

PEOPLE

A MASTER OF MOTIVATION

Mortgage broker and Chatswood martial arts instructor **John Gill** has just won his 13th title at the USA World Martial Arts Championships

WORLD SELF-DEFENCE champion John Gill has not wasted any time in his life. A 6th Dan Black Belt Master instructor in Taekwondo and Hapkido, he has won the World Martial Arts Championships 13 times and been the winner of numerous Australian and USA Martial Arts awards.

He was taught by 9th Dan Black Belt Sung Soo Lee, one of the leading Grand Masters in the world, and has been teaching others since 1985 as the owner/principal instructor at the Australian School of Self Defence.

Just to add to his ever-growing list of accolades, Gill also became a qualified tennis coach after high school and went on to win the NSW, Australian and Pan Pacific Tennis Masters Championships. He is still an avid tennis player today.

Of course, Gill is also a broker and has owned Melbourne and Sydney brokerage Australian Mortgage and Finance since 1999. So to say it's been a balancing act for Gill would be an understatement.

For the past eight years he has managed to juggle his broking work with competing and teaching martial arts workshops, tending to paperwork during the day and visiting clients in the evening.

Focus on safety

Gill's martial arts programs at the Australian School of Self Defence have a strong focus on teaching women and children self-defence, and this has landed him a number of nominations for Australian of the Year for his contribution to women's and children's safety.

Gill also recently wrote to Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to request government support for a self-protection course that would be free for all women and children in Australia.

And on top of all this, Gill also conducts a program of motivational presentations and empowerment workshops called Martial Motivation, which has been especially popular in schools and businesses.

"I'm trying to make it clear to people that it's non-contact, easy to learn and a very safe and fun sport," says Gill.

He adds that teaching the mental side of self-defence in his programs shows clients how conflict can be avoided and how they can talk their way out of a difficult situation.

"I really picked the brains of psychologists and had them involved in my programs."

Martial Motivation is perhaps Gill's strongest passion, and helping women and children is his biggest calling.

"If I can reduce the statistics of one in three



“Martial arts is the ultimate personal development system by a mile. It’s not about fighting, it’s about living”

women being attacked, being physically/sexually abused in their life, of kids being bullied, and give them confidence,” says Gill, “it makes me feel great and it’s my contribution to society.

“[Clients] like it as a personal development system – it’s more about self-improvement; that’s why I do motivational speaking now.

“True empowerment is from learning the moves,” he explains. “Not from me telling you to be empowered. Actions speak louder than words – it’s how you make people feel. They feel empowered after doing my techniques and they have fun with it too.”

Business black belt

Gill also tailors Martial Motivation workshops to business, delivering a unique executive development program.

“It helps stress relief massively; it really makes

you feel good about yourself – the empowerment from martial arts,” says Gill. “In fact, if everyone did martial arts there would be a lot less crime in the world. Because what happens with martial arts is it gives you confidence, it gives you self-esteem; you learn self-respect, and you learn to respect other people.”

Often the workshops take place during staff lunchtimes, and Gill says employees then work more efficiently for the rest of the afternoon.

“They are more focused and more disciplined. Martial arts is the ultimate personal development system by a mile – it’s the original personal development system; it’s not about fighting, it’s about living.”

Looking ahead, Gill's star just keeps getting brighter. His next project will be working on a movie set alongside actors as a fight choreographer for a martial arts action movie. **AB**