

THE POWER OF TRADITIONAL SELF DEFENCE

By Master Peter Byrne 6th Degree AImAA Ireland Director



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Master Peter Byrne AImAA Ireland Director

Master Peter Byrne is a 6th Degree Black belt and one of foremost exponents of AImAA One-step self defence .

Firstly Master Byrne can you please explain what a one step is?

Master Byrne: *One Steps* are a Self Defence System which have been developed by Grandmaster Hee Il Cho as part of the AImAA Curriculum to develop students aptitude for rapid and accurate counter attacks. The techniques can include blocking, evading, trapping and then striking with the fist, knifehand, ridgehand, elbows, knees or feet. Each technique is meant to offer a wide range of possibilities and variations which a student can adapt and effectively use in a fight or self defence situation. There are currently 55 one steps in total and form part of the belt curriculum with five or more new techniques being added to each belt level. Once the basic stances and angles are perfected after repetition they are forever engrained in your mind.



What benefits can an exponent achieve from practicing the techniques?

Master Byrne: Practicing the one steps will improve an exponents timing, coordination, speed, balance and focus and has been shown to improve an individual's memory and concentration through regular practice which requires memorizing the techniques in rotation as each technique is numbered from one to fifty five and are practiced with both sides of the body. One steps also increases the students confidence levels in each technique as their training continues and this develops the students skills that are essential preparation for free sparring. When performing one steps they should be performed just as a free sparring move, with the same high intensity, precision and explosive full speed. Even with this speed and power each technique should be performed with proper balance and well controlled.

These training techniques are among the best methods of familiarising students with punching, kicking, blocking and all the other basic movements. They will also condition the students forearms for blocking an attack in a real situation.

You have shown exceptional timing and accuracy in your class today, will the one steps also develop this part of the student?

Master Byrne: Of course, timing, as any fighter knows is everything, it can be the difference between winning and losing. A fighter whose timing is off just by half a second can find themselves on the wrong side of the punch or kick. One steps teach the students how to successfully time an approaching attack again through repetition. These techniques should be drilled to try perfect each of the 55 One Steps, as Grandmaster said *'it is better to practice one technique ten thousand times than to practice ten thousand techniques one time'*.



Can anybody learn one steps?

Master Byrne: Absolutely! The techniques are practiced by men, women and children of all ages, shapes and sizes.

They have been developed by Grandmaster Cho and he has shown us ways to adapt them for different people, if you are not flexible enough to kick to some ones head then kick to the body or to the knee. Each Martial Artist is different and AIMAA welcomes all.

You are known all through the AIMAA and beyond as a Self Defence expert from your years of security work, can you give us your thoughts on Self Defence.

Master Byrne: I think Self Defence should be broken down and looked on as two main sections, *Street Self Defence* and *Security Self Defence*. On the street there are no rules so all of your weapons (Fists, elbows, head, knees, ridge hands, arc hands etc) can be utilised to defend oneself but control must be used unless under real attack.

With security work we need to minimise the damage caused by only using various locks to secure and remove the offender from the premises. All self defence moves regardless of which sector must be preformed with speed, power and accuracy to ensure that the attacker is disabled.

When performing self defence we must think ahead to have the ability to counter and defend yourself before the attack has time to elevate in to a more dangerous situation. A lot of self defence situations intend to end up on the ground so that area must be studied also, ground work was introduced into the AIMAA by seventh degree Black Belt Master Philip Ameris

Can you please talk me through some of the one step techniques you have shown here today?



Master Byrne: Number 20 is performed by stepping in with the left leg and executing a right leg spinning heel kick to the head.

The spinning heel kick itself has been mastered by Grandmaster Cho from years of daily practice. It is a knockout kick when performed correctly.

Also one of my favorite defence moves is Numbers 14, which is performed by stepping forward on the left leg and executing a rising block with the left arm, immediately grabbing the

attackers hand with you blocking hand while stepping right leg to left leg and spin counterclockwise 180 degrees under the attackers arm while stepping the left leg back and striking the elbow of the attacker's right arm. This seems like a long and complex move but you seen today just how fast and effective it can be.



Where can I go to learn the techniques?

Master Byrne: All AIMAA Instructors and schools know and teach the techniques, however, if you don't have an AIMAA school nearby you can purchase the one step video by Grandmaster Cho from the AIMAA headquarters website www.AIMAA.com

Have you any advice for anybody who wishes to learn the one steps?

Master Byrne: Get Grandmaster Cho's video and practice, practice, practice until it becomes instinctive and that goes for all aspects of training, stay active and keep pushing for perfection.

Thank you for your time Master Byrne Thank you Mr Healy.

Interview by Mr Paul Healy. Photographs by Miley. Special Thanks to Mr Fitzgerald and Mr Byrne.