



Episode 257 – Intelligent Martial Arts Discussion | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hey everyone. Thanks for checking out episode 257 of whistlekick martial arts radio. Today, we're going to talk about intelligent martial arts discussions. You'll see what I mean in just a moment. I want to thank you for checking this episode out. Hopefully you've been listening to other episodes but if you're new, welcome. Thanks for checking out what we do, you can find our other episode at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. I don't say this often but you can also find the episodes on YouTube. On those rare occasions when it's a video episode, we've got maybe four or five of them now, you can find the full video over on YouTube and of course you've got the audio there, you can queue up a playlist if you want to listen to my voice all day long while you work. You will probably not get anything productive done and maybe you'll get sick of hearing me but hopefully not. We do try to make these entertaining as well as educational. If you want to check out the products we make, you can find them at whistlekick.com and we're rolling out some new stuff. There's some new stuff coming. If you're not on the newsletter, that's the best place to go really because that's working to notify you of the new stuff that's coming, it's kind of a digest. A whistlekick magazine if you will of all the happenings, the podcast episodes and the new products. Do sign up for the newsletter whistlekick.com or whistlekickmartialartsradio.com, we make it easy we're not gonna spam you promise.

If you've been listening to the show for a while you know that I absolutely hate style versus style arguments and my arts better than yours and you're not a legitimate black belt or this or that or any of these other opinions that pop up in the martial arts and some folks just getting so entrenched in those opinions that



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they won't consider the opinions of others to be valid. Drives me insane. We've done entire episodes on it and when I look around on social media, it's really hard to find a way to debate to discuss some of these differing opinions in an intelligent way and that's important to me because I feel that I get better I learn when I have these conversations fortunately because of the show I've been exposed to a lot of amazing folks a lot of wonderful people of all ranks but many who have in training longer than I've been alive and I value their opinions. Well, like so many other things that have happened with whistlekick, I wanted something so I created it. In this case is a currently private, we'll even call it sort of secret Facebook group that we're running and right now they're just over 40 people in there and we are having intelligent discussion with some fundamental simple ground rules. Yes, in time as we work out the kinks, we will open this up publicly but it's been completely amazing because we've been able to have you know a new topic every couple day and we just, we bat it back and forth and we share our opinions and we learn from each other and we get better and I think that, that is such a corollary to martial arts training. What do we do? We go in, we learn some skills, we practice them, we get better at them, we learn where they fall down, sometimes literally, we get back up, we were fine and over time we are becoming better martial artist. Well, you know that I feel martial arts is so much more than physical, when you consider the mental side, the internal side of martial arts, it's often hard to practice that without conversation. But it requires inappropriate "sparring" partner in order to test your skills or in this case, your ideas. By having these intelligent discussions, we're all able to test our thoughts to refine them, to plugging holes or find better ways to express things and I want to encourage you to find ways to do that in your life to find people around you that you can have smart conversation with. If you're talking about martial arts with people and you always agree with each other, those aren't the folks that you need to surround yourself with. It's like the saying you may have heard this, if you are the best person in the room at something, you need to find a different room. Because there's always someone out there better than you, there's always someone out there who can challenge your ideas and in doing so make them better. If they challenge your ideas and you change your mind that's awesome, if they challenge your ideas and you don't, that is also awesome assuming that you gave it a fair shake.

We should never hold to our opinion so strongly that they can't be changed because our opinions are based only on our experience, the facts that we have seen and of course the information presented to us filtered through our past so we can arrive at different opinions and have them just as valid. But I still want to know what yours are. I still want to understand what's happening with you and if you look at whistlekick martial arts radio in kind of a macro, 800-foot view, that's what we do. We're looking at all of these experiences of all of these martial artists and we're realizing the differences and similarities. How they are affected by their past experiences, what makes them different, what makes them in some cases, I guess I'll say better based on our opinions. I'm sure if you been listening for a while, there have been episodes you listen to and thought you know, I really resonate with what that person said and there'll probably be others that you listen to and said, that person sounds cool but I don't really agree with x, y or z. Hopefully you have an open enough mind that there even been in episode or two were you've listened to and thought, you know that just completely changed my opinion of that and I get that



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feedback from some of you at times and it means the world to me because I know that if you're listening to the show with an open mind and your opinions are evolving towards whatever is important to you then there's some good that's coming out of the show beyond you know, giving you a bit of entertainment.

I've always said that the educational piece is really critical. When I say education, I don't mean, maybe I should really have clarified this earlier, I don't mean that what I'm saying is truth and you need to accept it because I'm still evolving and I hope to always be evolving. That's one of the themes that we've heard from so many of the guests on the show that evolution is critical to being a martial artist. That if you've assumed that where you're at is as far as you need to go, some have even said show that you're no longer a martial artist, I don't know if I'd go that far. But that constant test refine process is important, it's inherent to being a martial arts practitioner think. So, when I say that what happens on the show is education, I mean that I hope when you hear the conversations between me and other guests or just my words solo, that they spark thought. If you are thinking and you change your mind or don't change your mind, as long as you're listening with an open mind I think that's what matters the most, to be willing to offer up your opinions as possibly adjustable. And I think the last point, quite often in martial arts we look at the older folks both in age and in rank and we assume that they're the ones that hold only answers. You know, I'll agree when it comes to skill, those are some of the things that, some of the, those are the folks that you want to look to the most because they have the time and practicing and that's where you are more likely to advance your skill by looking at those who have done more and for longer. Yet one of the interesting things and you may not have the saying in your school but in my original martial arts school, we said that a white belt is one of the most dangerous people to work with because they come up with the most bizarre things; things that you would never imagine someone would do. And there's a lot of value in that because when we get sort of indoctrinated, when we become tempered by the environment that were in, we no matter how open-minded we are there are possibilities that we start to discount. Sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously. And the same thing can happen for opinions, the values, the experiences, the ideas that people new to the martial arts have are sometimes just as, if not more, important for us to consider on certain topics. If your martial arts school owner and you're not really trying to find out what made your students come to you, I think you're doing yourself a disservice. Sure, maybe you have an intake form of the checkbox, oh we found you on Facebook or we found you in the phone book you know, fine that's great but why? What made them want to start training? And as they decided stick around past the first 3-6 months you know that time period, where a lot of new students drop out, again, find out why. Why did they stick around? When we talk about subjects like women and their role in self-defense and just general women's subjects it's something that's come up on the show quite a bit and there's some other stuff happening in the background that will talk about in the future or any other topic. You know, I mentioned this group that I've created. One of the topics that we've talked about was around junior black belts or adult black belts, you know, just general age of black belt. Well, everyone that's weighed in is a black belt. I would love to know the opinions of some folks who are not. What is a white belt think a black belt means?



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What is a white belt feel when they see a 12-year-old black belt with you know, half a dozen stripes on their belt? I care and I think you should care too. Just as you want to surround yourself with the best martial arts training partners learning from the best martial arts instructors, you should find people in your life that you can have the best martial arts conversations with.

If you're not in the martial arts radio Facebook group, there've been some friendships that have been formed in there and I see those friendships happening and I see the conversations happening on social media between those folks and I think that's awesome. I'm not saying that you know were, were running a martial arts friendship service, you know, some kind of tangent to a dating service, maybe someday will. Anyway, know that that is 1/2 joke. But just make sure you're putting yourself out there to have good conversation with people that may disagree with you because it is important that you allow those disagreements to lead to refinement in your beliefs.

I'd love to know what you think on this. Best way to get to us we are @whistlekick on social media. Of course, you can leave comments on the show notes page at whistlekickMartialArtsRadio, this is episode 257. If you don't want to post publicly, you can always reach out to me directly jeremy@whistlekick.com. Thank you for giving me the platform to share my thoughts and for all the wonderful friendships that have come out of my time shepherding this show. As I was making that last point about making friendships, I'm realizing how many of the folks that I consider friends now? Some of the best friends in my life have come out of the show. It's kinda crazy. Maybe there's another topic, martial arts friendships. Well, I'll let you go for now. Until next time, train hard, smile and have a great day.