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## Facts and myths about violence and self-defense – What is actually “realistic” for violence prevention?

### Abstract

Medially influenced images of “typical” dangers and violent situations often result in false ideas of violence or threats from violence and corresponding prevention strategies. Even among experts there are partly differing views on self-defense and violence prevention. There is only a partial consensus on definitions of the mentioned phenomena and corresponding didactic concepts for self-defense or violence prevention programs. There are also research deficits in the relevant literature. In this article the results of a qualitative study are to be presented, in which subjective theories and professional knowledge of experts with regard to violence, violence prevention, self-defense and gender-sensitive didactic concepts of self-defense and violence prevention in school are researched. From a methodological point of view, guide interviews were evaluated with the qualitative content analysis according to Gläser, & Laudel (2009). Views of 12 interviewed experts of different concepts concerning self-defense, violence prevention, victim role, the ability to defend, danger locations, violent situations and existing wrong expectations about violence and self-defense are presented. Finally, based on the results of the study, a 3-level model for self-defense and prevention of violence in everyday life is developed, which complements and expands existing models.

**Keywords:** self-defense, violence prevention, gender-sensitivity, facts and myths of violence

### Zusammenfassung

Medial geprägte Bilder von „typischen“ Gefahrenorten und Gewaltsituationen bewirken in einer breiten Öffentlichkeit häufig falsche Vorstellungen von Gewaltereignissen bzw. Bedrohung durch Gewalt und entsprechenden Präventionsstrategien. Auch unter ausgewiesenen Expertinnen und Experten existieren teils unterschiedliche Sichtweisen über Selbstverteidigung und Gewaltprävention. Es herrscht nur zum Teil Konsens über Definitionen der genannten Phänomene und entsprechenden didaktischen Konzepten für Selbstverteidigungs- oder Gewaltpräventionsprogramme. Auch in der einschlägigen Literatur finden sich hierzu Forschungsdefizite. In diesem Beitrag sollen Ergebnisse einer qualitativen Studie vorgestellt werden, in der subjektive Theorien und Professionswissen von Expertinnen und Experten im Hinblick auf Gewalt, Gewaltprävention, Selbstverteidigung und geschlechtersensiblen, didaktischen Konzepten von Selbstverteidigung und Gewaltprävention erforscht werden. In forschungsmethodischer Hinsicht wurden Leitfadeninterviews durchgeführt und gemäß der qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse nach Gläser & Laudel (2009) ausgewertet. Es werden Sichtweisen von 12 befragten Expertinnen und Experten unterschiedlicher Konzepte bezüglich Selbstverteidigung, Gewaltprävention, Opferrolle, Wehrhaftigkeit, Gefahrenorten, Gewaltsituationen und in der Bevölkerung vorhandenen falschen Vorstellungen zu Gewalt und Selbstverteidigung dargestellt. Basierend auf den Ergebnissen der Studie wird abschließend ein 3 Ebenen-Modell für Selbstverteidigung und Gewaltprävention im Alltag entwickelt, das vorhandene Modelle ergänzt und erweitert.

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# 1 Subjective perception of violence versus facts of violence – Who are "typical" perpetrators and victims?

Medially shaped images of "typical" danger locations and situations of violence have an influence on the general public's opinion on violence and its prevention strategies. Reports of spectacular acts of violence often deceive people's minds and for many it seems as if murder, manslaughter and serious juvenile delinquency were much more common today than in the past (Heinz, 2010, p. 11). People largely fear unknown offenders. In fact, such acts of violence are rare. Statistics show that two-thirds of violence take place in the social neighborhood and only one-third of the violence is carried out by previously unknown persons (Kapella, Baierl, Rille-Pfeiffer, Geserik, & Schmidt, 2011, pp. 7). With regard to actual facts about violence, crime statistics provide only insufficient insight. Particularly in the case of violence in the social neighborhood, those affected hardly report this behavior and, therefore, police statistics have little significance concerning the true number of acts of violence (Heinz 2010, pp. 14). In Germany and Austria, it is assumed that in women's shelters at least every fourth to fifth woman in a relationship has experienced violence (Müller, & Schöttle, 2004, p. 10; quoted in Haller, 2010, p. 508). In about 80% of rapes, victims and perpetrators have known each other or lived in a relationship (Breiter, 1994, p. 20). Generally, women are much more likely to experience violence in all forms (psychological violence, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence). Men are primarily victims of violence in public places, but women in their own homes or in the homes of others (Kapella et al., 2011, p. 30). Every fourth to fifth girl and every seventh to eighth boy is sexually abused in his close social environment (ibid, pp. 8). Girls seem to be more likely to become victims in a family context, whereas boys are more likely to be affected in institutions (Vertommen et al., 2016; quoted in Arbeitsgruppe Maßnahmen gegen sexualisierte Gewalt im Sport, 2017, p. 12). At present, numerous campaigns are running in different states across Europe to raise awareness of sexualized violence in sports clubs. In an online survey of the German study "Safe Sport" (Rulofs, 2016, p. 8), for example, about one-third of all cadre athletes surveyed stated that they had already experienced sexualized violence in sport. Females are significantly more affected than males. Sexual harassment affects 75% of all women and 25% of all men in Austria (Kapella et al., 2011, p. 16).

Violence does not begin with massive physical attacks. Even soft touches, body language threats, verbal abuses or exclusion of single persons from the group can also be manifestations of violence. However, these are often just not perceived by people. Some bullying victims still suffer years later after mobbing experiences from their victim role. Statistical figures, however, show that this is not a marginal phenomenon: for example, 18% of boys and 9% of girls in Austria in the age of 15 report of at least two bullying experiences in school in the last two months (Strohmeier, Gradinger, Schabmann, & Spiel, 2012, p. 167).

## 2 Objectives of the empirical study and structure of the article

Taking the contradictory representation of violence in the public media and actual facts of violence into account, one question arises: How do different self-defense and violence prevention concepts respond to existing fears and the reality of violence in our society. The aim of the present study was to explore the different definitions and concepts of violence, violence prevention and self-defense among experts and how their ideas affect didactic concepts of self-defense and violence prevention. In this article, perspectives and ideas of experts on self-defense, typical risk locations and violent situations addressed in self-defense courses, the significance of victim roles and the ability to defend are discussed. Furthermore, misconceptions about violence and self-defense are examined. The concluding chapter contrasts existing definitions of self-defense as represented in literature with the subjective theories of interviewed experts. Based on this, an expanded model of self-defense will be developed as a means of preventing violence.

## 3 Research design, methods, basic data of the study

Among proven experts, there are sometimes different perspectives on violence prevention and self-defense. There is only partial consensus on definitions of the phenomena and corresponding didactic concepts for self-defense and violence prevention programs. There are also research deficits in the relevant literature.

Experts from established self-defense concepts (Jiu Jitsu, WingTsun, Krav Maga), feminist self-defense concepts (Wendo, Frauen in Bewegung, Drehungen)<sup>[1]</sup>, experts in violence prevention (school, social work), police and military experts were interviewed. The total of 13 interviewees represented 12 different self-defense and violence prevention concepts. They had developed the respective concepts partly themselves and were founding figures or high-ranking multipliers on the training level of trainers. The interviewees partially reach a large sphere of activity through publications or scientific activity. A total of 6 females and 7 males were interviewed, and the interviews took an average of 2 hours. The categorization was deductively ex ante and the expert interviews were evaluated with the qualitative content analysis according to Gläser, & Laudel (2009).

## 4 Results

The following chapters give an overview of the perspectives of interviewed experts on self-defense and violence prevention and therefore address issues that seem relevant.

### 4.1 Victim role versus ability to defend

A large part of the interviewees sees the willingness and the will to defend oneself as the key to successful self-defense. However, not necessarily

**1: Jiu Jitsu:** jap. "the art of giving way"; striking, kicking, pushing, throwing, levering and strangulation techniques; concepts for kids: „Nicht mit mir“ (Germany), „Sicherheit4Kids“ (Austria) – kids learn to recognize violent situations early, use body language, say "no", scream out loud, flee, organize help; easy SD-techniques.

**WingTsun:** chin. kung-fu style; physical self-defense, strategies and techniques, self-development; principles-based: e.g. go forward, if the way is free; also teaching-concepts especially for kids and women.

**Krav Maga:** israel. self-defense concept without and with weapons; principles-based: e.g. don't go, where it's dangerous; use everyday objects as weapons; also concepts especially for kids and women.

**Wendo:** "the way of women"; violence prevention concept for girls and women; against patriarchal power relations and socially learned victim attitudes; awareness exercises, roleplays, body language, self-assertion, physical self-defense, exchange and talk about experienced violence; live solidarity among women.

**Frauen in Bewegung – Kampfkunst und Bewegung:** violence prevention and self-defense for girls and women; against inequalities in society; life attitude for mutual respect; empowerment to say "no" and defend especially against attackers in social neighborhood; learning to scream, fight and run away.

**Drehungen:** peaceful self-defense through psychological and physical "rotations" for girls and women; body awareness exercises to protect your own space, build self-confidence, nonverbal and verbal self-assertion.

complicated techniques should be used. Significant signals of defensiveness through body language, voice or simple, natural, physical defensive movements would often already lead to success in everyday life (K\_1, K\_2, K\_3, Fem\_1, Fem\_2, Fem\_3, LP\_1)<sup>[2]</sup>. Power imbalances and unequal hierarchy distributions are seen as the general characteristic of negative perpetrator-victim dynamics (K\_1, K\_2, K\_3, Fem\_1, Fem\_2, Fem\_3, LP\_2, GP\_1, Ex\_1). Feminist experts (Fem\_1, Fem\_2) name above all class or racial differences and gender hierarchies as potential sources of power and power abuse, which favor violence. Interviewees (GP\_1, GP\_2) assume that "typical" victims or "typical" perpetrators cannot be located, but tendencies can be identified. For example, children and adolescents at school affected by bullying often showed a certain amount of anxiety and insecurity. More frequently, girls suffered from sexual violence and boys were more likely to suffer from physical violence (GP\_1). According to crime statistics, particularly male adolescents between the ages of 13 and young adulthood are proportionately more frequently perpetrators of violence, but are also at greater risk of becoming victims of physical violence (GP\_1, GP\_2). One interviewee mentioned:

*I think the biggest weapon an attacker has against us is our own fear. And having that fear has trained us since we were little. We are socialized in fear; this fear is part of the attacker's plan. I always say that the attacker is looking for a woman or a girl from whom he expects no resistance. He wants to have power and control. (Fem\_1, pp. 5 / Fem\_1-31)*

Some experts (Fem\_1, Fem\_2, K\_1, K\_2, K\_3) also assume that girls and women in particular have great socialization-related inhibitions about harming offenders. With regard to possible gender differences in the will and ability to defend oneself, however, there are different perspectives among the experts. Depending on the type of personality, some interviewees see both genders equally at risk of getting absolutely rigid with fear or, on the other hand, being able to defend (LP\_1, LP\_3, GP\_2). A surveyed expert and instructor for trainers suggests that girls and women cannot successfully defend themselves physically against men due to their average much lower physical mass and even expresses concerns, when they show interest in coaching skills (K\_1). Women questioned, and feminist trainers in particular, are convinced that girls and women have enough strength to defend themselves against men, if they recognize their determination and their right to defend themselves. There is agreement that the feeling and experiencing of one's own strength can lead to more self-confidence and ability to defend for both sexes (K\_1, K\_2, Fem\_1, Fem\_2, Fem\_3, LP\_1, LP\_3). A representative of a feminist self-defense concept aimed at girls and women expresses this in the following way:

*I think it's good that they keep boxing hand-pads for each other, that they realize, "Wow". When someone realizes what kind of power they have, because they can barely hold the pads for each other, when they go into full force. And that's a very important experience. Simone de Beauvoir said: A revolution that does not go to the muscles has no chance. And I also think like this. She just has to feel in her body what's inside. And that gives her back the power or the courage to say: "Stop it, leave me alone, take a step back, go away! (Fem\_1, p. 4 / Fem\_1-24)*

2: The abbreviations refer to quotes and statements of interviewed experts:  
 Experts from established self-defense concepts (Jiu Jitsu, WingTsun, Krav Maga): K\_1, K\_2, K\_3;  
 Experts from feminist self-defense concepts (Frauen in Bewegung – Kampfkunst und Bewegung, Wendo, Drehungen): Fem\_1, Fem\_2, Fem\_3;  
 Experts from professional teaching (university, police): LP\_1, LP\_2, LP\_3;  
 Experts from violence prevention concepts (school, social work): GP\_1, GP\_2;  
 Security expert of the military: Ex\_1

## 4.2 The unmasking of classical myths and wrong expectations about violence and self-defense

At this point, individual myths cited by experts and misconceptions about violence and self-defense, prevalent in the minds of population, are discussed without, however, wanting to quantify them.

### **The “man with the candy” kidnaps children and locks them in basements.**

It is not strangers, who attract children with sweets in cars, but people from the close social environment, from which there is an increased danger of sexual abuse.

*So, if we talk about school violence now, (...) or for children, adolescents, then in the least part we are talking about so-called "ambush attacks". Say, the fourteen-year-old is running home from school and is suddenly attacked by somebody and dragged along, or the eight-year-old girl. That's a very, very, very small part—statistically absolutely negligible. (...) Therefore, have a look at the statistics, any swimming class has more effect, because many, many more people drown. (LP\_3, pp. 40 / LP\_3-318)*

Nevertheless, one questioned expert (K\_1) is convinced that with self-defense courses he can protect children from unknown and known pedophiles waiting for them in front of the school. A secret “codeword” that children make up with their parents should keep them from getting into a “wrong” car. Thus, in some self-defense courses fears of the statistically rare “man with the candy” are still being fueled.

### **Children can defend themselves against adults with the 'right' technique.**

There is widespread consensus among experts (K\_1, K-2, K\_3, Fem\_1, LP\_1, LP\_2, LP\_3) that children cannot physically defend themselves against adults in an emergency, as they are clearly physically inferior. For children, the focus is to learn how to distance themselves successfully and say “no”, scream loudly for help or escape.

### **Violence is 'abnormal' and only the 'others' are affected.**

Violence does not originate from “foreigners” or strangers outside of Europe, but is present every day in the whole of Europe (LP\_1, GP\_2, Fem\_1, Fem\_2). Feminist concepts concentrate on visualizing the normality of violence and not on portraying it as something abnormal that only happens to a few people. They regard violence against girls and women as partly normal in their everyday lives. Statistical figures also prove this. It is not about accepting it, but recognizing how widespread the different facets of violence are in order to avoid them in time. Sexual harassment and sexual violence affect many girls and women, for whom it is important to name violence as such in the first place:

*And the problem with it is that it takes a long time before we recognize that someone wants to do something to us. And if in doubt, we choose the man because we cannot get it in the head, that this man, who is my friend, whom I have known for years, really has something bad in his mind. And we try with all our energy to change the situation so that it is not an attack, even though an attack has been going on for a long time. (...) It's not just the learned helplessness, but the not kno-*

*wing what's going on, because we do not want to admit it. (Fem\_1, p. 13 / Fem\_1-75)*

### **Violence is 'per se' negative.**

An expert points out, that violence also has positive and productive functions, such as regulatory behavioral restrictions at school or the state's legitimate monopoly on the use of power to enforce the law.

*So, there are also areas where you have to say that violence is productive and that would be exactly the point for self-defense: violence is actually the solution in self-defense and not the problem. Perhaps there is a problem I encounter, but if I want to defend myself and have missed the previous stages and tactical courses of action I have just mentioned, and it comes to this immediacy of physical controversy, I must use force myself. And here we are again with the fundamental question, that I have to ask myself: Am I ready to do it? (LP\_1, p. 9 / LP\_1-54)*

### **4.3 Subjective theories of experts on self-defense and violence prevention**

The present study showed a clear difference in the understanding of self-defense between female and male respondents. Perspectives of male experts are directed primarily at the situational moment of violence or shortly before an outbreak or after physical violence. Their understanding of self-defense basically refers to physical defense or body language and verbal strategies in the run-up to or after physical violence.

*So, the goal of self-defense, as I interpret it, is always the escape, I want to get away, I do not really want to fight there, but I either want to get out of the situation beforehand or if I get into it, as quickly as possible. So that means we defend ourselves to escape. And that means in practice, that I have to learn to run away. (LP\_1, p. 21 / LP\_1-144)*

In many cases, it is important to recognize the most favorable moment how to escape the danger situation in time. Another expert (GP\_2) emphasizes that the moment of early detection of violence, just before physical violence takes place, carries high potential for successful self-defense:

*When it comes to self-defense, it is the actual moment, the actual act that transcends aggressive behavior, cross-border behavior, harmful behavior, the level of threat, the threat, and culminates in actual acts of violence. It is much more decisive for me because it means thinking about how I can act, how can I fight off, how I can influence the situation in a way, that it does not even escalate and I become a victim. (GP\_2, pp. 12 / GP\_2-82)*

There is agreement that physical self-defense is only used as a last step, if other de-escalating measures have not worked.

*Self-defense is always the last step and this is always the step that all other steps have unfortunately not worked and self-defense is basically not, what I strive for. In self-defense, it can always happen, that I get hurt. I cannot rule out that I will not get hurt myself, get seriously injured, and that is the situation I want to avoid. (K\_1, p. 45, K\_1-357)*

Physical self-defense techniques should consist of simple, natural movements, and work according to a few comprehensible principles (K\_1, K\_2, LP\_1, LP\_2).

Female respondents, on the other hand, regard the term "self-defense" mainly as 'primary prevention strategies of violence'. It's about learning about boundaries, saying 'no', talking about and sharing experienced violence, role-playing games that practice self-confident behavior, and gaining a new outlook on life and determination against minor and major abuses. The focus of self-defense courses is on steps to be taken before physical violence, verbal and non-verbal attacks, sexual harassment and hidden forms of violence, and only then on physical self-defense.

*I see this as an attitude (...) I always say: we have to create a new norm in society, especially for women, that we say: I say I expect respect in my life. And that we are able to enforce that. Because self-defense is, what we are actually doing for twenty-four hours, and it's not a matter of "When an attack comes, then I fight back," but more of an attitude we have and that attitude is, "I'm a human and I expect respect." And when I meet other people with this attitude, then I either get respect, which I expect or I am able to enforce that and that I do not accept being treated with less respect or being turned down. (Fem\_1, pp. 1 / Fem\_1-17)*

The interviewee interprets self-defense as a way of life and a personal attitude in order to ensure mutual responsibility and to demand respect. Another interviewee sees self-defense as something peaceful:

*It calms me down because (...) it is a peaceful technique, ultimately. You only protect your environment, it's not about more. (Fem\_3, pp. 26, Fem\_3-269)*

A representative of a feminist concept is convinced that if many girls and women revolt against patriarchal power structures, sexist harassment and sexual violence, it could bring about positive changes in society:

*Exactly, and I also believe that self-defense changes something. So, that when women take steps and say "no", from saying "no" to defending themselves. That also changes something about a reality. (Fem\_2, p. 13 / Fem\_2-120)*

Self-defense and violence prevention are not focused on the moment of a single violent event, but can be understood as a process in which girls and women are empowered to successfully demonstrate their own will to harassers in everyday life and resolutely defend themselves physically in an emergency.

#### **4.4 Dangerous places und violent situations in self-defense and violence prevention concepts**

Addressed danger locations, violent situations and self-defense scenarios of established self-defense concepts such as Jiu Jitsu, Krav Maga and WingTsun primarily deal with public places and mainly unknown perpetrators. Typical scenario trainings take, for example, place on the street, in the car, in the car park, in the elevator, in the subway, in front of the disco or at the main station. Feminist concepts such as Wendo, Frauen in Bewegung and Drehungen, on the other hand, are primarily focusing on private danger situations and violence in the social neighborhood.

*So, the most dangerous place for women is their own beds and their own apartments. (Fem\_2, p. 13 / Fem\_2-123)*

*I mean, trained in street fighting, you come home and then you're being abused by your father. Yes, and these are the topics, that we tackle in our courses. It's not about the stranger. (Fem\_1, p. 44 / Fem\_1-370)*

Indicated hazard locations include, for example, the home, jobs, partnerships, families, refugee homes, schools or hospitals. They also see the patriarchal social system as a "location" of danger and central cause for violence against women.

## 5 New dimensions and definitions of self-defense

Different perspectives on self-defense, violence prevention and related terminology have been addressed in the previous chapters. The understanding of self-defense unites experts in some areas, but elsewhere it differs a lot. Male interviewees tend to focus in their prevention strategies more on physical violence and the situation before or after physical violence. Within the self-defense offers surveyed, established concepts (Jiu Jitsu, Krav Maga, WingTsun) create training situations primarily for public places and dangerous situations with mainly unknown perpetrators, while interviewed feminist experts (Wendo, Frauen in Bewegung, Drehungen) show a completely different understanding of self-defense and violence prevention. They see self-defense as a way of life and attitude to demand respect and aim at changing patriarchal power relations by determined demarcation of many girls and women. Female respondents don't see physical techniques first, but rather strategies of primary violence prevention and awareness of unrecognized aspects of violence, self-assertion, body language, and speech training in order to successfully demonstrate their own will to harassers and attackers. As studies show—contrary to the main aims and contents of numerous established self-defense concepts—most people are primarily not affected about perpetrators on the street or in front of bars, but about close and well-known people, who exert violence in different, often hidden forms. It has been statistically proven, that women mainly experience violence in the private area, while men are more likely to experience violence in public (Kapella et al., 2011, pp. 30). Dangerous locations and dangerous situations are thus sometimes different for women and men, so it makes sense to adapt self-defense strategies to these circumstances. A surveyed expert sums up the need for self-defense as follows:

*More important to me is whether someone suffers from the situation, or if he or she sees a need for action, if he or she sees need, (...) whether he or she signals need for help. (GP\_2, p. 8 / GP\_2-62)*

For example, a central question for self-defense and violence prevention services may be: What is the subjectively felt suffering of girls, boys, women, men, refugees, migrants, disabled and old people, lesbians, homosexuals and transsexuals?

Staller, & Bertram (2016) singled out two essential distinguishing views on definitions of self-defense in the literature: "Self-defense in the narrower sense", which exclusively deals with physical attacks, and "Self-defense in the

broader sense", which does include non-physical actions of self-defense and strategies of primary and tertiary violence prevention. Many definitions of self-defense in literature and also in established self-defense concepts are mainly focusing on physical self-defense and strategies of early detection and deescalation at the moment of violence or shortly after physical violence. A broader understanding of "self-defense as a means of primary violence prevention" and an attitude to life for mutual responsibility and respect is unusual in this field till now. The following model is giving more space and meaning to this "macro level" of self-defense "in the broadest sense". Self-defense can also include the training of social competences for respecting each other and taking responsibility, breaking up classical gender roles or victim- and perpetrator roles, as well as reflecting one's own understanding of violence and self-defense. Moreover, it also means identifying hidden forms of violence, and coming to an individual and also common understanding of violence in the group and saying "no", if someone crosses these borders. Based on this, an expanded model of self-defense was developed.

Tab. 1. The three levels of self-defense in everyday life.

<b>Macro-level</b> of self-defense as a means of primary violence prevention and as an attitude to life for mutual responsibility and respect	<b>Meso-level</b> of self-defense through early detection of violence and appropriate actions after conflicts	<b>Micro-level</b> of physical self-defense against attackers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ training of social skills for mutual respect</li> <li>▪ discussions and exchanges about experienced violence</li> <li>▪ conscious handling of facts and misconceptions about violence</li> <li>▪ role reflexivity and breaking up classical (gender, victim, ...) roles</li> <li>▪ recognizing the normality of violence in our society and its hidden manifestations (threat, verbal exercise of power, sexual contact, ...)</li> <li>▪ coming to an individual and also common understanding of violence and self-defense in the group</li> <li>▪ developing a determination to defend oneself</li> <li>▪ feel your own strength and learn to appreciate it</li> <li>▪ uncover and break up social, structural and personal hierarchies and power relations</li> <li>▪ self-assertion, training of self-confident behavior, verbal and non-verbal strategies of demarcation and saying "no"</li> <li>▪ escape, scream, get help</li> <li>▪ mainly role-plays in "realistic" danger situations and harassing in the social neighborhood + partial scenario-training for statistically rarer "anxiety situations" in public spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ analysis of moments of violence and exploration of the scope for action before the moment when violence occurs</li> <li>▪ avoiding one's own stagnation + remaining in the movement and action flow</li> <li>▪ escape and run away</li> <li>▪ non-verbal self-defense strategies: facial expressions, gestures, body language, self-confident body posture, ...</li> <li>▪ verbal self-defense strategies, vocal exercises, screaming, getting help, saying "no"</li> <li>▪ psychological and tactical strategies of SD before and after physical violence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ develop a resoluteness to use competent, targeted violence against attackers</li> <li>▪ simple physical techniques and natural movements of defense</li> </ul>

Feminist self-defense concepts have for many years been focusing on successful demarcation and “primary violence prevention” and have developed numerous methods. It would be worthwhile to make this work accessible not only to girls and women, but to all those, who show an interest in self-defense and violence prevention. In the didactic discussion, some doubts are raised regarding the extent, to which self-defense can find a place in school, since in the final analysis it is a matter of hurting perpetrators. However, if one sees self-defense primarily as social learning in the forefront of violence or physical defending and “slamming” as a means of recognizing and appreciating one’s own strength, it opens up a large, substantial space of experience for the educational work in schools. My personal view of self-defense is:

*Self-defense starts, when I feel uncomfortable or hurt and begin to think:  
“No! I don’t want this!”*

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