



Episode 273 – When To Punch Someone In The Face | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hey everybody, thanks for coming by whistlekick Martial Arts Radio episode 273. Today's episode is titled When to Punch Someone in the Face. If you're new to the show, you can stop by whistlekickmartialartsradio.com for all of our show notes, other episodes, it's the hub for everything we do with this show. You can also stop by whistlekick.com which is the hub for not only everything we sell but everything we do at whistlekick. There's so much more that we do beyond selling some products and this show. There is even more going on in the background, stuff that's coming out soon. There is a whole team of people helping bring about some amazing ideas, all to benefit you as a traditional martial artist. Because I'm a traditional martial artist and I wanted some cool stuff for me and thought I would just share it with all of you.

Alright, let's talk about this episode. Let's talk about when to punch somebody in the face! When do you punch someone in the face? That's what we're going to get to. We're gonna walk through this and what do I mean? We're talking about self-defense. We're not talking about the scenarios in training or competition. We're talking about the nitty-gritty of self-defense and when it is appropriate to hit someone. This is a subject that, if you would ask me 10 years ago maybe even a year ago, I think I would have dodged answering. But I think I'm ready to muscle through it, mental muscle through it. Obviously, when you are going to get into a physical altercation has a lot of variables. For example, if you are



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surrounded by three people and they hold knives on you and you feel that they are going to attack you, in that case maybe striking first, punching someone in the face, may be warranted. Obviously, if someone attack you in all but very few cases, attacking them back, responding, countering their attack is warranted. Sensei Ando had a wonderful episode describing this incredibly impassioned, we'll call it an attack, unwarranted attack that happened in the context of training. And it turned out, I don't want to ruin it, but it turned out it wasn't what you would have expected. So there are times that someone attacking you warrants no response. But how do we boil that off? How do we come up with the rule? I would argue that we can. It's not going to be without exception because rules rarely are. But would say that you punch someone in the face when it is a better decision than not punching someone in the face. Okay, let's expand that a little bit.

When you stand to lose more not responding than by responding, and that's a broad definition but there are lot of factors that we have to consider. We have to consider value of life, value of safety, for yourself and hopefully for the other people involved, we have to, unfortunately, consider the law. We have to consider how all of that works. It's a real thing. We do live in a time where someone can attack you, you can defend yourself, defend yourself completely adequately and go to prison. It's ridiculous but it's real. So we have to weigh that in. I would rather be in prison than be dead. However, I would rather have a bruise or maybe even a broken bone than be in prison. We have to consider all of these factors. And we have to do it in such a short period of time. Which is why I think, considering it, thinking ahead about it is so important. We have to consider what's important to us. My wallet and the usual \$20 I have in there at most, I'm a debit card person, is far less important to me than a punch in the face. However, the well-being of the people that I love is far more important to me than a punch in the face. I will take punch in the face all day long if it means that the people that matter are kept safe. Thus, today's episode, really is less about coming up with the rule because I just gave it to you. And I would guess that for every one of you, you would agree. You punch someone in the face when the consequences of not doing so are worse. Thus the purpose today is to get you to think for yourself about what is better and what is worse. What are the things that you value in your life? And I want you to come up with some scenarios. I want you to imagine a number of scenarios, I'm actually going to give you a few of them here. I want you to consider these and if you're going to take some time to think about them, maybe you want to hit pause on whatever you're playing this on and consider what your responses would be. We'll go through, let's say 5 of them. I could come up with dozens but we'll just do 5.

The first one, you're walking down the street, it's dark, you're not in an entirely unlit area but, you know, it's 11:30 at night, maybe you're coming bac from a late dinner with some friends, there's no on around, someone steps out from a doorway, and they have their hand in their pocket and they say, hey give me your wallet. What do you do? What if that



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same scenario changes to two people, hand in their pockets? Do you handle it the same way? Do you handle it differently? What is important? What is in your wallet? What is the likely outcome if you don't give them your wallet? You're in a bar, a crowded bar, you're there with some friends. One of them has said something, seems to be accidental to the wife of someone in another group of friends that is there. There are four of you, there are five of them. There are probably another 50 people in the bar, and one of the people from the other group has come up to you as the more sober of the group and said, hey your friend disrespected my friend's wife. What do you do? At what point is that situation escalate to where you would strike? Where's the point where you might consider striking first? Would you strike first? Here's one ripped from a video I saw on social media. The inspiration for this episode, a junior high teacher, middle school teacher is shoved by a rather large, strong-looking, 13 year old boy. The boy is in the teacher's face, yelling, clearly wants to hit the teacher. Now obviously, it's going to be a foolish move for the teacher to strike first, I don't think too many of you would do that, but let's say the kid punches first. Then what? It's not cut and dry. Now we have the issue of age, a factor. And here's one that gets even murkier, you're training, you're in your school and a new student transfers in, someone that the instructor allows to come in, this person has a similar amount of training time to you, maybe they're even wearing the same color of belt and you're working with them whether that's sparring or some kind of more structured partner work and this person is hitting harder than the culture of your school would suggest. You have asked the person to lighten up and they're hitting and it almost seems, maybe they are, trying to hurt you. Maybe they're trying to make a name for themselves or find their place. When does what you're doing transition, if at all, from applying training technique to defending yourself?

I'd love to know what you think. I'd love to know how you consider when it is appropriate to use force. When do you punch someone in the face? When is it appropriate to strike first? How do you determine the value in your life in that situation? How do you analyze the risks? For me, once you reach a certain point, martial arts becomes so much more mental than it does physical and this is one of those exercises that I have run through my own. One that I wish more schools would not only encourage but facilitate. There are conversations to be had from this and those of you out there, there are school owners, I would love for you to have a class or have a class where you have this conversation with your students. Because the application of martial arts is important. We talked about that. Every school talks about that - how to defend yourself. The why to defend yourself isn't that hard to discuss but the when is an incredibly important discussion that I find skirted by most people on most schools. That's my encouragement. Have that conversation.

Would love hear from you, you can write to me, jeremy@whistlekick.com. You can leave comments over at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com for this episode 273. You can find this episode on YouTube, you can find all of our products at whistlekick.com, maybe sign up



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for the newsletter, and we have a bunch of people coming in to the sort of secret not quite Facebook group, whistlekick Martial Arts Radio Behind The Scenes. So you can feel free to jump in over there. Sometimes we have some extensions of the episode, sometimes we ask questions, stuff like that. I thank you for listening, I appreciate your time, your consideration and until next time. Train hard, smile, and have a great day.