

## Questions submitted to Brian Frias

The following is a list of questions (followed by responses) that I asked Brian Frias, military veteran, San Diego SWAT team officer, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Black Belt under Professor Andre Galvao and Co-Lead Instructor at Shivworks, a Craig Douglas owned company.

1. How old were you when you started to train in BJJ?

*I started training seriously in 2009 when I got back from Iraq. I was a 21.*

2. How old were you when you became a police officer?

*26*

3. Prior to becoming a police officer, other than the occasional school yard scrap, did you ever have a situation where you needed some self-defense skills? If so, please explain.

*I was in handful of fights as an adult and several as kid. I was really small, kids would pick on me. I would try and talk my way out of it but became quick to violence. A formative moment for me was getting robbed in Brazil a few months before going through the police academy. It turned out ok but as someone who was actively competing and training jiu-jitsu it was a good reminder things do not work the same in real life as in sport.*

4. What are the most common mistakes you observe when practitioners of only one system (either Krav Maga or BJJ) face unpredictable, multi-threat, or weapon-involved scenarios, and how would you recommend bridging those gaps in practical training?

*Guys who are adherent to a single style try solve all problems with that style. They struggle to adapt. There are outliers but it's not common.*

5. Given the legal and ethical constraints officers face on the street, how should self-defense training balance rapid neutralization techniques with control-oriented tactics to reduce liability while maximizing safety for both officers and suspects?

*Other than a firearm, I don't put much weight into, "rapid neutralizing techniques." Anything can work and anything can fail. Most "system" that teach a certain strike and claim it to be "deadly" do not know that most of the time it fails. Control to a known goal is the best path to success.*

6. Can you share an example from the street or training where grappling and positional control from BJJ prevented an escalation (or reduced injury/legal exposure) in a way that striking-focused reality training would not have?

*Grappling looks better on camera and is less damage (mostly) than strikes. A little bit of forced used early can often prevent a lot of force used later. I can remember arresting a robbery suspect who was seated. My partner immediately locked his arm*

*before he had a chance to know we were there. We did not give him time to comply. That allowed us to control him and remove a gun from his waist without it turning into a struggle over the gun.*

7. From your experience, what legal and ethical differences should a civilian understand when choosing between striking based reality training (i.e. Krav Maga) and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu for self-defense—especially regarding proportionality and acceptable use of force?  
*I don't think either are good. There are a few Krav guys who are essentially teaching MMA but for the most part, I see twisty wrist stuff and gun disarms that don't work. There are techniques from Jiu-jitsu that will serve you well but it is not a complete program to keep you safe. The best solution is an agnostic approach to technique. Do not care where it comes from; if it serves the goal and meets the required conditions, then use it.*

8. Finally... In an ideal world, people would have the time and money to train in both fighting styles. Unfortunately, this is not the case for most individuals and they have to choose one system. If someone was starting out and told you their goals (I want to be a LEO, I want to be able to protect my family, I want to get into Executive Protection... whatever)... when would you suggest they train in BJJ and when would you suggest they train in Krav Maga.

*Hands down I would steer someone to BJJ over Krav. The margin for error when you choose to fight within wingspan using strikes vs grappling is unforgiving. One lucky punch can end a fight. I don't see many Krav gyms with an instructor familiar with the actual consequences of using force against a person (legal, moral) but a lot of the gyms advocate for actions that would not serve them well.*

*BJJ gyms tend not to address the self-defense side of stuff. Self-defense is used as a marketing gimmick but in the day to day, it is sports-based. The sport will help a person make it home under a wide variety of possible incidents.*