

Metadata: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4Knsjl0nik>

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. 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. But everyone I think has some kind of competitive desire within them, however much they keep it down or restrain it. And 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 is a clear and definitive winner, where one person wins and one person surrenders, and there's something attractive about that. We all come from a Darwinian competitive background. That's our physical, biological history. 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. 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 possessions get stolen, no one's lives get ruined or ended. There's no serious loss here. The only thing that gets hurt or bruised is your ego. 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? 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 technique until one of us quits. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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 so it raises a generation of people who are capable of defending themselves in a violent world, but will not promote violence.