



Episode 241 – Dealing with Self-doubt | [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com)



**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Hello! Thanks for tuning in, this is whistlekick Martial Arts Radio episode 241. Today we're going to talk about self-doubt, how it can creep into our lives and our martial arts training, how to understand and how to address. I want to thank you for tuning in, my name is Jeremy Lesniak I'm the host of the show, I'm the founder of whistlekick sparring gear and apparel and I'm pleased, honored and thankful that you have joined me on the figurative airwaves today. There are a lot of podcasts out there and the fact that you are choosing to listen to this one that's pretty cool, I dig it. So, thank you. If you're not familiar with our products, the amazing things that we have going on, please check them out at [whistlekick.com](http://whistlekick.com) you can also find links to all the other things that we do from there. We're working very hard to promote the martial arts, the traditional martial arts and to help you receive what you need in your life. There's a martial arts education and the accessories to showcase martial arts as part of your lifestyle.

Self-doubt. Self-doubt sucks socks and I'm recording this on a morning where I got this big knot in my stomach. Some things happen I'm not gonna talk about what happened, but some stuff happens, some stuff that maybe it was outside of my control but not really because it relates to whistlekick and it's all on my shoulders. It's my responsibility as the founder, so when someone does something that maybe they shouldn't have done, it comes back on me. And I've always been someone who has struggled with doubting myself and that comes in, in business, in my personal relationships, in my training, it's everywhere. And I know that everyone deals with self-doubt from time to time, some of us have a harder time with it than others. Some of us do a better job of hiding it than others, I don't generally do a



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very good job of hiding it. I've learned that to talk to people to let them know what's going on in my life, even long before this podcast, that was helpful to me. So that's kind of what I'm doing today, I'm not only going to reach out to you and offer you my thoughts in a way that I hope may be helpful to some of you, but I'm going to help myself by sort of venting, by talking through some things with you and I thank you for that. If you don't get anything out of this personally, well then thank you for allowing me to get something out of it for myself.

Self-doubt that feeling that your inadequate, that you're not good enough, that what you've done isn't up to par up to the standard that it should be. We all face from time to time, some of us face it often. To be honest I spent probably 10 years with a knot in my stomach running my last company because nothing ever worked the way I wanted it to, ultimately that's why sold the company because it wasn't fun anymore. Whistlekick is fun but that doesn't mean I don't still have that not my stomach, that one in the pit of my gut that saying maybe you're not good enough to do this and of course that feeling always creeps in when something negative has happened. When everything is going well and sales are happening, and money is flowing in, and the teams hitting on all cylinders and everything is going perfectly, I don't feel that way, I feel on top of the world. Inevitably something's going to happen of something's going to dip and something is going to rise and it's a cycle and being able to not take that cycle too, personally even though we care is important. Because that's the root of self-doubt, of these feelings of inadequacy because we care. You know what? I am not a great pole-vaulter but I don't care. So, I don't spend my days agonizing over my inadequacy, my inability to pole-vault. I've actually never pole vaulted. In order to feel inadequate, we have to set a standard, we have to have a bar in front of us to say this is where we should be, sometimes martial arts other people are setting that standard but most of the time, where setting that standard for ourselves. We've talked on the show before about the idea of being a newer rank or even an upper rank it's looking further up the chain and even higher ranks. And looking at what they are capable of and comparing yourself and not feeling good enough, but guess what? That's okay. If you're a white belt or a blue belt or a 1st degree black belt and you're looking at someone's been training a year or 10 years or 20 years longer, you shouldn't be as good. If you are, well, then somethings off with one of you and that's okay. So, to recognize that when you look at something, something about yourself, something in your life and you feel inadequate, it's because you care about that thing, that feeling can be really useful because it can help us hone in on what's really important to us. Of course, these feelings of self-doubt, this inadequacy can be crippling, it can cause us to not take action. The fear of failure can be so great for some of us that we would rather never try. That doesn't seem to be a common feeling among martial artist, people that start martial arts are usually able to persist through that because let's face it, starting martial arts is scary, especially the first time. Doing something completely different especially as an adult is tough so the very nature of who we are as martial artists, we don't tend to have that inaction, but many of us have in other elements of our lives. That's not generally my response, I tend to counter my feelings of inadequacy by working too much, too hard. I'll sacrifice several nights of sleep in these almost manic states to correct the problem that I see to get work done, to get to a point that I said; I need to be here, the company needs to be here or



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something else something with my friendships or whatever has to be at a certain point. Inevitably that backfires in some way because by robbing my sleep to accomplish things and maybe I get sick or... There's always a balance, something balances out, your robbing Peter to pay Paul, everything stays in balance. The place that I find these feelings to be the worst, the most impactful for most of us is our willingness to try new things. When I see older folks training someone that maybe started their training in their 40s and after five or six years, they're on to some advanced techniques that their body isn't really set up for. Jumping techniques or spinning or jumping spinning techniques. Anyone has been training for a while especially if you've been an instructor you know that it's okay for that person's jump spinning crescent kick to not look as good as the jump spin Crescent kick from a 15-year-old who's been training since he was five. You have to compare but the person in their 40s looks at it and says sometimes, I never can be able to do it that well, I'll focus on the other things that I'm good at. It's a double-edged sword, focusing on the things that we can progress at is important but it doesn't mean that, that person in their 40s couldn't become great at that kick. It takes effort, it takes a willingness to try and fail a whole bunch of times. In fact, a lot of the books that I'm reading right now, the podcasts I'm hearing, the people that are incredibly successful business are actually looking at failure as one of the most important metrics. The idea that if you're not screwing up a bunch of things over a given period of time that you're not pushing boundaries, you are not trying. I consider the most successful episodes of martial arts rated to be the ones that ruffle feathers, the ones that make people think. If everything I come out with is accepted by everyone that listens, all that I'm just telling you the things that you already knew. I'm not pushing boundaries, I'm not getting you to consider a new perspective means I'm not growing all at the same time and that's not good. So, these feelings of inadequacy can help show us what we care about, keep us focused, keep our effort in the right place, so long as were not allowing that to completely bound us, bind us into what were already good at. Of course, these feelings can become too much though, when your feelings of self-doubt, inadequacy restrict you from the life you want to live. If you are that 40-year-old who wants to get really good at a jump spinning crescent kick but you're fearful, you're fearful of what people will say, you're fearful of messing up, of hurting yourself, of falling, of looking like a fool, now it's too much. Now it's had a negative impact on your life on who you want to become and it's time to shed that. It's time to recognize that we have a fixed amount of time on this planet to do the things that are important to us and if we spend energy doubting feeling inadequate, not allowing for personal growth, that energy is wasted, 100% of that energy ultimately is wasted. Our job our goal is to pull back as much of that as we can and redirected to use that energy in a positive way that moves us forward. How we improve how we reduce that self-doubt and those feelings of inadequacy really depend on the root cause, the severity of those feelings. For some of us, those feelings could require some professional help. Maybe some therapy, maybe some medication, maybe some meditation, if you listen to one of our recent episodes 239? 237? We have subtle meditation recently you should check that one out will link it on the show notes. One of the best ways to improve though, one of the ways that has worked so well for me is to practice, to practice not only the thing that makes me feel inadequate, but to practice not feeling inadequate to offer myself daily affirmations that I am good enough, to practice the physical feeling of being adequate, of



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reminding myself what it feels like to be good at something. Sometimes I will go off and I will do something that I know I am good at just so I can remind myself that I'm good at something and to take that feeling and try to apply it in the same situation where I was feeling inadequate. When it comes to martial arts it's almost entirely the environment that you're in. I've trained in martial arts schools that hold people to incredibly high standards and others that don't and I've trained in schools there are incredibly positive and I have trained at schools that are not. And while there are some folks who do well with a more militaristic, negative style reinforcement, the majority of people I know that I've trained with do better with positive reinforcement. That supportive energy to let you know; hey you're doing a good job, you could be doing a better job, here's how you can improve, let's work on it together. There are all kinds of studies out there about how much a positive supporting environment can impact the future lives of the child, well even though we don't all start martial arts as a child, what we're doing is still coming up from a sort of infancy, to be raised in the martial arts, to become a martial arts adult, maybe that's a black belt if you want to continue that analogy. The other adults in the environment need to make sure that they're being supported, that they are helping to raise that martial arts white belt up in a way that they want to stick around and get better and feel good about themselves because if you feel good even when you're failing, you're going to progress and you're going to be able to look back and say; I did that, I accomplished that thing and you can lean on that as you look forward. Smaller bits of what, for many of us, is the theme of our black belt test. I was fortunate, my instructors were very direct for the rest of your life you will be able to look back on this test and say I made it through that, I can make it through anything and I have. It's important to have those elements in our lives, things that test us that make us doubt a little bit but to see that we get through it to say; I got through that, I can get through this and the more of those you have, the more open you are with yourself, about these things that you've accomplished to date, the fact that you know you can persist, you can overcome, you can grow, the less these feelings of inadequacy of self-doubt will take hold and stop you from living the life that you want or training in the manner that you want.

I feel better! I want to thank you for listening. Thank you for letting me say that. If you did listen to this episode if you got all the way through, let me know. Shoot me an email [jeremy@whistlekick.com](mailto:jeremy@whistlekick.com) do you feel doubtful about who you are? About how you train? I'd love to know, I'd love to know that I'm not the only one. You can always find us on social media as well @whistlekick pretty much everywhere but Facebook and Instagram are our two primaries we also spent some time on Twitter. You're gonna find us and a bunch other spots as well. You can find the show notes for this and every other episode at [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com) you can find the rest of what we do from [whistlekick.com](http://whistlekick.com) including our products and here's a hint, we're entering the holiday season 2017 and if you are not on the newsletter list, you're going to want to, we just put together our holiday promotion plan. Check out the stuff as we release it, best way get on the newsletter list. Thanks again for tuning in, for your support and until next time train hard, smile and have a great day.