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## Marietta non-profit trains women to turn the tables on an attacker



MARIETTA, GA (WXIA) -- At F.O.R.C.E. Krav Maga, there's no such thing as a victim. The female students who on Thursday night were handily dispatching their much larger male "attacker" are proof of that.

"Once she deflects the blows she arches up, turns and torques her body," said instructor Wesley Swanson as he narrated the way the woman responded to the attack scenario.

"We tell the women that self defense isn't pretty," he continued. "What you're doing on the ground and how you look doesn't matter; what matters is getting that assailant off of you."

In classes like this, you will find regular women, who have, as Liam Neeson might say, a particular set of skills.

One of them, Sonia Johnson, demonstrates just how easy it is to disarm a gunman. But it takes a lot of training and dedication to get that good.

"That initial grab, that initial strike, if you're not trained, you're initially going to (have) fear," said Joyce Hurd, who at about five feet tall is extremely capable of taking care of herself against a man twice her weight like fellow classmate DeAngelo Travis.

The training is real-life. And they hit hard on purpose. It is very realistic and almost scary to watch.

"All of the women know where the attacks need to take place," said Swanson. "The throat, the eyes, above the nose, the ears, the knees, the groin."

They practice various attack scenarios like walking to the car or alone in the park.

"When we went through the training here, having the man actually put their hands and take us down it was a wake-up call," said student Ashley Garcia.

But in every class, the women here test themselves against the men and pass with flying colors. They train for attacks involving physical strength, knives, and guns. Learning how to fight helps them decide if they need to. Each one may respond differently to a threat and whether they should use force. But each one is more than able to defeat a much larger, even armed opponent.

"When someone attacks we don't have to think about it," said student Kelly Taft. "We're trained to be aware of our surroundings. And if something catches us off guard, we know what to do simply because our body goes into the motions."