids walking out in a controlled environment where an unfamiliar adult comes up and shows them a puppy and they all jump in the car.

They do that right after having the training. What I try to tell people all the time is, listen, these predators -- And believe me it's horrific the level of predators that are out there these days, they're far more savvy than your child's young mind is ever going to be. They're going to be able to talk them into things. They're no match. Your child is no match for these people.

That's not to scare the crap out of everybody. It's just to be honest. My wife is a captain with Las Vegas Metro and she's done all sorts of interesting -- She's run interesting undercover groups and stuff and, unfortunately, a lot of it's been in the sexual trafficking side of things. Unfortunately, firsthand, I have a lot of knowledge, disturbing knowledge about this.

What I try to tell parents is it's absolutely good to get your kid in there, not with the idea that you're going to be able to protect themselves but that you're coordinating them and that you're preparing them for early adulthood when you can start teaching them effective protection measures where their minds are mature enough to be able to discern when it would be time to use that and how to properly protect themselves.

And also to make better decisions about what to do and not to do because -- You have daughters. I have daughters. That's a whole new world. My son was easy. My oldest son was really easy. My little guy is really easy. Boys, just point them in the direction, they like to break stuff. Girls are completely different animals. They're so verbal. They're so advanced. It's going to be one of those things where we're going to have to, as dads, navigate this and do it in a way, like you said, doesn't scare them but lets them know that you are not powerless when it comes to your own protection and you have the ability to protect yourself. You just have to look at things differently. You can't look at them the same way that a male would look at them. That's part of it.

My little guy, I just want him to the point to where he is really as coordinated in his body as possible, he understands how to move correctly, good movement patterns, and then it's really easy to teach people like that. It's really easy for me to teach really coordinated MMA guys, BJJ guys. Those guys are easy because they already have the intent. They already have the ability. They just need to sit there and see where, okay, let's take this submission move into a joint break to protect your life. Let's do this, this and this, make these changes and understand that when you're fighting for your life, here's what you got to be aware of.

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Those guys are great but with little kids, the disappoint thing is we as parents -- The example I gave was does the lioness expect the lion cub to take a couple of classes and fight off the hyena? It's no. The lioness is going to take care of the hyena when it comes to it. That's our job. These are hyenas. I'll just give you a very disturbing thing that's going on here.

These are Vegas stats. They have 16 full time investigators working on cyber, going after pedophiles on cyber. They are so overwhelmed that if the child -- This is how they determine it. They said, listen, basically, if the kid's old enough to not believe in Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny, we have to discard that case. They're having so many cases from infant to six-year olds that are overwhelmed. It's a very real threat to our kids. Oftentimes, these parents are there.

Again, I'm not a fearmonger. I'm not trying to but I have young kids and I understand. You ask the question and I just had to give the disappointing answer, unfortunately.

Robb: Right. No, no, no. It's phenomenal. I work pretty tightly with the Reno Police and the Reno Fire working on their wellness. Funny enough, our clinic does the Vegas Metro wellness too. So, your wife probably knows the CEO of our clinic Jackie Cox. We just had a situation here in Reno where a girl who was 12 somehow there was some interaction online. I never really got remotely the full details. It's at a very hazy 30,000 foot level.

Some guy was interacting with her online, managed to somehow get her money for a bus ticket. She made it as far as Sacramento and then somehow this whole gig got popped, the emails got read and the Sacramento Police intervened. This guy was part of a group of people and they had traced him back with multiple dozens of young girls, young kids that have just disappeared. They ended up in that probably like global sex trade deal.

This girl was a step away from going down that rabbit hole and never coming back. That was something that just happened a couple of weeks here ago in Reno. I mean, again, it's one of those things where like you need to be -- What do the guy, be aware and informed and fight back and all that? But at the same time, man, I just want to have a cocktail on rock fiddling in the corner and not think about it.

Tim: Yeah. It's horrific. That's why this whole subject of it and the reason I went out of the way to call it violence is I didn't want to sugarcoat anything because what we call self protection, self-defense is really what happens after the fact. Meaning,

what gets us out of the situation that we're talking about is violence. And then the violence, it's determined by the local authorities whether or not it was a justified use of violence or where it will be legal or if it was criminal and then you'll be prosecuted.

But really what we're defining is violence and that's the core thing that we're all learning. The problem with it also is people are very -- People tend to look at things like the UFC and you have all these amazing athletes and these incredible guys that are just phenoms, and girls, that are just phenoms and we think somehow that, oh, since I can't do anything like that there's no reason for me to look to--

Robb: Even try.

Tim: **[0:39:12] [Crosstalk]** self-protection. And it's kind of interesting. I was talking with another guy in the industry, a buddy of mine, Tony Blauer and he--

Robb: I know Tony. Good guy.

Tim: I like Tony because he -- Well, we've been friends forever. But, I guess, people would say we're competitors but I just think he brings really outstanding views. One of the things that we were talking about was the fact that people say they want to train all the time. "I really want to learn self-defense. I really want to learn this." And really the vast majority of people don't want to learn that. They don't want to learn self-protection or become an instructor or do the crazy stuff like I do or other guys that are real practitioners do.

**[0:40:02]**

It's because we like this stuff. We're mutants. To us, it's interesting. What most people want is, hey, I want to know how can I live a life where I would never need to use the skills that I'd learned in self-defense? How can I arrange my life better that way? That's really where I think we can help people. The other analogy Tony used was the idea -- I don't know where he got it. He probably stole it from somebody because he's a sneaky bastard.

He claims it for himself but I thought it's pretty good. He said, "Hey, listen. Really, everybody should learn self protection just like everybody should learn CPR." A doctor wouldn't make fun of people learning CPR. Yeah, you're not a doctor. You're not going to be a world class MMA practitioner if you learn self-protection. But that's not what it's designed for. It's really designed for this.

I've had some of the most unlikely people, and I mean unlikely people, be able to use the information of how to injure somebody to save their life against bigger,

faster, stronger people. And the reason being is because they knew how to exploit an opportunity that the predator gave them. That's just it. This is not a competition. That's what people have to understand. When it comes to your own self-protection we don't want to learn competition. We want to learn destruction. They're very different skill sets.

The reason we look at like something like the UFC or other combat sports, what makes them so great is because we gamified violence. The way you gamify violence is by taking direct injury out of the equation. Last time I looked at the rules, I think there were 31 rules for the UFC, 27 of them involved injury to human body. Because it has no place in competition.

To break a structure, to deliberately break a structure or a sensory system on somebody in a competition is criminal and should be treated as such. I absolutely agree with that. People say to me all the time, "Well, if the system you teach is so great, why isn't it in the UFC?" I go, "It is." I said it's ended every competition it's ever been involved in regardless of who the fighter or the practitioner was.

Of course, I'm kind of screwing with him. I sit there and go look at every MMA injury that's come in there when you got these two highly trained athletes going at it. One guy makes a mistake, rolls up, snaps the other guy's ankle, it's over. The guy is right there. This guy who was completely dedicated and going, now his sole focus is on that injury to the human body and it's over where the refs there stop it. They had to get the guy out of there and get medical attention to him.

That's just one area of the human body. We see numerous areas all the time. So, when injury is introduced, it bypasses bigger, faster and stronger. That's kind of the Rosetta stone to self-protection. It's understanding. Where you get that information, the best information on where to go in the human body to get the biggest results comes from sports injury data.

The reason why we look at sports injury data is because those are all injuries where humans collided with humans and humans collided with the planet and those are forces that you and I can replicate. And you see there's approximately seven areas in the human body that keeps showing up time and time again. These are these areas that regardless of the person's physical conditioning they can't protect these areas of the human body.

A lot of us know a lot of the obvious ones, the eyes, we know groin, throat. Everybody talks about those areas. I already talked about the ankle. Joints are susceptible. Joints are very susceptible after or prior injury. Joints are actually pretty tough if you're not injured on there but once you start systemic injury the body loosens up and then joints are really easy to take out.

Basically, what you do is you have to look at things different. The biggest challenge I have with some socialized individuals when I'm training them is I need to flip their mindset to the way a predator looks at things, an alpha predator. An alpha predator, when he looks at another human being, say the guy is much bigger than him, we would sit there and look at that same individual who's much bigger, stronger and faster and that's like, "Oh my god, he's so much bigger than me. He's way stronger than me for sure. I know he's younger and faster." And we just start shutting down with all these thoughts. Whereas the alpha predator looks at that and says, "Okay, he's got a throat like me. He's got a groin like me. He's got knees like me. He's got a clavicle like me. He's got ears like me."

**[0:45:05]**

He just starts looking for all the opportunities, all the similarities. It's the idea of looking at human, the similarities in all human bodies rather than differences. That also gives you the focus to go in right away and you know what your job is because I don't want to find out how good that guy is. I don't want to find out how fast he is. I don't want to find out how strong he is. I don't want to find out how good he is at doing what he does.

The way I get out of that is by putting an injury on a human body that's enough that it basically betrays his brain. The body goes into an autonomic reflex response, a spinal reflex response where there's no information basically given to the brain. The body just automatically reacts to protect itself and then informs the brain, "Hey, by the way, you just broke your ankle. You just did this."

We've all experienced it. If you touch the hot surface or you stepped on a tack or something, your foot automatically comes up after stepping on the nail or the tack. You don't think about it. You don't sit there and say, "Oh, hey, I just stepped on something. I better move my foot." It just automatically happens and then you look down and you say, "Oh, shit, I just stepped on a sharp object."

Or you touch a hot surface and your fingers come right off right away. That's not a thought process. The brain is not used in that. It's the spinal reflex reaction. The afferent and efferent nervous system are kicking back and the trauma amplitude is so great that it only makes it partially up the spine before another impulse shoots right back down and say, "Hey, move it. Move that right now." That's what bypasses the guy's will in everything. He can't control his body anymore when he's had those types of injuries put on him.

Robb: Right. Tim, I have a good friend Matt Thornton, a really sharp philosophical guy. I'm curious where you are on this. You've kind of alluded that I think you guys

may be on similar pages but he's made the point that it would be fantastic to be, even marginally well-trained in some effective delivery systems like jujitsu, Greco wrestling, boxing, and then we could layer in then this -- If you're a good boxer you figure out some degree of movements and also target placements and so then if we wanted to poke someone in the eyes we've got both, some aptitude and movement but the targeting is kind of in there.

Maybe similar with Thai boxing, decent wrestlers are going to be able to disrupt someone's center gravity and to your point maybe dump them on the ground or something like that. How do you view that whole story of if one wanted to pick a suite of things to train to kind of augment this more self-defense specific kind of delivery, what type of delivery system would you want running in the background there?

Tim: First, I had to preface to everything by saying I am probably one of the biggest fan boys of martial arts. I grew up pre-MMA. I had to do mostly Korean arts coming up because that's all that was available. But I'm huge. I mean, I was involved in some of the earlier UFCs early on and stuff and I knew all the players. I just love the sport. I love that whole thing. I love the practitioners. I got to preface it with that.

My take on all of that stuff is I could care less, when it comes to your life, I could care less where you learned that particular strike that you did, move, whatever you did. It's just, okay, does it produce an injury like we describe it? And if it does, you're good to go. It doesn't matter. And the reason I'm saying that is because the alphas, the guys that live in this petri dish of asocial violence day in and day out that literally run the prison systems, they run the streets, most of these alphas are incarcerated 23 out of 24 hours a day, have little to no technology and yet are able to run tens of thousands of distributors.

The reason they're able to do all of this -- We're talking, obviously, about the prison gangs. We're talking about members of, say, Black Guerilla Family, Aryan Brotherhood or Mexican Mafia. The reason these guys are able to do this is because their currency is violence. They have to be good. Meaning, the threat of violence and being able to effectively do violence is extremely important.

**[0:50:00]**

In order to do that, they can't have any opinions. They can't say, "Hey, I'm going to train martial arts Y versus grappling arts X," or anything. They sit there and they said, "Listen--" In fact, the first group that really got it was the Aryan Brotherhood. They screwed up, in the mid 90s, they screwed up an execution that they were hired to do.

That's their life bread. Aryan Brotherhood is really interesting. Listen. I'm not glorifying any of these guys. I'm going to preface it with that. But when you look at it from this perspective, you learn a lot. They make up less than one half of 1% of the prison population, the Aryan Brotherhood, yet they run most of the prisons that they are in. When John Gotti, the former mob boss in New York, went to prison, the mob had to pay off the Aryan Brotherhood to protect him. They couldn't protect their own in there. That's how powerful these guys are.

What was interesting was they screwed up this murder. It was written up in the New Yorker a while ago, I think about probably 15 years ago. But they messed up a murder and they're really bombed out. Meaning, the guy stabbed -- They stabbed the guy a couple of times. They'd gotten in there but then the CERT team, the prison SWAT team got there early.

After that, they basically put an edict to everybody saying, "You're going to study anatomy. Everybody, all of our people need to study anatomy. We need to know where to put our knives, where to put our efforts. We got to make sure that these guys are dead before there's any response time. We can afford to do this." Because, of course, now that guy is moved into a secure location. They didn't have a chance to hit him after that.

That's a big black mark on them because, again, they have to be successful in order for them to have power. That's where they derive their power. And so they did it. And then, of course, I have interviews from a lot of the top guys in all these gangs and they all talk about the same thing. They all talk about violence. Now, what's interesting is they talk about their education process and they talk about a lot of books that you'd be very familiar with as with lot of the entrepreneurs, things like the 48 Laws of Power, Senses, Art of War, Abnormal Psychology and Psychology.

A lot of the books that they listed in this one interview that I saw are basically are all the same books that I as a young special warfare intelligence officer went through a course at JFK Center in Bragg. It was special operations people and it was our reading list. The only thing that wasn't on the reading list was the Anatomy text that they studied. That was the differentiation.

These guys are incredibly smart individuals and so what I would do is I would just overlay everything with the idea of anatomy. Meaning, are you getting a direct result? It's kind of like Peter Drucker thing. You want to make sure when it comes to your own life that everything that you put in to save your life is effective first. And as long as you sit there and go, okay, would that get me result? Okay, that's effective.

Then if you have the luxury to continue training and doing things then you can get effective, I'm sorry, then you can get efficient. You can smooth things out. I tell everybody my only goal for people is to make them effective first because everybody can do rock to the back of the head. Everybody can do a lot of these basic straightforward injuries that we talk about to other human beings. If you want to train longer then, yeah, I can work on your movement patterns. I can make you more coordinated.

But that's a luxury and that's not necessary because I've got tons of videos unfortunately of very unskilled practitioners who understand injury to human body taking out very skilled practitioners who don't understand the difference. It doesn't mean one is better than the other. It just means that the intent to do harm and knowledge of where to put that intent is really worth its weight in gold.

So, yeah, I think, background, I think jujitsu is fantastic. I think learning a group of things, boxing is fantastic, all that. They're all indirect pass to injury though because they're not specifically designed to injure the human body. They're designed to have some sort of a competition. And all my buddies in jujitsu, they always bemoan the fact that in UFC you really don't get to see the ultimate in jujitsu and they all laugh because people get hit.

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I understand what they're saying. They're saying that, yeah, in a jujitsu competition where the rules are allowed for jujitsu to really show what it can do, you're going to see amazing high, high level jujitsu which if they try to do that in an environment where strikes are allowed against a really good well rounded MMA practitioner they're probably going to run into some problems in doing that if they don't respond in kind.

That's what I look at. What I look at, I look at everything and say, okay, are there any -- Has anything been contained in what these guys are training right now? They made assumptions that this isn't going to happen. Meaning, okay, it's going to be one -- A lot of people always assume it's going to be a one-on-one situation. That, to me, is absolutely crazy. Because all you have to do is just look at the wealth of YouTube videos that's out there showing violence and it's rarely one on one. It's never this classic dual situation that most of us train for in the combat sports and martial arts.

It's this multi men situation where you really have to understand movement. You have to understand rotation. It's things that are very easily learned by these practitioners. The goal of combat sports is not to maim, cripple and kill. It is to better your opponent, to show your skill sets are better, that you have the same

level of skill, you're pitied against somebody who's your same weight class, your same, about roughly on par, and then you get to see, hey, whose training and whose tactics and whose heart is better under these conditions? That's fantastic. Unfortunately, taking some of that approach to the street can be deadly against somebody that just wants to injure you.

Robb: Right. Tim, with that mind, where do -- Man, this just goes down the rabbit hole quickly but where do edged weapons and firearms drop into this?

Tim: It's all the same. The way we talk about is, the way I talk about it with my clients is brain is your primary weapon. Your body is your first set of tools. Everything else is just add on. So, clip on tools. So, the same movement patterns that I use. The targeting that we use is the same targeting you use for any tool. And so you don't have to then say, okay, now we're going to do knife fighting, now we're going to do gun fighting. It's all synergistic.

It all work together. In the same methodology that I use for training people, we use the same methodology that you would learn whenever you use any new tool. I mean, I have to basically, when I get new people, I have to have them zero in their weapon system and their initial weapon system is their body. I'm going to use the same protocols that you use on a range when you're zeroing in your weapon. You're going to go slow and deliberate.

You're going to lock things in. You're going to do deep practice type training up front and you're going to use the crawl, walk, run approach. The problem is that people, for whatever reason, when it comes to training your own weapon system, we throw everything out that we do with every other weapon system that we train. Like there's very little deliberate training that I see frontloaded in a lot of the, I guess I'd call it reality self-defense, hand to hand, all that stuff.

A lot of it is chaos driven and create chaos way before the practitioner has any skill sets or foundation laid down to deal with it. I put it like this. I always joke to people, "Hey, how many people know how to shoot?" And there'd be some people who raise their hands. I go, "Great. Okay. So, was your experience like mine? The instructor showed me, basically gave me safety briefs, showed me how to hold the weapon, loaded it for me, took me to the kill house, said, okay good luck, threw me in and then red team started shooting at me right away. That's how you guys learned it, right?"

They all start laughing. I go, "Yeah, why are you laughing?" Well, because we won't be able to do anything. You don't know how to operate the tool. So, you have to learn to operate the tool first slowly deliberately with a total focus on how it works and what you can do with it before you sit there and stress yourself out in something where you don't have any skill set to respond.

So, this is ramping up too soon and, you know, I've got a lot of -- There's a ton of data, and they call it deep practice now. I mean, we were doing it a long time ago. We just always understood that slow training, slow deliberate training yields amazing results when you go at full speed.

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Now, that does not mean slow meaning weak. It does not mean that you never ramp velocity. But just like anything else, velocity is the last thing you put into the equation. If everything else is screwed up, velocity is just going to make it worse. That's probably the biggest difference I see on how to learn injury. You really want to learn it slowly, deliberately, putting one square inch of you on a square inch of him that can't take it. It's not built for that type of traffic. And you get a real result.

You'll learn that for a while and then it just becomes second nature. And then you can just look at the human body and, like I said, all of sudden you go from looking at the differences to every human body looks the same to you. Your opportunities look the same and you're constantly, when you're walking around, you're constantly targeting just naturally, not in an aggressive way, not in a creepy Dexter kind of way or anything like, but you just naturally, you look at somebody and you just notice the highlights on the body.

"Oh, yeah, that's where the inside of his knee is. I'm about a step and a half away from his throat." You just start noticing these things. And so you learn it in kind of a low stress environment first and then you go up. I just remember every time I learned weapons, explosives, any of the really crazy stuff that could get a lot of people hurt and killed I had the most calm deliberate instruction from guys who didn't want to be calm and deliberate because they're going easy on me. They want to be calm and deliberate because they want to make damn sure I understood everything.

Robb: They didn't want to die from your mistake.

Tim: Exactly. And were they crazy and sadistic? During physical evolutions where it was very difficult to get really hurt or hurt a lot of people. All the stuff that didn't matter where they put on all of the stress testing and stuff like that. But whenever it came down to like fire and maneuver or any of the really intricate stuff, that was a lot of deliberate up front training before we ever got to go full speed.

Robb: Makes a ton of sense. I mean, everything from just like -- It's funny the parallels between these things because we cofounded the first and fourth CrossFit

affiliate gyms in the world and we were pretty successful financially with that. I mean, running a brick and mortar business is not for the faint of heart in that regard but we really early on recognize that people needed that crawl, walk, run approach and if they weren't ready for it, they weren't a good fit for the gym.

They were a liability if they wanted to bypass those steps. And what we found is that these folks exceeded. They were comparatively safe relative to the other people. And so it's interesting even on a business perspective of running a jujitsu school, MMA school, what have you, if that kind of progressive environment and knowing when and how to ratchet things up so that people get a dose versus when the things are like, no, we need to really take our time to get these motor patterns or even just the mindset right.

The folks that get that right, they usually do pretty well financially. They usually get a decent amount of proficiency in what they're doing and the rest of the folks are kind of left scratching their head why they're getting lackluster results. So, it's just interesting to me that there's all these parallels there.

Tim: Yeah. What people don't understand is that if you front load everything with deliberate practice and deep practice and slow accurate, what's great about that is you know every mistake you make. You can feel when you're out of balance. You can feel when -- You can look at your targeting and go, "Oh, man, I'm too low on the throat there. I got to adjust up."

But you have the ability to adjust and train your body because really what your brain is asking is, hey, okay, in the situation, what do you want me to do? And you want to make sure you're giving it the best information possible. The brain doesn't know speed. It doesn't distinguish between velocity. It just say, "Oh, okay, so when I'm in a position like this, you want the body -- You want our body weight to step right through this guy and you want this one square inch of your forearm right there in that one square inch of his windpipe." "Yeah, that's what I want." "Okay, cool. Let's do it a couple of times." Boom, boom, boom.

And then it just, like I said, you just start -- It's that kinesthetic link, that idea it's not me talking to you as an instructor or any of that stuff. I love to hear myself talk because I'm freaking brilliant but, unfortunately, that doesn't really help my people. What my people need to do is they need the kinesthetic awareness of actually using another human body, touching these areas, not trying to injure the other person.

The other person modeling what injury looks like to see what success looks like and you're just using all of these proven skill sets that have worked amazingly. I mean, I remember McGregor got harassed a lot because he was doing a lot of

movement training and slower training just like that. And, yeah, say what you want about it, he definitely got some results.

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I got a lot of other people that use it in other competition or areas that have really raved about it in the results and it's pretty straightforward. It works really well with firearms training. It works really well with edge weapons training. It works really well with just about any sort of complex training. Therefore, why wouldn't it work when we're talking about our own mind and body? That's really the way we look at it.

I don't want to look -- I don't want my client to be beholden to a tool or think that there's anything special about the tool. If he understands that targeting the human body and he understand what kind of results that you get with these types of targets, meaning, okay, we know if I'm, an edged weapon practitioner for me, I want him to sit there and realize, okay, lower margin ribcage is my friend, highly vascular blood bags behind all four quadrants.

I can also go up underneath the pelvic floor and get big results because they're not going to be able to bear down after that. They'll eject tissue. Yes, I could go for the side of the neck but that's a lot harder than most people think to get the artery. It's not as high value of a target for this type of thing. And you just look at where you go, liver, spleen, kidneys, pelvic floor, right up under the chin.

I don't mean to be this graphic but what I'm saying is what I want coming out of my people is a decrement of function that they're going to do. I am doing this because it's going to decrement this guy's functioning and this is how it's going to happen. And that's how you talk to each other. No, I don't poke the guy in the eye. I'm blinding him. That's what I'm doing. I'm not punching him in the throat. I'm starting the asphyxiation process. This is how you talk. Your self-talk is very important when you're learning this and when you put it because that helps you build the intent.

Robb: Well, Tim, your book is amazing, When Violence Is the Answer. Who introduced us? I'm trying to remember.

Tim: I don't know. We know a lot of similar people. I don't know if it was Ryan or if it was Bret that introduced us.

Robb: It's Bret. Yeah, it was Bret.

Tim: I run across a lot of people. This isn't like mutual backslapping. I followed your stuff for a long time.

Robb: Oh, cool. I had no idea.

Tim: Yeah. I reached out to you one time to tell you I really appreciated one of your books. The other thing is I heard Joe Rogan talking about one time too. That scene where you were out in the bush and freaking hunting with those primitive weapons was freaking amazing.

Robb: I still apparently have the world record in that kind of Boone and Crockett deal for the largest land animal taken in modern times with an atlatl. So, I've got that going for me.

Tim: That's something to hang a hat on. That's pretty cool.

Robb: I tell you what, if you starve long enough and lose enough weight, you figure out a way to make things happen. I guarantee that.

Tim: Thank you so much for having me on and let me share the message with your people.

Robb: Huge honor to have you on. Before we wrap up, remind folks where they can track you down. I know that when they go to your website, [timlarkin.com](http://timlarkin.com), when they order your book they get a free ten-week video training course also with that. Can you talk about that a little bit?

Tim: I just think it's incomplete when -- Listen. I had 2,500 pages that I had to distil down to a couple hundred pages. There's a lot of stuff. So, what I decided to do for everybody because I really appreciate -- Listen, you know, when you get your book published, it's not a big money maker. I did it with the publisher because I wanted to get a broader range of people and having a little publisher like Little Brown is nice in my industry because most of us self-publish which is there's nothing wrong with that. It's just you get a gravitas if you have a real publisher.

What I decided with people was, listen, if you're going to be good enough to help me out and get the message across and keep me on a list and everything, I'm going to go out of my way to go each chapter by chapter and go in depth and do a follow-up video and also give them some video examples of some of these things.

I'm bringing some criminal videos that I have, some interviews from some of the alphas from the prison gangs, incidents that they can look at. It's just a ten -- One every week for every chapter. And it's just been great. People really, really like it and it kind of helps in a multimedia way bringing the book alive a little bit more.

Robb: Oh, man. It's genius. I absolutely love it. I am painfully regretful I have not done that yet for my books. Before, I don't know, maybe a week, a week and a half ago when I was doing some prep for this, I shot this to my wife and like, oh my god, we totally need to do this. Yeah, great. Good job for doing that.

Tim: They can go to my website. They can go to [whenviolenceistheanswer.com](http://whenviolenceistheanswer.com) as well and it gets some right in the process right away.

Robb: Great. And do you have a preferred social media hangout? Twitter? Facebook?

Tim: Instagram.

Robb: Or you try to avoid that like a plague?

Tim: I'm not a big Twitter person although that's where a lot of people reach out to me. But, yeah, it's @TFTTimLarkin and then same for Instagram too. And Facebook, it's easy to find me. It's Tim Larkin. You'll find me.

Robb: All right, Tim. Well, thank you so much for coming on the show and looking forward to buying you a drink in real life and talking shop.

Tim: Take care.

Robb: Awesome, Tim. Take care.

**[1:10:55] End of Audio**