

Metadata: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e\\_ffCW4joaU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_ffCW4joaU)

My approach is both based around a group of fairly simple sentiments. One is the first that a coach has to be there for a reason. That reason is simplicity in itself. A coach's primary function is to improve his student's athletic performance. If I can't pass that simple test, then I'm not worthy of being called a coach. There should be noticeable improvements on the part of a student in live training and competition if I'm around them. If I'm not there, then they should see a falling off in their progress. Progress comes in degrees. I'm happy to say that in some cases I've been successful in taking people to a fairly high level in a fairly short time. The progress of my students is an indicator to me as a coach how I'm doing. What's my scorecard in terms of my input in the structure of the room that I'm coaching. I constantly monitor my students day by day, their progress. Over the years I've been able to see certain ways of coaching which gave better results and others which not so much. Over time I was able to refine my coaching method where I could closely monitor how much progress people were making and how much time against what kind of competition. Through simple trial and error, success and failure, I was able to come to a fairly solid method. I think everyone brings a motivation with them. When you think about it, it's a strange thing that would draw anyone to come in to train at all. I often say when someone comes in, they have to have a certain amount of madness just to enter the doors of the academy. There has to be some demons inside. Everyone carries their own very personal demons within them. But those demons bring them in the door. But it takes even bigger demons to keep them inside the door for long periods of time. No one's going to get a black belt in this sport without some physical suffering and some aches and pains to tell their grandchildren about. In my case, I came from a fairly normal middle class family in New Zealand. I can't give a story like Nick Diaz. I came from some kind of tortured youth which drove me to fighting or something like that. But everyone I think has some kind of competitive desire within them however much they keep it down or restrain it. Those who have perhaps a little bit more, I think are attracted by the idea of a sport where it's such an honest and open form of competition. Your whole body, spirit and mind against another person's where there's a clear and definitive winner. Where one person wins and one person surrenders. There's something attractive about that. We all come from a Darwinian competitive background. That's our physical, biological history. I see the world in terms of Darwinian structure. And this is like a perfect Darwinian game. You have a large gene pool of people who come in on their first day of training. And ten years later, that pool has shrunk to the most competitive, most wily, most adapted and evolved of the people in that room. Some would say the most insane. Who knows? But I love that Darwinism. My whole world view is essentially Darwinistic. And there's no more pure sense of Darwinism than human combat. What I like about Jiu-Jitsu is that unlike other forms of combat, whether it be warfare or crime or something, there's no negative side to it. No one gets seriously hurt. No one's positions get stolen. No one's lives get ruined or ended. It's combat with benefits as opposed to most forms of combat where its combat leads to tragedy or loss. There's no serious loss. The only thing that gets hurt or bruised is your ego. That sense of perfect competition without dangerous ramifications is what attracts someone into the doors of Jiu-Jitsu, I believe. There's a sense in which it depends who I'm explaining it to. If I'm explaining it at a social setting to a friend, a friend of a friend, then I might just give them something that they're familiar with. I might say, well, picture the Olympic sport of Judo. You've seen the Olympic Games. Well, it's similar to Judo, but more of an emphasis on wrestling on the ground. Or I might, if they have no idea what Judo is, they come from a country where there's no Judo, I might say wrestling. If I'm in the Midwest of the United States, it's like wrestling with a uniform on. Instead of pinning them, you put them in something called a submission hold. I think the idea is to point out what is the essential characteristic of Jiu-Jitsu. The essential characteristic of Jiu-Jitsu is very simple. It's the science and art of control that leads to submission. What more complete victory can there be than your opponent surrendering, putting out a white flag? If we're involved in a sport of

wrestling and I pin you for three seconds on the ground, does that result who's the better fighter between you and I? No. You could always say, listen, you pinned my shoulders down for three seconds. A few more seconds, I would have got out and kicked your ass. If I throw you flat on your back, does that result a question of who's the better fighter? Well, on concrete, maybe. Maybe I would have gotten up, resumed the fight, and defeated you. Many people have been thrown, gotten up, and gone on to win the fight. But when you surrender, there's no ambiguity. You gave up. We can both agree about that. It's the most perfect form of victory. It's the most complete and the most uncontested. And I think everyone has that sense. And so I always try to explain Jiu-Jitsu in terms of the notion of submission. We're going to compete against each other within the realm of wrestling or grappling techniques. Until one of us quits. That's something that even the most naive person can understand. And that's always how I try to explain it. You're asking an interesting question here, which is the question of how is Jiu-Jitsu useful outside of the wrestling world? How is Jiu-Jitsu useful outside of the wrestling world? For an individual, the greatest gift that I think they get from Jiu-Jitsu is the idea of solving problems under stress. Every second of every match you're ever involved in in Jiu-Jitsu is an attempt to solve the problem that my opponent is presenting to me. But it's a problem unlike any other. If I give you a simple mathematics problem, 742 divided by 13, it's a static problem. I give you pen and paper, you go through the various steps, and you come up to an answer. But in Jiu-Jitsu, the problems aren't static. They're dynamic. Worse than that, not only they're dynamic, I'm dealing with a cognizant, thinking opponent, which is trying to defeat everything I'm trying to do to them. So with each second, the problem changes. As I try to give a solution to problem A, my opponent is already switching to problem B, and then C, D, all the way through. So I have to be able to follow their problems. Not only am I asked to solve problems, but I have to solve them at a faster rate than my opponent is solving my problems. And in this sense, it's one of the trickiest problems you'll ever come across. That's why it has such an ability to hold people and addict people. Because really, the problems never get solved. Your opponent keeps getting smarter day by day. And those same 10 people you train with most of the time, progress at roughly the same rate as you do. So you never get to beat them. Your progress never goes so much faster than theirs that you dominate them. You're both progressing together. It's not until you go back and roll with someone who's a complete beginner that you realize, Oh my God, I've made progress. I am getting better. Despite what I feel day by day in the training room where my opponents keep getting good at the same rate that I'm getting good. This ability to solve problems under stress is one of the most valuable things that I think that any human being can have. We live in a stressful world where usually most things are stacked against us. Just the simple act of getting to work some days can be tough. And your ability to maintain a calm, even mind and solve problems as they come flying at you with potentially bad consequences. That's a very, very useful attribute for any human being to have. Now that's as far as an individual goes. But let's ask a deeper question. How does jiu-jitsu benefit not just an individual but groups of individuals on a social level? I would love, for example, to see jiu-jitsu taught in high schools throughout the United States as a required physical activity. Why? Because I think not just jiu-jitsu but all of the martial arts, I'll say it again, all of the sporting martial arts have a very, very valuable social function. When you think about it, it's kind of crazy to think that we advocate a sport which is so tied in with violence. Violence is usually seen as a very negative thing. No one says, you know, no one proudly says, I condone violence. We look at it as some kind of crazy one. And yet jiu-jitsu is undoubtedly linked to violence. It's the art of strangling people and breaking people's limbs. It's a violent activity. We look down upon violence in every other sphere, whether it be crime or warfare or what have you. Anyone who says I'm anti-violence, most people would agree with me. I'm involved in a violent sport, strangulation, joint breaking, but I'm generally a pacifist. Let's go back to that idea of our Darwinian world. We live in a world where there is a massive population and a limited set of resources. And so the idea of competitive violence is inextricably woven into

human existence. You couldn't be a pacifist on this planet and expect to survive. Imagine an animal with completely pacifistic tendencies. It would be wiped out in the first generation. Lions, tigers, hyenas would eat it. It would be gone. The few pacifist societies that exist on Earth only exist because they were protected around the outside by more violent elements of that same society they were within. They couldn't have survived by themselves. And so a certain amount of violence is absolutely necessary to guarantee human existence. It's a competitive world. If you can't compete, you're not going to make it. But too much violence is itself destructive. Eternal warfare will wipe out a civilization just as surely as complete pacifism. And so humans have to strike a balance between their desire to avoid violence and their ability to engage in it. And the martial arts is the perfect example of finding a happy medium between the two. Yes, what we deal with is competition and violence. But it's put into an atmosphere where you can take away the negative elements of violence. There's no serious injuries. There's no death. There's no stealing of property. It's an honorable and safe form of violent activity. And so it raises a generation of people who are capable of defending themselves in a violent world, but will not promote violence. It sublimates the dangerous aspects of violence, criminal behavior, violent behavior, warfare, and makes them work within a peaceful social setting. And so good citizens can be great jiu-jitsu players. They could easily survive in a violent competitive atmosphere. They have the skills to do so. But they won't promote violence. That ability to find a happy medium between the need for strong competitive human beings and our desire to avoid unnecessary or harmful violence is the reason why I believe not just jiu-jitsu, but all of the sport and martial arts are an essential part of everyone's education. The more I see the younger generation learning it, the happier I am. They learn that they can't be completely pacifist, but on the other hand, they can't be completely violent. They have to find that happy medium between the two. And jiu-jitsu, wrestling, samba, even boxing, all of the various sporting martial arts teach that sense. They take a competitive, potentially violent setting, and take out the negative aspects of violence, and make it work within a social setting, in a social environment. That's the social value of the study of the sporting martial arts. By nature, I'm not a particular competitor. I've been talking all this about competition, yet I'm probably the least competitive person in the room. I would say what keeps me going in jiu-jitsu, despite the many physical problems that I have, one is a love of solving problems. As I said, this is the most complex problem in the world. You're dealing with dynamic problems. They're the most complex, the most frustrating, and those are the ones that are most likely to drive you crazy. And so my love of problem solving was definitely part of it. But as I got more and more involved in the sport, something else occurred too. I started to realize that my biggest joys in life came from not my own achievements at all, whatever small achievements I've made. Rather, my greatest joys came from helping other people make their achievements. If you ask me to list all of my greatest experiences in my life, all of them involve assisting someone else getting to a life goal. And so I made a commitment, not to myself in jiu-jitsu, but to the people I teach. And ultimately, what keeps me coming in, despite my many problems, is my pride and my love of watching my students succeed and do well. There's no joy like having a student come home with a trophy in his hand and having defeated one of the greatest fighters in the world. I'll give you a common-sense example. Yesterday, when you guys came in to film, shortly before you came in, Gary Tonin walked in. Just leg-locked the guy that many people believe was the most technical leg-locker in the world. And he didn't say a word. He just smiled, walked across the mat, and said, Thank you. And we didn't have to say a word. We just knelt down, and not a word was spoken. But that feeling of pride in his performance, pride in the progress that he's made in such a short time, was immeasurably greater than any pride I've felt for any achievement on my own that I've made in my life. That's just a common-sense example of why I stay in this sport. It's a magical feeling to help people to get to their goals. I would hate to say that judo was the only thing I can do. I don't like the idea of being bound to something. Ultimately, we're all human beings first.

And a human being can do many, many things besides jiu-jitsu. Jiu-jitsu is currently the main thing in my life. I unquestionably say that. But would I say that for the rest of my life, I'm guaranteed to only do jiu-jitsu? Absolutely not. I mean, who knows? Maybe five years from now, I could lose my interest, or some new interest should come along, and I would dive into that. So it's unlikely. I'll grant you that. But I would never say it's impossible. I would never say it's impossible.