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WORKBOOK

# RICKSON GRACIE

SELF.DEFENSE.UNIT

MODULE 5

 WAR TRIBE



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## 1. TECHNIQUES

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### 1. CHEST PUSH DEFENSE

#### TECHNIQUE:

First we'll look at a technique that isn't in Master Helio Gracie's book but is important to know from a self-defense perspective.

When I'm someplace and someone approaches aggressively, it's important for me not to have my arms beside my body, for I'd be unable to defend against a headbutt, slap or punch. It's key to raise my hands in front of me, as if gesticulating, in a comfortable, safe position. It's important not to convey aggressiveness -- closing your fists like in a boxer's posture, for example.

The invisible effectiveness details of this defensive posture lie in the weight distribution. If the aggressor walks up and pushes me, and my weight is distributed over my feet equally, I won't be able to block his motion and I'll lose my balance. But if I transfer my weight to my toes, I'm now in a position to use my weight effectively to block. It's not about being on the tips of my toes, but rather distributing my weight forward, creating the necessary leverage to block the motion. The way of placing the hands on the aggressor's chest is important to have blocking effectiveness in the event of a punch or slap. The fingers must be turned inward, so as to enable the use of the elbows to deflect punches or slaps, and the weight always projected forward.

Equally, kicks can be defended against with deflecting moves by the legs and hips. The practice of these moves must evolve from the understanding of the weight distribution, from the connection with the hands on the chest, to the alternatives of moving to a body-lock takedown or back-take.



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## 2. WRIST GRIPS

### TECHNIQUE:

A lighter or weaker person can have a lot of trouble getting rid of a wrist grip by someone stronger or heavier.

You must always look for the weak point of the grip to execute the escape motion. The weak point of a grip is always the thumb, not the four other fingers.

When the grip is made with both hands, you use the support of the second hand holding the closed fist and making the motion in the direction of the thumbs. It's important to make a good base to effectively perform the escape.



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### **3. CHOKE AND ARMLOCK FROM THE MOUNT, SIDWAYS**

#### **TECHNIQUE**

When the opponent gets mounted on and turns sideways, it's much better to distribute your weight, raising one leg and kneeling with the other close to the back and head, keeping your weight on top of the person.

Thus, base management is better, and if your opponent continues to turn, they'll be offering a back-take. If they stay sideways, the best option is to hold the arm, put the other hand on the ground, touching their face, to control the head and fall to perform the armlock. This attack's invisible effectiveness aspect is when you have control over the opponent, so they don't escape at that moment. And the key detail is having the knee glued to the head, the hand in front of the face, and the weight placed on this hand, so as not to leave space for them to move and turn their head.

Recapping: When my opponent turns sideways, I raise my leg and step



as close to the belly as possible, I slide the other knee until gluing it to the back of the head. If -- through knowledge or luck -- my opponent protects their arm, I immediately grab the collar and hand it to the other hand that's coming behind the head, very tightly.

The detail that adds effectiveness to the choke is the collar grip, which must be done with the ring and pinky fingers slightly loose in order for the middle and index to consolidate the grip, enabling the torsion motion with the wrist, which is much more effective for choking. This torque motion allows for the wrist motion to connect to the back and hips, making the choke much tighter and more powerful. The second hand can grab the other lapel, the fabric on the shoulder or any other place in the area, because it will be pushing while the first hand makes the torsion motion of the wrist. These motions of pulling and twisting with one hand and pushing with the other must be totally connected to my body -- arms, back and hips.



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#### 4. NECK CRANK FROM THE MOUNT

##### TECHNIQUE:

When you reach the mount and your opponent protects their arms competently, one attacking option is the neck crank. For this, you stretch one leg, which has to be over the arm so as to lock it, and you hold from behind at the top of the head with both hands, pulling it toward yourself in order to pressure the spine. The biggest concern when applying this finish is with your training partner's health. Because this is a lock that applies pressure on the spine, the consequences can be severe, including quadriplegia. So it's better not to attempt this finish in free rolls, but instead to practice it in an extremely careful, controlled way with your partner, only to get the hang of the proper weight distribution and control, without using force when holding and pulling the head.



## 5. NUTCRACKER CHOKE

### TECHNIQUE:

In some situations on the mount, it's possible to use this technique to open up other opportunities of attack, or even finish. By propping your elbows on the ground next to the head and holding with both hands the collar so that the bigger joints laterally press the neck as you simultaneously turn both wrists, you obtain a very effective, painful lever that can force the tap-out. If their reaction is to push to relieve the pressure, an opportunity arises for armbars and americanas.

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## 6. TOE HOLD

### TECHNIQUE:

One foot lock option consists of holding over the toes with one hand while the other passes under the ankle area and holds one's own wrist, in a similar grip to the americana's. When the opponent tries to restore the guard by placing the knee and shin at belly level, advance with your hip to block the movement, hold the foot with one hand and, with the other, go under the ankle area and grab your wrist. Keep your elbows glued to your body to obtain a solid connection. This way, even if your opponent stretches their leg, the lock will remain effective.



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## 7. KIMURA FROM THE NORTH-SOUTH

### TECHNIQUE:

This technique can also be started from side control. When your opponent doesn't protect their arm, it's possible to lasso it and grab your own lapel with the arm that is next to the head. Pull the elbow in the direction of your body to adjust the grip and the control. The free hand gets propped on the ground next to the opponent's hip to maintain the balance and stop them from turning, following the motion of going into the north-south position. If the opponent blocks you from going to the head with the free arm, you raise the hip to get past the block. When you reach the north-south, post one foot next to the lassoed arm at an angle that allows you to push with your chest and use your body weight to turn them sideways and then get on your knees with your opponent's head between your legs. Hold their wrist with your free hand and, with the hand that lassoed the arm, hold your wrist, making the kimura grip. Pull up the wrist and the controlled arm and bring them back and down, applying the lock. Sometimes your opponent will hold their belt or gi, blocking the upward pull. In this situation, pull the controlled arm to the side, moving the hand away. Raise and bring it backward and down.

**Obs.:** Once you're kneeling with the kimura grip controlling the arm, it's important to have well-made base and weight distribution to be able to work on releasing the grip and bring the controlled arm to the position of the lock.



## 8. SPIN ARMBAR FROM SIDE CONTROL

### TECHNIQUE:

From side control, when the opponent makes a mistake and allows the arm lasso, lasso it grabbing your collar to post the other free hand and control the opponent's body movement. If, as you move towards the north-south position, your opponent blocks with the free arm, then move your hip so as to be able to raise the leg and get past the block. When you reach the head, prop your foot so as to use the strength of the leg, the connection of the chest with the lassoed arm and the weight of your body to turn the opponent sideways. If there is an opportunity, go for the kimura, but if the opponent stretches their arm and keeps it next to your head, the option is to go for the armbar. Raise the leg on the opposite side of the lassoing arm, the other knee glued to the opponent's back and hip; lie down keeping the knees as close as possible to each other and controlling the arm, always keeping the opponent's thumb pointing up. It's important, as you're lying down, to keep 90-degree angle in relation to the opponent's body to avoid the escape that is possible if the lying down is done at an angle where the body falls more to the side of the head.

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## 9. PAPER CUTTER

### TECHNIQUE:

When you go from side control to the north-south, sometimes your opponent hugs your back, creating a chance for this choke. In this situation, pass one hand through their armpit with the palm up and grab the collar at the nape of the neck, with the four fingers. Return to side control keeping the grip on the collar, so as to lock the opponent's arm. Bring the elbow of the free arm very close to the ribs; make the grip with the thumb inward on the other collar, and squeeze. There are some options for reaching the choke, depending on the way the opponent reacts to defend against the second collar grab. If they try to defend by placing the hand on the inside to block, I'll keep the pressure and make an underhook motion to recover the grip. If they grab the hand right away, then control the opponent's hand with the chin, pull the hand and make the second grip. If they raise their head and glue the face to block the second grip, use the forearm to lower the head and achieve the grip. Establishing the second grip, bring the elbow toward the ground without landing and making a circular motion parallel to the ground to squeeze the choke.

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## 10. GUILLOTINE FROM SIDE MOUNT

### TECHNIQUE:

The guillotine from side control is a simple, but very effective, choke. When you're in side control, sometimes the opponent gets slightly sideways and raises their head. The first move is to prepare the collar on the side of the arm opposite the head, to lasso behind the head with the other arm and grab the collar, obtaining a strong grip for the squeeze. Move your hip and mount. This move must be made with the correct weight distribution, spreading it over the opponent's chest to avoid being pushed and losing the position as you move back. Use the forward hip motion to squeeze, keeping the grip tight with pressure and the correct weight distribution.





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## 11. MOUNT ESCAPE, FEET UNDER THE ARMPIT

### TECHNIQUE:

To escape a mount, there are the options of the upa and the elbow escape. When the opponent is heavy or places themselves very high on the mount, you have the option to grab the armpits and push, simultaneously performing a quick upa. Keep your arms stretched so as to block the mount recovery and then take your feet to the armpits. Push more with one foot, so that the roll is performed over the shoulder -- not the neck.



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## 12. SIDE HEADLOCK ESCAPE, ARM TRAPPED

### TECHNIQUE

Unlike a simple headlock, in this position the opponent controls the arm and head, making escaping harder. To prepare the escape, swing your legs, pushing the opponent's back with your shoulder so that they react and move their weight in the direction where the projection for the escape will be made. Then make a grip on your own hand, raise your hip to project the opponent's head toward the ground, and perform the projection. The projection preparation, with the swinging of the legs (which remain connected to the ground), the connection of the shoulder to the back to provoke the opponent's reaction in the direction of the projection, are the details that render the escape effective.





### **13. REAR KNIFE DEFENSE, CHEST THRUST**

#### **TECHNIQUE:**

In this position, the first move is to hold the wrist with the hand opposite the aggressor so as to block the motion of the knife, forming a lever with the arm. Grab the hand of the aggressor that is holding the knife with your other hand, and shoulder-escape, taking one step back to execute the torsion of the wrist that holds the knife.

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## 14. REAR KNIFE DEFENSE, THROAT THRUST

### TECHNIQUE:

You cannot afford to make a mistake in this position. The hand on the same side as the aggressor holds the knife make a grab over this hand, gluing the elbow to the body to obtain maximum firmness and leverage. The other hand also grabs over the first, equally gluing the elbow to the body. Keep your base and take one step back to the side of the aggressor's knife-holding hand, performing the wrist torsion.

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## 15. KNIFE DEFENSE, BACK HAND

### TECNIQUE

The first move in this defense is one of blocking the forearm, with one step forward on the side of the block. The other hand holds under the elbow and performs a sudden upward movement at the same time the blocking hand grabs the wrist and performs a sudden downward movement. One light step to connect the chest to the aggressor's elbow, and then perform the torsion.

When the aggressor is very strong, they may stretch the arm and avoid the torsion of elbow and shoulder. Move the hand that holds the elbow to the aggressor's hand, forming a "champagne glass" grip and taking one step facing away from the aggressor with the hand controlled above the head, and another step to complete the torsion, with the aggressor's knife-holding hand well under control by the two-hand grip.

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## 16. HIDDEN KNIFE DEFENSE

### TECHNIQUE:

To defend against a knife attack, the first detail is to observe which hand holds the knife and how the aggressor holds it. The reading of these details is fundamental and necessary to the defense. Because of this, a more experienced aggressor may hide the knife behind their body with both hands, in order to pick which hand they'll use at the last second and surprise the victim. When this happens, use the foot and hit their stomach in a stomping motion, keeping the distance and base to avoid the aggressor reaching the necessary distance to employ a deadly blow.

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## 17. GUN DEFENSE, POINTED AT FACE

### TECHNIQUE:

In this situation, where the aggressor maintains the gun pointed at your face, the most important thing is the coordination between the hand that will grab the gun and the head, which will leave the line of fire. Both motions have to be precisely simultaneous, with the head getting out from in front of the gun at the same time you grab the wrist that holds the gun. Once the wrist is grabbed, grab the gun with the other hand to take one step to connect to the aggressor, switching the grip on the wrist, passing the arm behind, placing the bicep behind the elbow, bringing this hand again to the hand that holds the gun, which must be twisted by the hand that kept it held. Hold the hand over the knuckles and apply a wrist fold, disarming the aggressor. When the aggressor is very strong and resists, hit them with your knee to achieve this.

**Obs.:** An extremely important detail: You must observe which hand holds the butt of the gun. If the defense is performed on the side of the hand that simply supports the hand that effectively holds the butt, that defense will be ineffective.

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## 18. STRIKING AGAINST A WALL

### TECHNIQUE:

It's important to acquire knowledge about the distance a striker needs in order to connect their blows, and thus develop the ability to clinch without getting hit. It's interesting to practice this against a wall, so there isn't the possibility of retreating, and thus perfect the ability to block and deflect. As you use the forearms to block or deflect punches and slaps, keep your weight distribution in such a way as to obtain a good connection with the aggressor and the necessary leverage for maintaining your balance that enables the transition into the clinch. The same applies to deflecting kicks, which you do by moving your hip to defend against the impact and keep your posture to reach the clinch.

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## 19. FRONT KICK AGAINST A WALL

### TECHNIQUE:

The first important detail is base maintenance. The deflecting must be done by moving the hip and moving only one foot, using the hand to deflect the kick and keeping your weight centralized, to be in a condition to return with force as you strike with your elbow. This movement of hip and body must be practiced and perfected, because it allows you deflect the kick and prepares the elbow strike.

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## 20. TWO-HAND CHOKE AGAINST A WALL

### TECHNIQUE:

The first important detail is the tucking of the chin to protect the neck. Gluing the chin and using the muscles of your shoulder and trapezius already creates the conditions of resistance to the aggression. Bring both hands over the aggressor's to feel which finger is most exposed. Grab this finger and hold the wrist with the other hand, which must lock the grip, gluing the forearm to the chest to consolidate the connection. Hold the finger firmly and apply torsion.

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## 21. ONE-HAND CHOKE AGAINST A WALL

### TECHNIQUE:

Like in every defense against a headlock, the first action is to tuck your chin and protect the neck, always using the muscles of the shoulder and trapezius. Hit the wrist on the side of the thumb and return spinning the torso to execute an elbow strike. It's important to make the motion of spinning the torso that disarms the choke and return with the elbow strike in base, using your body weight to obtain maximum impact.

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## 22. PUSH AGAINST A WALL

### TECHNIQUE:

When pressure against the wall is applied with both hands on the chest or shoulders, and the aggressor is strong and heavy, there's no way to take them down or escape by exerting opposing pressure. The move here must be one of deflection. Therefore, you must take small steps to the side, sliding the back on the wall. When you have opened enough space, controlling the aggressor's elbows with your hands, spin with the shoulder leaving the wall and projecting the aggressor in the direction of the wall, applying a knee strike to the stomach in the continuation.

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## 23. HEADLOCK AGAINST A WALL

### TECHNIQUE:

In a headlock against a wall, protect your neck with the muscles of the shoulder and trapezius, like in every defense against a headlock. Pass the leg that is far from the wall over the aggressor's leg at the hip, making a hook. To perform the move that takes the aggressor down, use the hip and the support of the elbow propped against the wall to transfer your weight over their hip. As you take them down, remove the hook-making leg and maintain your balance over the aggressor, using the arms as a frame to make the aggressor release the headlock, and apply an armbar.

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## 24. HEADLOCK WITH AGGRESSOR ON THE WALL

### TECHNIQUE:

When the aggressor applies the headlock and props themselves against the wall, protect your neck and get in base. Hold their leg with both hands, bringing your elbows to your body and pulling the leg with the hip motion. It's important to note that it's not a motion for raising the leg, but rather for pulling with the backward hip movement, with arms well connected to the body. Once on the ground, use the arms in a frame to undo the headlock and apply the armbar.

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## 25. TEACHING SKILLS

Now that you saw all the movements in the curriculum, I'd also like to put a little food for thought in your mind, because as you progress in the teaching skills, it's important to understand that every movement has a scale. And as you teach something, you cannot expect the student to be responsive and reflexive, and strong enough to do with pressure. So, it's important, for every movement, that you make it easy at the beginning, you make the guy understand the mechanics, and as he starts to become more comfortable, you start to add a little more pressure.

Without the pressure, he's never gonna be defending himself for real. Without the softness to get the details, he will never really capture the angles, what he needs to build on.

So, for example, let's suppose a simple punch attack. First important thing is to create the knowledge that he has to respond.

So, be comfortable not only in the arm movement, but also the base. So, until he has a good block, a good base, I build that up to get that point.

Once he gets here, I'm going to softly show him how to throw.

Until he's able to do this under pressure, I will softly drive him to get



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there. Check his base, check his balance.

Another important thing here is to start with a half-throw. So, for a while, for the first or second day, he starts to just understand how to lift. But at one point, a good instructor has to be falling easy.

It's important, in the practice, not only for the student to finish the throw, but for the instructor to fall.

And if the instructor does not have the knowledge to protect themselves, they can get hurt. For example, in any throw I hold anywhere over the student gi, so when they perform the throw, raise and project me, I'm grabbing somewhere, making them to have a good base and protecting myself so I can fall many times without getting hurt.

This forces him to have a good base, and helps me to fall 100 times and not get hurt. Because if I let go, boom. If I fall like this every time, I'm not gonna be happy at the end of the day with so many falls on my back.

So, it's important for the student not only to learn how to throw, but also the instructor understand how to fall.

And this must all be built, because the beginning is the correct way of falling, using the floor slap to deflect the energy.

And then, when he goes and throw me, I will have a little support. So, I have to feel comfortable to do this 100 times.

So, those are some skills you have to develop to the point you're gonna go, you're gonna check his balance, make him connect here, and then when



he goes, you're gonna make some resistance, and make him do exactly what he's supposed to do.

So, adding stress is very important. But guiding the process of learning to the point of it getting harder, but still easy to understand -- getting harder but is easy to execute.

That's the goal for the instructor. Just follow a pattern of increasing stress.

So, for the first day or second day, or first week or second week, I'm not here too much; I just want to make him feel comfortable -- put the chin in, use the frame, and put the leg over.

Eventually, when he thinks he knows already, I will put some more stress, which is gonna force him to use the shoulder better.

So now, he's able to do the same movement under more stress. To the point when I come in, if I know he knows better, I'm sure he's ready.

So, again, the smoothness of the techniques has to be preserved, but the addition of stress has to be imposed.

So it's a fine line between training where your techniques get challenged and honed, and training where you start forgetting the techniques, and get crazy, and start just being too intense and blow up your ears, and it starts to become tough.

It's very important to be tough, but make sure you follow the perfect techniques. ■

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