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Should I break up the fight?

Categories : [Uncategorized](#)

Tagged as : [fighting](#), [legal](#), [relationship](#), [self defenseviolence](#)



My brother wrote me an e-mail a while ago about feeling like an asshole. He was out with some friends and everybody but him got into a fight outside a bar. He said he felt like a tool because he thinks he should've got involved and at the least dragged people off each other.

I'll tell you what I told him in a little bit.

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Should you get involved and break up a fight?

- Your friend is trading punches with some asshole at the bar.
- The neighbours are having another domestic, but the wife sounds really frightened this time.
- Two homeless guys are beating the crap out of each other.
- Two guys are dragging a screaming jogger chick off the running trail and behind some bushes.

Do you intervene? Which of these do you get involved in and try help?

Here's the thing, you should know the answers to these questions. If you have to think about it, then you're fixing for trouble. Get involved in the wrong thing and you get dead. Don't get involved and an innocent gets dead.

Why? What's the big deal? There are a couple things at play here...

How to know if you should get involved

First of all – fights are UNPREDICTABLE. You don't have control of anybody else in this world. This includes whether or not someone in a fight gets freaked out and pulls a knife and stabs everyone within reach, including you (trying to help break up the fight). And nobody says that this won't even be your friend that you're trying to help. Any fight you get involved in can end in your death, or someone else's and you catching the blame.

Secondly – YOU HAVE NO CONTROL OVER WHETHER THE COPS GET INVOLVED. If the cops rock up are they going to see you anywhere near the middle of things? If so, expect to get arrested, even if you were just pulling someone off someone else.

Question number 1: **“Is this worth getting arrested/dead over?”** Check [this guy](#) out, arrested for who knows what, waiting in these conditions for 2 years just to start his trial. He might end up only

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paying a fine, or even getting off. Can you afford to sit in a room like this for 2 years, not working, not paying bills, not being with your family?

Thirdly, is it any of your business? Do you owe anything to the people involved? Two bums having a punch-up? Absolutely not. You don't know them and you don't owe them. Don't get involved.

What if it's s friend and some asshole fighting? Do you really owe anything to this "friend" if he's dragging you into drama?

Me? I have a family, any "friend" who risks my ability to get home to them every night is not a friend. My friend gets into a fight with someone else, suddenly that guy's friend remembers that he and I were drinking together. My friends are calm and mature enough to minimise drama, or else they're not my friend. [I know my goals](#), and petty bar-fights are not on the list. I care enough about my friends to punch them really hard and drag their ass out the bar to stop him (us) getting stomped half to death.

Shocking your humanity

So what do you do if you see two guys dragging some jogging lady off the running path and behind some bushes? If that was your wife/daughter, would you want someone to get involved and help her out? Then you can't expect someone to do that for you, if you're not willing to do that for someone else.

Question number 2: "Does this shock my humanity"

If something truly shocks your humanity, if it offends what it means to be human – then do it, end things quickly and [decisively](#).

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What about the grey areas?

The best grey area I can think of is domestic disputes. My first thought is that getting involved in domestics is very dangerous. First and foremost, a domestic is an internal thing. It's a fight within a tribe, a family. You are an outsider, and the tribe will likely band together to fight off any outsiders, even if they're busy fighting among themselves. So you knock on the door to see if everything's ok, and then both the husband and the wife try stab you if things go badly? No thank you.

Domestics often fail Question number 1. You won't risk arrest and/or death over helping out a neighbour.

But what if meets Question number 2 criterion? What if it's the same old fight and suddenly you hear the women scream for him to put the knife down? Or suddenly, in the middle of the fight next door you hear a chainsaw start up and the women starts screaming for help? (Don't laugh, something similar happened up the road from me years back – turns out the power tools we heard was to chop her up to eat her – at least according to the local newspaper).

I have 2 thoughts on this. The first is, if you really think she's going to die, then by all means, go (very fucking cautiously) knock on that door. The second is that domestics are usually things that repeat themselves on a regular basis. If the woman chose to not get the fuck out after the first couple times, then she's kinda a willing participant. If there are children involved however, then there's not too much wrong with (very fucking cautiously, and heavily armed) knocking on that door and asking if the kids want to come over and watch a movie with you kids.

Back to my brother's story

So what did I tell me brother when he felt bad for not helping his friends fight? I told him 2 things:

1 – If it was a low risk fight, then they didn't need his help (a few black eyes happen now and then). So getting involved and possibly getting arrested were not conducive to him getting home safe that night.

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2 – If it was high risk (maybe one of the other guys pulled a knife on his friends) then getting involved was one of the better ways to NOT go home that night. Plus I know his wife, after checking he was ok in the hospital she'd be righteously pissed that he was so stupid (like all wives I guess).

Overall I was proud of him – the way I explained it to myself and him was that he wasn't so sunk into his monkey brain that he managed to hang back, physically and mentally.

Plus he goes out armed, so getting arrested and searched for fighting (even if everything on his belt is perfectly legal) is not a good idea.