



Episode 197 | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com

Jeremy Lesniak:

Hey, hey everybody. This is whistlekick martial arts. My name is Jeremy Lesniak, I'm your host. I'm the founder at whistlekick and I'm a martial artist. That was probably obvious. Those of you that have listened to the show know that to be true but, hey we might have some new folks coming in and I want to get that out of the way. This is episode 197 and we're going to talk about why your journey in the martial arts should not be compared to anyone else's journey in the martial arts. Not now, not ever. I'd like to encourage you to visit whistlekick.com because that's the hub online for everything that we've got going on. Too much to name, we sell stuff, we got gear and apparel. We've got martialartscounter.com. We've got martialartsmemes.com. We've got half a dozen other projects that we're working on. They're in various stages because I'm someone that can't leave things alone. If I see something that could be improved, I try to improve it. That's how I was taught into martial arts and I bring that philosophy to this business. Thank you for your time today, thanks for tuning in. One more thing that I want to let you know about, episode 200 is coming up. That's right. This is ep 197 which means we're a week and a half out for episode 200. It's going to be on June 26, that's a Monday. If you're used to firing up your podcast feed on Monday morning and seeing a brand-new episode, a brand-new interview, you're not going to see that Monday morning. Because it's not going to be until 8pm on Monday June 26 that we will be recording episode 200. Two firsts for this actually. The first first is that this episode, episode 200, is going to be live. The second, almost first, is that it's going to be video. We'll be broadcasting, it looks like with YouTube live and Facebook live. We will record it for later, it will be released as an audio, as a video. All kinds of options, so check it out next week. Next Thursday, episode 199, I'm going to talk about what's going on with that episode, how you can be a part of it. And of course, it will be more than just self-promotional. There will be some good stuff in there. So, stay tuned, check that out and if you're on Facebook, check out the Facebook event on the whistlekick Facebook page. That will clue you in to everything that we've got going on. There will be more and more stuff added and updated as we get closer because we're still finalizing a lot of details there. Lately I'm seeing a lot on social media about people comparing their martial arts journeys to other people's martial arts journeys and I got to be honest, I don't like it. I don't like it because I think it's very contrary to what martial arts is about. Martial arts, after all is a personal journey and in most cases, we tend to value that progress that happens over skill level. You can see that in a lot of different ways. When we look at competition, is everybody thrown in to the same division, no. Because, we recognize that we tend to progress at different levels, different belts if you're in a school that uses belts, most of them do. We're not throwing in yellow belts with black belts because we know that a black belt has more skill. And we're also not doing it based on time. If all that matter was how much you knew, we would throw people in based on their time but we don't do that. Nor should we be comparing any aspect of what's going on because different people progress in different ways. I think we can all agree, hopefully we can all agree, that martial arts is about being more than just skilled. It's about more than your ability to punch or kick or block or jump or



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spin or flip or whatever it is, whatever the physical attributes are. We recognize that there is a mental and spiritual and emotional, psychological, sometimes, component that matter and it's important that we recognize that.

I would say most of us do. On this show, we talk about martial arts as being a journey, I don't always use that word but when we talk about our definition of martial arts, personal development through the lens guys perspective of hand to hand combat. what are those first two words in there? Personal development, when you think about martial art as the grammatical construct, it is the martial type of art. Art when we think about any other art, the artist that we value whether they're musicians or painters or anybody really, we tend to talk about their growth as an artist. And a martial artist can be expected to grow overtime not all of them grow, not all of them grow at the same pace in fact we all grow at a slightly different pace and that's good because there are a whole lot of other places in the world in our lives, that are available to us, that we can grow at the speed that is comfortable for us. Not everybody is comfortable with rapid growth, some people want to grow faster than a snail's pace, sometimes what we want is the opposite of what we get. But the fact remains that we have that option available to us and that's critical it is one of the things about martial arts that makes it so valuable it's one of the reasons that I am so passionate about it and why I have dedicated all but the very first few years of my life to it and now to spread it. We share a lot of stories on social media, whether its martial arts stories or non, with people that are growing, they're progressing, people that have say lost a lot of weight or persevered despite some crazy adversity. We tend to resonate with those stories, we value them. When we watch any movie, we see that the characters have to overcome something, we see that in literature, we see that in television. We value people that move forwards in their life that they get past whatever the crap is that they're dealing with. It's one of the questions we ask just about every interview, every Monday show. Tell us about a time in your life that is difficult and how your martial arts training helped you get past it and that's an important question that, honestly for me, is one of my favorites because it allows the guest to talk about something that sucked, something that was negative and their martial arts kind of diffuses it, that allows them to grow. As human beings, we learn from our mistakes, we improve because of adversity. You don't create a sharp knife with moderate temperatures and light pressure, no you have to heat the blade, you have to grind the blade. That's a lot of pressure and temperature there's a lot of force exerted a lot of energy put in to make a knife sharp. And people are the exact same way despite all of that. I still see a lot of people judging themselves and others about their journey into martial arts. Frankly, I don't see as much of it with people judging others, people would judge skill, we know we've got trolls, I mean there's, there are a lot of us in our community unfortunately and it's kind of the times that we live in that people like to bring others down it makes them feel better it's you know online cyber bullying whatever you want to call it it's there. That part doesn't bother me so much, I will rail against it and I will take anyone to task that feels that, that is okay. The part that bothers me much more though is people comparing their journey to others. My journey is not the same as your journey is not the same as any other person listening. We have a lot



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of people who listen to this show now and not one of you have the same journey as others. Some of us may have started at the same time, but we started with different instructors, we had different parents, different upbringings, different things happening inside and outside class. We all know that the people we trained with have a tremendous impact on our progress, to look at what you've done and try to compare it to someone else is to forget about all of the nearly infinite number of ways that your training is affected by the other things in your life many of which maybe even most of which are outside your control. I have a good friend who spent some time as a life coach therapist sort of guy and I did quite a few sessions with him. And one of the things that he was fond of telling me, as I would sit there on his couch chair and tell him now how I was trying to make this thing happen or that thing happened or I was disappointed at this and it didn't turn out that way. He would just kind of look at me and say, you are where you are supposed to be and that's really always stuck me because it ties in so closely with what's going on in martial arts. We go to class, we dedicate sometime, we dedicate some energy and we progress. Somehow, what we need tends to come from martial arts, if we look closely at what's in front of us, the lesson is there. Maybe the lesson is to try harder, to show up more. Maybe the lesson is to back off and let that injury heal. There are a ton of lessons and infinite number of lessons that can be learned and martial arts makes all of them available to us. Because of that it's unfair that you look at your status whether that be rank or skill or health as it relates to martial arts and look at someone else and think I should be or I would be where I could be. It's those 3 phrases that I think get me the most. I would be in such in such rank if I hadn't taken that time off or I should be this rank or I should be standing in first place in that tournament line, it doesn't matter. because the things that you gave up or changed or did differently than that other person, you needed those things. Whatever it was in your life at that time, you needed that. Now maybe you did something that you regret doing, so you've learned the lesson, you've learned what's important to you. Maybe you needed to take care of your family or go back to school or nurse an injury. There's tons of stuff, stop comparing yourself, compare yourself to who you were yesterday or the day before or the year before or 10 years before. I don't care how far back you have to go. Recognize that you are progressing, you are moving forward. Honestly, the deeper you get into martial arts, the better your skill the less there is to compare to you, your earlier self to show your forward progress. Sometimes you have to look at other things. I'm a better person now than I was a couple of years ago because of martial arts. Has my skill improved, yeah, a lot. I've been training for bunch of years? I'm happy to train, I love training, but for me the biggest opportunities for growth in my belief as an individual have nothing to do with my physical training right now. I look at other people who honestly have less time in and higher rank and I look at them and I would freely admit there is a part of me that is jealous, and that's hard to admit, that's really hard to admit publicly. Then I take a step back and I say alright look, when I take that belt off, regardless of what belt it is who it's from what rank it represents, I'm still me, I'm still the person that dedicated myself, I'm still the person that has grown and continues to grow. None of us start from the same point, not all of us are headed in the same direction. To assume that we're on the same path and that we can judge ourselves by the standard that



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someone else sets, is just foolish. It doesn't serve you, try to let it go. In a time when so much of the world is divided and we have media and people trying to polarize everything every decision every subject. We as martial artists, as a martial arts community have an opportunity to be a beacon an example. Focus on what's important, recognize that we have more in common than we do separate. Set the example for the rest of the world about what a good person is. That a lot of why people bring themselves bring their children to martial arts, let's embody that let's embrace that. Something we need to do, something the world needs from us.

Thanks for listening today, I appreciate your time I appreciate you listening to my thoughts on this episode and every other episode. I hope you'll tune in again. If you want to check out everything we've got going on that's at whistlekick.com, if you want to check out the show notes for any of the other hundred and ninety-six episodes I'll be honest show notes on this one is going to be kind of late. Eventually we will have a transcript, yes, we are going back in transcribing every single episode, it's going to be a lot of work but we've heard some feedback people want that so we're doing it. I don't know when the first one is going to roll out, it takes some time as you might imagine.

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