

Podcast #208 Transcription – Guided Chaos Hand-To-Hand Tactics

Jeff Anderson: Real violence is chaos. Despite what you may see out there, defending against a determined aggressor when you're unarmed, isn't going to look like the choreographed fight scenes from the latest Mission Impossible film or the, you do this then I'll do that, self defense sequences practiced in about 95% of the traditional martial arts schools out there.

Fighting is dynamic. It's unpredictable and to survive you'll need to be able to quickly improvise and adapt in order to one, own the offense so your attacker's unable to launch his own strikes against you, two, know how and where to strike to create maximum damage, and three, deliver those strikes with explosive power and ruthless efficiency. Do all that and you're practically guaranteed to walk away the victor.

In today's episode, you're going to discover a unique fighting system whose training methodology is centered around generating and controlling explosive striking power, even in extreme close quarters environments, to defeat any attacker in mere seconds so that you can extract yourself from the danger or face other aggressors. Sound like a tall order? Well, it's not and it's all coming right up.

Hello everyone, this is Jeff Anderson, editor from Modern Combat Survival Magazine and Executive Director of the New World Patriot Alliance, with another podcast to help you better prepare for any threat you may face in your role as a protector and a patriot. With us today is an instructor who's been in our network for a long, long time. Actually, probably since we started way back when it's Lieutenant Al Ridenhour. Al, welcome back to the program man.

Al Ridenhour: Hi thank you very much again Jeff. Thanks for welcoming me back to your program. I think the last time we spoke, I think I was a major in a Marine Corp at the time so it was good to see that I got promoted, but that shows how long that we've kind of known each other. So, thank you very much for inviting me back to the program.

Jeff Anderson: Yeah, it's been a long time since we've had you back on. I'm really excited because I think a lot of our people ... I'd like to get this kind of like new types of techniques and systems that they're not aware of out there in front of people. I've been a big fan of your stuff for a long time. So, listen everybody, if you haven't seen any of the other work that we've done with Al in the past he's a retired Marine Corp Commander and combat veteran who even though he was an unarmed combatives instructor in the military he discovered that a strange new fighting system was transforming real hand-to-hand warriors who seemed to be able to strike him at will with penetrating force even though they were half his size.

Now this system was called Guided Chaos and is founded by John Perkins back in 1979 as an answer to the unrealistic techniques that were being taught to law enforcement and military that failed to hold up against the wild dynamic street attacks by bigger stronger aggressors. Now Al's first thought was, "If this works for them it'll work for me." And he instantly began studying this unusual but powerful new fighting system, mastering it's practical use against street and even battlefield violence. Passing on his training to his troops when possible, as well as the police and civilian trainees who were seeking a more effective way to feel safe from violent attacks. Now you can find out more about Al and the Guided Chaos training system over at www.guidedchaos.com.

Alright Al, so when we're talking about the fighting system that you have here, Guided Chaos, it's understandable why it's called Guided Chaos. It definitely looks chaotic, there's non-stop movement, it looks very different than what most people are used to seeing when it comes to like traditional martial arts or self-defense system. So, let's kind of give people just kind of a synopsis intro of what's the benefit of this Guided Chaos, this unusual type movement and training system, and why is it more effective than a more traditional self-defense or martial arts approach?

Al Ridenhour:

Yeah thank you Jeff.

So, the main thing that I want to get across to folks is that as we like to say real fight is chaos, real fights are chaotic, unpredictable, etc, etc. And one the issues that John Perkins discovered ... and you know even a lot of us who had done a lot of traditional martial arts discovered over the years was a lot of things that we learned didn't feel natural, the movement wasn't flowing so that must be how a real fight is. It wasn't dealing with the type of chaos. Many of the things that we were doing, or learned how to do, or contrived and seemed to kind of place you in a box.

And so, within Guided Chaos the biggest thing that we do is we try to train people to fight within the bodies that they already have. We have this thing called proprioception and I can talk even more about it later on, but our proprioception we're born with it, it's a tool that we already have that gives us the ability to be able to kind of sense where people are, perceive things, etc, etc. And so, within our system we train people within the body they have to learn how to move as natural as possible, through a series of exercises and drills to kind of get people back to the way we were moving when we were little kids. Remember when we were little kids, when you did things you just did them, now there was no thought. I mean probably when we were in high school probably even less though. But the point is within the Guided Chaos system we're focused only on training people as best we can to move in the bodies that they already have, to be able to fight at a level in many cases well above what they're normally thinking they're capable of.

And like you alluded to, when I first started doing the art, the first time I was brought in a good friend of mine who was a phenomenal Gosuru practitioner,

he brings me in and all I know is I gotta beat up by two housewives and a fat guy. So, I figured, well you know there's gotta be something to this because what happened shouldn't have happened, especially getting hit by women at will literally, or even getting hit by Grand Master Perkins where anything I tried to do with all my athletic moves just had no effect on him, but yet he can not only hit me at will but I could feel the penetrating force that he was hitting with. That's kind of like almost when I played football you know when you got blindsided by a shot, that's kind of the jolting feeling that I got in my body. So, I knew I had a choice, I could either walk away from it and think it was nonsense, and go back to what I was doing, or I could at least investigate and figure out what was going on, because like I said what happened to me shouldn't have happened yet it did.

Jeff Anderson:

Yeah, it's interesting because a lot of traditional martial art systems are a very static environment. It's like you have your stance, you're solid in your stance, you're using that stance to drive power and deliver power into an attacker that's also relatively static as well. But even with sparring it's usually done in a very controlled environment, and those are all the things that go out the window when it comes to a real street attack. So if you're used to training statically, well there's movement in a real fight. And I guess we can liken it also to ... we talk about the shortcomings of firearms training. If people naturally think going down to the range and shooting live fire, and you have your lane, and you have your stance, and you have your target, and your targets not moving, and it's two dimensional. And so, we build up those techniques based upon an unrealistic environment for what you might have to fight in. I think the name of the system Guided Chaos seems to really say a lot to it because fights are chaotic and how do you guide that energy especially your own energy that you have the control over to be able to do that, so, it's real interesting. I think people are going to get a lot out of this.

Now one of the things that you have as kind of like the hallmarks or the cornerstones of Guided Chaos is being able to ... the way that you put it, feel and anticipate your attacker's motion so that you can sense his openings, you can know where you're next ability to attack is. This sounds almost like super hero like. You got the super power you can slow things down, and you can find their openings, and be able to strike them at will. But I think you were on the other end of that by getting struck at will. What I'd like to do is get ... how can you explain how to do this? How can you sense this other person's movement in the dynamic environment of a fight?

Al Ridenhour:

Yeah, so this is one of the things that I spend a lot of time talking about in our classes, to get people to understand because they feel me do something, or they see the Grand Master do something, or some of the other instructors do things to them and they want to know how are they doing it. So, I alluded to proprioception early on, and that's our ability to know where we are, where all body parts in time and space. But the other part of that is you can actually feel where other people are in relation to your body as well.

A good example of proprioception is you're sitting in your car driving in traffic and you can't see the outside of the car, but you know where all the parameters are, you're not hitting stuff, you sense where all the parameters are. You can even feel when another person's getting ready to cut you off, and the same way you drive your car you kind of anticipate constantly. You see our brains are always anticipating, you can not not anticipate. And so, with that understanding once you start moving the way we teach people to move through exercises that we call contact flow what starts to happen is you start learning how to deal with another person's motion. And I don't always like to use the word pattern, so I'll explain the difference between pattern movement as we define it versus what most people may think.

When we're talking patterned movement we're talking like what you see in traditional martial arts like what you alluded to. A guy that throws a punch here, you block there. You stand like this and you wait for the guy to do something, then you go ahead and you throw the kick or a corresponding move. What we're talking about in terms of feeling and sensing things is the human body is the human body. The human body the way it moves there are certain ways in which our bodies move and can only move. And so, as you're working with another person you start learning to feel the differences in how their body's moving and you already kind of know that they're moving a certain way kind of what the future is, so to speak.

It's kind of like the Great Gretzky used to have a saying when they asked him about what makes a good hockey player versus a great hockey player. And he said, "A good hockey player plays where the puck is, a great hockey player plays where he knows the puck is going to be." And it's the same thing, we do this more than we think, a lot of your best martial artists, no matter what they may think, what's really going on and what gives them their edge, it's not that they're just faster or they're more talented, they have the ability to sense what other people are doing, and they're already moving to the place they know they need to be to cut off that other person's movement because their proprioception has been developed to that point where they can do that. So, we focus on in order to help do that a set of principles. Right? Because everybody teaches punches, blocks, kicks. I mean we teach this stuff, we teach people how to strike, we teach people how to kick, we teach palm strikes, everybody teaches it. You gotta teach those things 'cause those things are a part of fighting, but how do you make it work when you need to make it work under dynamic conditions?

And so, we focus on principles of balance, because you gotta have your balance. Without balance, you can't control your body. Principles of looseness or as I like to define it as subtle muscle control, where you're able to control your body, because the more control and coordination you have the easier it is for you to do whatever it is you need to do. Sensitivity we focus on both kinesthetic awareness or sense of touch, and we also focus on what we could define as spatial awareness. There's a technical word called proximity, we don't fully understand it. I don't try to get too much into the science 'cause then my head

starts hurting, you start seeing smoke coming out of my ears. But, proximity or what we call spacial awareness is that ability that we all have where you're kind of walking through traffic, or you're walking through a crowd. And it's like people all around you ... of course half of them are looking at their phones, right? But like nobody runs into each other 'cause you can just sense when people are around you. So we're already born with these skills and the problem is unfortunately most martial arts systems actually train people away from what they were born to be able to do. And so, through these principles we get people back to that.

The culmination of those three principles, of balance, looseness, and sensitivity work together because they work together all the time, creates what we call body unity. You can kind of define body unity as a super principle 'cause it encompasses all those things. And then the last principle is anything goes, total adaptivity, freedom of action. In other words, my philosophy is always, as long as it's within the laws of physics and human physiology don't ever let anybody tell you what you can't do. And so, by training people in this fashion and of course through a series of exercises to help develop the attributes, exercises for balance, exercises for looseness, exercises to help you sharpen your natural sensitivity that you were born with, exercises to teach you how to move in a coordinated manner with your body. And then kind of through contact flow as we call the exercise, or combat flow allowing for some free play were you kind of mix it up with people in various speeds. What starts to happen is as long as you allow people that freedom and work those principles simultaneously people just start doing this stuff.

I mean we have students, it's crazy, I have students ... I do a workshop down in Philadelphia every couple weeks. The youngest people in the room are people my age, and I'm in my 50s now. And I have people who are in their 70s and 60s and it's crazy because they move like kids. And a lot of it is because they've learned how to move better in their bodies, and they're not trying to struggle through or muscle through it as we used to say in the Marine Corp, but they're actually moving in a more natural way. And that's the other thing we try to do, focus on natural movement because the more natural the movement the harder it is to deal with it. The more unnatural the movement the harder it is for you to make it work because you're doing something against the way your body is designed to work in the first place.

Jeff Anderson:

Yeah. You know it's a common question that we get about with people with limited mobility, in fact that's a great lead in for one of the next questions that I have for you actually. So listen everybody we've been talking with Lieutenant Colonel Al Ridenhour of guidedchaos.com about how to generate explosive combative strikes against the violent attacker in a real fight, and we have a lot more coming up for you, including my question on how to master combat mobility even if you can't touch your toes, or hell even if you can't see your toes. Specific Guided Chaos strategies that will make a larger attacker's size and strength their own downfall, and how to train realistically for the dynamics of a

real street fight, even if you've never been in a fight in your entire life. Now all that and more is coming right up, but first check out this special message.

Okay, we're back with Lieutenant Colonel Al Ridenhour of guidedchaos.com, talking about specific tactics that you can use to own the offense in a violent attack, and generate explosive combative strikes that will end any fight in seconds. I've got a lot more to get into so let's go ahead and jump back into our interview now.

Now, Al one of the things that you claim is that this system works well for smaller people, women, older people, but somebody watching your videos ... and I highly recommend everyone just go over to your website at guidedchaos.com, listen everybody, and check out some of the videos that are there because you can see how unique and different this type of fighting system is, but honestly with an honest evaluation looking at those videos it might be very off putting to somebody who maybe does have a limited mobility. Because Al, you're in a lot of those videos and you are soldier, commander, combat veteran, and you're in great shape, and you look young. You're probably not as young. I think you and I are probably around the same age, but nonetheless getting older, limited mobility is a big thing that we all deal with, especially people that are listening out here in our audience.

And so, it's kind of like it might be, well there's no way that I can do this because some of the videos that you show do involve a lot of movement, a lot of athleticism. And so, with a system that really gears itself toward helping the smaller person be able to fight in the dynamics of a real street fight, what can someone with limited mobility or maybe they're larger, maybe they're overweight, maybe they're older, what can they take away from the Guided Chaos fighting system that will help them to unleash Guided Chaos on an attacker?

Al Ridenhour:

Okay, 'cause that's a loaded question but it's one that I always get because like you said, we make in some cases people think outlandish claims. You know one of the things that we're working on is yes I'm in a lot of the videos, and unfortunately because people see me in a lot of the videos, and they see some of the other masters in the videos it may be like you said off putting because of the fact that a person may look at myself and Master Watson fighting and like, "There's no way I can move like ... look at these guys, they're in great shape, they got size, they're athletic, etc, etc." But the reality is we're actually able to move that fast and under a control because of the principles.

So, I'll look at it like this, if you're a smaller person or if you feel that maybe you're not as athletic as you used to be, because we're all getting older. I played football from when I was eight years old through college and then you know 28 years in the Marine Corp, so my knees aren't what they used to be. But what I can tell people is that because we train you to only do what you can do within your body, what starts to happen is you start developing techniques and strategies if you will to not ever get yourself in a situation where for example,

we've had people who've had bad knees, bad legs, whatever the case may be from previous injuries. You may have a bad leg but if a person say has a gun for example, I'm in the same boat you're in 'cause I'm not out running the bullet either. So, let's take that off the table. Okay, so what if I'm in the middle of a fight and I injure my leg? It could happen. Well, I still gotta fight. Just because you have a bad leg, they still gotta get close to you if they're going to do something to you. So, you need to have the ability to be able to negate whatever they're going to do, but you gotta do it within your own body.

We train people in the concept that we call your sphere of influence. So, your sphere of influence is as far as you can strike with your hands and your feet in any direction. And so, what happens is through the principles you start learning to hit with power in almost any direction. The other thing that we also teach is a thing we call drop striking or we sometimes refer to it as the Dempsey Strike, after the legendary boxer Jack Dempsey. And what we found is when people gain their balance and learn how to drop strike they can hit with power whether the persons behind them, whether the persons in front of them, whether the persons to the side of them. And they start realizing that if a person is trying to get around me but I know how to kick well from behind, he's still on the outside of my circle, he can't move fast enough before I can hit him. If a person is trying to run around me and I'm throwing a chop to the side or behind me as long as I can rotate my body well enough within the natural range of motion they cannot move fast enough to what I'm doing because they're on the outer part of that circle.

Jeff Anderson:

Yeah, the other thing I'll say just from going through your system some is that you have very simple movements. So, one, you focus in on natural movements of the body, so, it's nothing weird or complicated that they have to master, they're natural movements. But the exercises that you put them through, I liken it to kind of like the Karate Kid, the wax on wax off. You have these exercises that people do that are simple, natural movements, anybody can do them of any age, they're easy even for people with limited mobility. Those form the principles that when you apply that in the dynamics of a real fight you basically don't realize you're mastering this ability to maintain better balance, have more power in your strikes, and things like that. And so, that's something that people they need to experience your system and just see how simple it is in that basic framework to be able to move up to master this.

Now, on the same note Al it's obviously more of a challenge for smaller people when they're going up against a larger stronger attacker. And most people when they think about facing a larger attacker they think, "There's no way my strikes are going to anything, they're just going to bounce off of this person." But the Guided Chaos system really does focus in on delivering explosive penetrating power into strikes even if you're up against somebody bigger and stronger. So, if you can what tips do you have for delivering power for somebody that is facing somebody who's twice their size and strength?

Al Ridenhour:

Sure. Again, we have a few students who are much bigger than I believe it or not. And so, I'm at the same disadvantage as anyone else with somebody who's bigger and stronger. Our advice always is to go after the more vulnerable areas if possible. Go in for the throat, go in for the eyes, go in for the neck, go in for the side of the head just below the ear and max flow for the head, go in for the temple. Really trying to focus on hitting kind of those target areas.

Anybody who's done martial arts they kind of know the target areas, striking with the palm strike underneath the chin, chopping to the throat, those type of things that of that nature and really concentrating on getting good at hitting those areas. As far as the body's concerned sure you know the groin strike it's a great strike if the guys not already pissed off at you, but as you know and I know almost any man has like a sixth sense to protect their balls, that's just the way it is. You only need to get hit there once where you say, "Okay, that's not going to happen again." But also, going for the knees if you've got a kick, keeping all your kicks low. We usually kick from the waist down, try to aim more for the knees, more for the shins, things of that nature, on the insides of the legs if possible. And then of course in the torso, aiming for the solar plexus, aiming for the floating ribs where a lot of the organs are, things of that nature. But also you want to strike for effect. So, it's not enough to just hit people hard.

Most people when they throw punch or a strike they're trying to swing with all their might, and that's fine, you want to do that. But most people throw strikes, it's kind of like a fire and forget weapon, it's kind of like the bullets out of the gun wherever it's going to go is the last place wherever you pointed it. You want to think of your arms also like the guided missile, but also when you strike you want to strike for feel. So, the good thing about the human body is the tissue is actually different in different spots in the body. So this is where the contact flow exercise is so crucial, because we do hit each other. Now we're not hitting full toke because you start hitting people in the throat full toke you're not going to have the school. That's just stupid, but we get used to touching people in places that people really cannot afford to even get hit in, and you start learning believe it or not how to strike the tissue different ways simply because it feels different.

Jeff Anderson:

Yeah. You mentioned a little bit about Dempsey and how he was able to deliver a great amount of power in a very short distance, and I know that turned into in your system the drop step. Can you explain a little bit about how that generates explosive power for somebody especially if they're smaller up against somebody that's a larger attacker?

Al Ridenhour:

Sure. So, what Dempsey found when he used to do what we later referred to as the Dempsey Drop, he just called it a drop step. He found that as he stepped forward to throw his jab if he dropped his weight into a ... here's the key 'cause most people mess this up. When he dropped his weight into a strike he dropped his weight straight down, he didn't extend his arm out of sink with what his body was doing, and he wasn't just lunging forward as a lot of people who try to copy the movement that we teach, instead of just asking us how we do it as we teach them. And so, what he found was he got a lot of power out of that. Well,

over time later on in like the 1950s he wrote a book called Championship Boxing and kind of the subtitle was Great Punchers are Made Not Born. And so, one of the things he found with the drop strike is when you drop your weight because of inertia the ground pushes back with equal force.

Now back in the 50s they didn't have the science that we have today, but what happens is there's this plyometric type of effect that takes place where there's a deceleration and there's an acceleration in the muscles, that as the body attempts to stabilize itself from all that force from the drop, as the ground pushes back with equal force. And if you time it right you can actually channel a lot of that force, so when you're throwing the punch it's really about the timing of channeling that energy, or that wave of energy as some people would put it, coming back up from the ground as you strike people. And so, it creates the illusion as if you're only moving maybe a few inches, but you're penetrating with tremendous force.

If you watch a good boxer and you watch him throw a jab, because there are some people that say, "Well you know you want to lead with your jab but your power punches you know, your backhand." But you and I have seen guys knock people unconscious with jabs, and that's because when a guys throwing a jab if he's throwing it right he's actually dropping into it a little bit. And so, there's tremendous force but to your eye it doesn't look like there's a lot of force. So, this mystical thing that everybody talks about martial arts chi [inaudible 00:26:32] and all this stuff, there's really a scientific basis in terms of physics behind it. It's not the mystical touch or the death touch or Kill Bill, the five finger death touch, or whatever they called it. It's a matter of me timing the strike at the right moment as I'm dropping my weight suddenly, catching the plyometric affect of the ground pushing back with equal force, and timing it right so that the energy travels through and I hit the person at the right moment, so that when you do hit with the fist, or with the palm strike, or whatever you're going to hit with it's almost like you're hitting people with like a sledge hammer or like an anvil.

Jeff Anderson: You know Al, this is such a unique fighting system. It helps to give people some sort of like a sense of early accomplishment, like they know that this is something that can actually work for them. Now one of the things is that on your website you do have a free DVD that you send out to people that does talk more about the system, why it works so well, how anybody can use this to defend themselves in a violent street attack. But is there anything that you can do right now, something that you can offer people maybe in a training exercise, or a drill, or some sort of technique that will help people to understand how the dynamics of Guided Chaos can really help them defend themselves? Is there anything that they can do right now?

Al Ridenhour: Yeah, well what I'll offer is, I mean they can go on the website, sign up for membership, and what happens is they'll get the half hour DVD, actually it's a download. They can download that where actually we're teaching 10 different things that we teach. The most important thing obviously we talk about is

developing their balance of course, but one of the things I always recommend to people is learning how to strike with their body in sync with what they're doing with their hands. And one way they can do it is the opposite of what everybody thinks, and that is a thing that we call slow striking.

So for example, say you're doing chops, or you're doing palm strikes, or you're doing punches, whatever you're doing, or kicks, and what you want to do is you want to throw the strikes as smooth as possible not extending the arm all the way just like you're taught, no more than 90%. And as you're moving in any direction you want to try to move at first at the same speed. So, what happens in the beginning is you're going to start feeling jerkiness, and that's okay. That's basically your body it's developed a certain neuro pathway development that's basically your body kind of struggling to kind of fill in the gaps so to speak. But what happens is you start practicing slow whether it's chops, whether it's punches, whatever the case may be, but you move consistently you don't stop moving, you don't stop and try to figure everything out. You just keep doing it, and doing it, and doing it, trying not to lean. Don't even worry about hitting anything, just keep moving like that.

Then you start stepping in different directions doing the same strikes, turning your body, hitting in different directions, and only moving within the natural range of motion what you can do. We like to call this strike school, this teaching people how to move and strike. What starts to happen is the more you do that the easier it gets, and all of a sudden believe it or not your body just starts creating stuff. And that's why I tell people to be creative with it, roll the hands forward like a speed bag, roll them backward like a speed bag. Chop one direction, strike in another. Punch in one direction, chop in another. Then start doing strikes where you're chopping and striking in different directions simultaneously with both hands. What you're doing now is all the strikes that you already know how to do if you do martial arts you're now starting to train yourself to throw those strikes in any possible position.

Jeff Anderson:

Yeah I love it, and this makes total sense as an alternative from maybe a more traditional martial arts technique, where they're trying to teach people multiple different types of strikes where it's like, "Okay, the next sequence we're going to do is jab, cross, elbow, roundhouse," or something along those lines where you're learning these sequences. But what I like about what you're saying I can almost imagine a Bob training dummy or a heavy bag there, and just simply using whatever strikes seems to be natural to be able to throw from whatever position that you're in, doing it slowly really helps you to kind of all the things that you talked about today with movement, and balance, and strike selection, and generating power. That slow movement and being able to move around a bag or a Bob training dummy, understanding your space in relation to them. Just that slow movement is really helpful. Whether or not you know a whole arsenal of strikes or not I love it, it's a great drill that anybody can do that does help to simulate master your own bodies movement in relation to somebody in the dynamics of a real street fight, so that's awesome.

Listen everybody, as you can tell this is a unique fighting system out there. I hope we've generated enough interest here. I definitely want you to go over and check out the website over at www.guidedchaos.com. You can go ahead and get a free video download there that shows this stuff more. And even if it's just to kind of get more of the dynamics of the movement for whatever you're going to add to your own personal defense system, start there. Go ahead and get signed up, go ahead and grab that video, see how you can apply it to your own personal plan. And I think you're really going to love what you see over there, so go check it out over at www.guidedchaos.com. And until our next Modern Combat Survival broadcast this is Jeff Anderson saying prepare, train, and survive.