



Episode 278 – Mr. Shawn Twing | [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com)



### Jeremy Lesniak:

What's up? Welcome to whistlekick Martial Arts Radio episode 278. My name is Jeremy Lesniak, I'm your host on the show. I'm the founder of whistlekick sparring gear and apparel and today, I am joined by my friend Mr. Shawn Twing. If you're new to the show, you can check out everything we're doing at [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com). And over at [whistlekick.com](http://whistlekick.com), you can check out the products that we make, the other websites that we have, and all the great things that we're doing for you, the traditional martial artists. If you've made a purchase recently, thank you. Welcome to the family. I appreciate your support for all the things that we are doing. If you'd like to make a purchase, I would love to see you do so. We're making some good stuff, we're always planning more good stuff and hopefully, someday, we can count you as one of our customers.

Some martial arts practitioners train for titles. They're looking to gain respect from others. But Mr. Shawn Twing is not one of those martial artists. He trained martial arts with a mindset of humility. And though he's earning the title of Master, it doesn't define him. The tradition that his father passed on is what he plans to continue though that wasn't always the case. Mr. Twing pulls no punches when it comes to sensitive topics like respect, ego, and title. Let's welcome him to the show. Hey, Master Twing. I got you.



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**Shawn Twing:**

Mister.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Mister? I thought you went by a Master now with the promotion?

**Shawn Twing:**

No, we talked about that last time. 4th Dan, so... Weird. Our tradition is 5th Dan is Master whereas as the Kukkiwon tradition is 4th Dan as Master. Which I didn't... It's fine. I didn't even know that until we're at the instructor's course in November.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah.

**Shawn Twing:**

And everybody kept addressing me as Master. I'm just like dude, you can see the four stripes on my belt, what's up? And that just happened there. It's part of the, one of the conversations. I just realized that we just don't do it that way. Whatever. So I'm actually been wondering about that since then, it's kind of funny.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And of course in, you know, in my Taekwondo tradition, it is 4th.

**Shawn Twing:**

It makes sense. See, this is the only thing I can think of that might explain it. My father was a 4th Dan before he reconnected with his instructor. And he used, he referred to himself as Mister, and he didn't changed. He didn't go by the term Master until after his instructor promoted him. So I'm thinking maybe we just kept with that tradition, like you know, the head instructor was a 4th Dan and was Mister and wasn't Master until late. I don't know. That's the only explanation I can think of. Or we're just contrarian by nature. One or the other.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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Well I think martial arts is contrarian by nature.

**Shawn Twing:**

That's right.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

You know, it's interesting to me to watch all the different stuff around rank, title, ego, etcetera, and there's a Facebook group that I'm... I guess I can't say I'm part of it cause I started it and it's a private group. But it's a bunch of friends, people that you know you're mutual friends with as well, I think I may have even invited you to it, and one of the questions that went up recently was kinda general around titles and what do you think of titles. And there's just been some fascinating stuff.

**Shawn Twing:**

Interesting.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Because of course, I can refer to you, you know, accidentally, inadvertently, as Master Twing and there's respect in that. But I could also call you Mr. Twing and it means something completely different.

**Shawn Twing:**

Right.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

You know, the word and the intent behind them aren't always connected.

**Shawn Twing:**

It's interesting too, we had this conversation recently about there were a group of black belts who were together, actually we were at the same instructor's course which was four days and it was intense, you know. It was 13-hour a day and we had this sort of late night conversation about what I see is kind of this interesting progression like there are... In this group, there are



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black belts who I knew as lower ranks so I had to call them by their first name and then now I call them as Mister, Miss. And there was another person there who was a black belt who I've always referred to as Mister, I'm not comfortable calling him by his first name even though he's a good friend. And then there was another person there who was a black belt who I've known for a very long time who is a good friend, who, if I'm being... it's not more formal, but I may call her by her first name and that is, in that situation, actually more respectful because that's sort of acknowledging the nature of our relationship that, you know, I would always refer to her as Miss in a class context or if we were in anything or anybody were listening but there was also this profound respect in also referring to her by her first name. Like seeing that there's this kind of this interesting recognition that we're close enough that we can go this even, we can kind of come full circle and have, and show each other profound respect on a first name basis because the respect is now no longer associated with title. It's relationship. Which I just thought was really interesting, I have never noticed that before.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah. Respect is so subjective in one sense in the way that it manifests, I think, between people but I think the heart of respect is always the same.

**Shawn Twing:**

Right.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

If I respect you, if you respect me, we may show it differently but you can see it. You know what respect looks like regardless of the actions that are taken.

**Shawn Twing:**

Absolutely. And there's, you know, there's a funny thing is that I was in the military but it's kind of like the military where you know, you're bowing to the rank or you're saluting the rank. Which I get it, you know, black belt is black belt as black belt. You know, if I see a black belt on any context, I'm happy to bow to him. If I don't know him, it doesn't matter. I appreciate that they've done something significant and I'm showing respect for that. So I'm bowing to the rank at most situations but I don't respect the rank. I respect the person. So it's kind of like okay, I will acknowledge your rank and I will show, you know, **06:45** to your rank not knowing you, sight unseen. But respect itself, that's earned. And you know, once you start engaging with someone you're like, oh this person's a pompous ass. Alright, I mean, you know, yes I'll continue



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to bow to your rank but my level of respect may be a little different versus oh we get to know each other and I'm like wow, this person is, you know, I really think this person really represents that well and there's a lot that I just, I feel that sense of respect. It's just, it's a subtle difference but... I mean you've experienced that we've all experienced it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah. And I think I have the hardest time when someone comes up to me, someone that doesn't know me and they just... they almost want to put me up on this pedestal.

**Shawn Twing:**

Right.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Because of the belt. Because, you know, the edges are a little frayed or because you know, they've heard that I've trained other places or about this show or just for whatever reason, they wanted just give me this deference and I've never felt I've earned that.

**Shawn Twing:**

Alright.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Not earned, deserved. I don't deserve that because I'm a human being. I think you and I, you and I have had a number of conversations and I think we're pretty similar in this regard. That for me, that... For me, accepting titles is almost more to not make waves with some of the people that are around me.

**Shawn Twing:**

Sure. Makes it a lot easier, everybody's on the same page. If you approach it differently than you know, the other 50 people around you, then it kinda throws the whole thing out of kilter so you just... I heard an instructor talk about this which I thought was such an interesting thing that his wife... He was Taekwondo instructor, is a Taekwondo instructor. His wife was training in Kung Fu nearby and after class, he would go over to wait for her and there was like half an hour left of class. Every time he walked into the training area, the Sifu for that Kung Fu class would



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stop the class and bow to him and acknowledge that a black belt had entered the training area. And you know, at one point after he pulled the Sifu aside and said, you know, sir you don't have to do that. I'm just here... You know, I'm kind of embarrassed. I'm just here, you know, waiting for my wife or whatever, I like to watch class. And the Sifu was like pretty much... It's not your choice, man. You know, it's like you're a black belt, that's the deal, suck it up. When you walk in, class stops, we're gonna bow to you, period. And it was kinda like... It's just such a funny thing. Cause he was human. You know, some of us, just, we don't... it feels odd. You know some people would demand. But some of us is kind of like, that just seems so strange. I just love that story, okay? You've earned it and now you gotta suck it up and deal with it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And to me I see kind of both sides to that. It's interesting because on the one hand, yeah, to offer that respect. But then if you truly respect that person and they're asking you, hey I'm not really comfortable with this, is it... it could almost be disrespectful to not honor their wishes in that case.

**Shawn Twing:**

Yeah. Then he gets this interesting circle or like a --

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Exactly.

**Shawn Twing:**

Yeah. I look at that as like, you know, if I'm coming at hanging out at your house then it's your rules, you know. It's no different than them, the home poker game. So, your house, your rules. So if your rules say that a black belt enters a facility and everybody stops and bows and I'm hanging out at your house, well guess what? Everybody is gonna stop and bow. You know, if you wanna come play in my sandbox and I, you know, I may make that decision knowing that that's your tradition so that when you enter I may stop and acknowledge that but not feel like another instructor would have to do the same thing for me. I think that's an easy solution. But I love it. I might love this stuff cause it's exactly this kind of a spiral of interests. Like what does all this stuff actually mean at the end of the day?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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Yeah. And it really just becomes this kinda microcosm for exploring humanity and psychology and how all of that comes together. When we talk about respect, it's you can earn respect. But the more I think about it, you can't demand it. It can only be given.

**Shawn Twing:**

Yeah, exactly.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And I just, I keep looking at that more and more. This notion of respect and how it flows. If respect is a sentiment, you know, it's a kind of an emotion, it's kind of an energy and it has to move. It has to transition in order for it to fill its purpose. Which means I have to give it over. If I respect you, I give you respect. I mean, that's the verb that we use.

**Shawn Twing:**

Right, yeah. Absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

You can't... Nobody's ever said I take respect from you.

**Shawn Twing:**

That's right.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I never heard that. I mean...

**Shawn Twing:**

I have not taken respect from you. Deal with it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

If I read that, I assume it's a terrible translation.



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### **Shawn Twing:**

Right. Right, that's interesting. Yeah, I can... it's funny cause we're both on the same page of this. I get wound up for about this stuff, too. Like we have, and this is sort of one of my weird things that I know for at least in the Dojo that I train where we have red belts who are... You know, once you get your red belt, your best case scenario would about a year away from being able to test for black belt. So a long period of time, you know, we give red belts a hard time to make that transition just to get them ready. And then there's sort of one school of thought where you start hearing people, start referring to red belts like Sir or Ma'am, occasionally or a Mister or a Miss and I'm just, I'm fanatical about it. Like you don't get the title, you don't get that recognition until you get the belt. Not because I don't respect the person. It's like okay, now you're a black-belt, now I respect you. Cause I don't want to dilute it. Like I want there to be a transition where it's like, I will call you by your first name right up until the moment you wear the belt. And then I will never call you by your first name again. Because I want there to be some distinction. And I'm not doing it to be a jerk, I'm not doing it because I don't respect the person at all. I mean, sometimes it's difficult because other often times like... We have a candidate for black-belt next Friday and you know, this is someone I've put a lot of heart and soul and time and energy into it, someone who I like a lot and really involved myself in his training. I'm incredibly proud of him and I have a tremendous amount of respect for him. But he's a red belt. It's like I'm gonna call you by your first name. I'm going to give you a hard time, when another instructor recalls you Mister or says Sir after class, I'm gonna make you do push-ups for that like I'm gonna do all that stuff. And then next Friday he'll get the rank and then it'll never happen again. Like I'll never... it's just, it's weird. It's such a funny thing but to me it's very important to recognize that distinction.

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

As you were talking about this person, you said that, what are the words you used? I've put a lot of time into this persons. That's kind of a funny sentence construct, isn't it? Outside of martial arts, I don't think we talk about that too often - to put time into a person. You might put time into a relationship, you might put time into a business or a hobby but I think anybody that's been a martial arts instructor probably knows exactly what that feels like - to put time into a person. So what is, you know for the people listening that aren't instructors or maybe wouldn't use the words in that way, what does that mean?

### **Shawn Twing:**





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That's a great question. I'm now on my second college class that I'm teaching. And I think teaching does have some of that. You do put effort into people when you teach. So I don't know that it's just the martial arts. I think the martial arts, it's a different kind of time investment. But it does feel like that. Like I'm not expending effort or energy or any kind of thought into building up my relationship with this persons. That's a byproduct. And the relationship was really independent of it. I mean he's out there on the mats, I'm out there on the mats, we're, you know, night after night after night we're going to have a relationship. And it's not like, it wasn't ever a thought like, oh well I really want to get to know this person so let me give him some feedback or let me get involved. It was more I saw this person training hard and I saw some things he could better and I brought that to his attention and I've offered him a choice. I said, you're at a fork in the road. You have the movement pattern for a fundamental kick that is not serving you well. You're just not doing it right. And you're at a rank where you've done it now, I don't know, 10, 12 thousand times wrong or you know, don't want to call it wrong, really not right. So you can go, you can get a black-belt with that and you'll have this for the rest of your life and you'll struggle with it and you'll wish that you fixed it. Or we can work on fixing it now and you know, I told him I don't need an answer right now. You tell me next class. This is what the deal is, if you wanna fix it, you don't ever get to throw that crappy round-kick again, at least not with me seeing it. You're going to have to throw really uncomfortable. And I tell him, you have to be uncomfortable for a long time to rebuild, you know, Tiger Woods rebuilding the swing kind of thing. So that's what we wanna do. So there was in that moment, and then when I came back to the next class he said, I wanna do this right. So whatever it takes to do it right, I wanna do it. On that, he had my attention like okay. So now, I've made a step toward this person and that person has now made a step toward me. Now it's on me to bring out the best in him. Now if he said nah, no thanks, coach. Doesn't mean I'd just okay see you later, I'm never going to help. It just means I couldn't help there. But that told me a lot about him as a person, told me a lot about him as a martial artist. And for whatever reason I saw, I'm like okay. I'm willing to invest whatever it takes cause he's willing to invest whatever it takes. I mean he struggled. The first three months were miserable. But then, he started to see wait a minute, that one looked like pretty good round-kick. And then all of a sudden there were more round-kicks than not good round-kicks. And now he's just has a rock-solid round-kicks. And he's going to test for black-belt and he's bringing with him a black-belt level round-kick. I'm like, great. That's what it's supposed to look like. That's what it's supposed to be, that's what it's supposed to feel like. So it does very much feel like an investment in a person but it's an investment that I don't... I expect no dividend from, I expect no pay-off for. I don't need him to, you know, walk off the floor after testing and come over and say, you know, I couldn't have done it without you. That would make me horribly uncomfortable. I didn't do the push-ups for him. I didn't do the reps. He did them. So that investment in another person is... I think it's without expectation of anything else. It's for the pure love of the art or the love



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of excellence, whatever. I don't know what it is but that's it. That's the deal. Not for some need to them, you know, make a champion who later comes back and says, oh I never would've done it without you. That would make me horribly uncomfortable.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

You described offering the suggestion to this student as taking a step towards them and then they took a step towards you and that was the point where you said, okay now it's time to work on this. Now is time to teach them, to help them. That could almost sound contradictory to the notion of investing in someone. I've seen instructors and honestly, I've been guilty of it myself in the past, of wanting someone to succeed more than they wanted to.

**Shawn Twing:**

Right. I was the recipient of that one. I was younger, I had a lot of people around me who would really... were trying to get me to do something that I was unwilling to do. And I'm unwilling to put the time in that. I can only imagine how frustrating that must have been. I mean I can predict myself back and imagine being in their shoes and just think, wow they really did a lot of work that was not paying dividends at that time, at least. But now, I look back on that 30 something years later and realize it kinda did pay dividend because it... I still look back on that and remember like okay, there were people out there who were dedicated to helping me succeed despite me not trying to at all. So you know, I have a model of how I can behave to.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

How do you keep yourself from... I'll ask it differently. How do you make sure you're putting in the right amount of effort with the student? How do you keep from underselling them, you know, or short-changing them, that's the word, or attempting to force that investment down their throat? Where's the line?

**Shawn Twing:**

That's a good question. Yeah, I mean for some... I think about this a lot. And I think, ultimately, we can put the canvas out there but the student has to paint it. So in the canvas may be a drill, a canvas may be a class. Who knows what the canvas actually is? Could be an entire program but the student has to get out there and say, I want to create something with this. You know, I see this all the time where about a class, that a third of the students in the class are listening to every nuance that an instructor says, they're doing every nuance, they're forcing themselves in the positions that are not entirely comfortable or because they want to push those edges. And



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then there's a, you know, a third in the middle that's, you know they're doing some things differently, they're pushing a little bit but they're not really uncomfortable. They're just kind of exploring the edges. And then there's a third or so that you don't even... you're not even sure that they heard anything that you said because they're doing the exact same thing they've done since day one with that technique, exploring none of the nuance that you just suggested. And you know, my personality, I at least call people's attention to that. I don't want to single somebody out and say hey, I noticed, you know, we've been doing fast kick for the last half an hour and I've gone through 50 variations and you've done the exact same thing through all 50, you know. And I don't want to call an individual out and say that. But I do bring it to everybody's attention that there is a spectrum that I'm observing. And one end to that spectrum is really pushing the edges, the other spectrum is staying in the comfort of habit, and here are the consequences of those two things. If you wanna push on the edges, it's going to be uncomfortable now but you will progress faster. If you want to stay where you're truly comfortable now, that groove becomes a rut very soon and you'll wake up and 10 years will go by and you will have the... you will be doing the exact same thing that you were doing right now. So those are the choices, you know. That's the canvas, you choose how you want to paint but I'm not someone who is going to go and grab the student by the shoulders and say, you're doing this wrong and do it right. And you know, wrong is subjective, of course, too.

#### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

You talked about people investing in you and maybe over-investing in you at the time but it ended up working out. When did you start? You've talked about your father, you've talked about a few things, I'm thinking we should go back a little bit.

#### **Shawn Twing:**

Yeah, it's fine cause we did this once and now, I'm just trying to remember what we actually talked about. So, I started training when I was 12, I'm 46 now. I tested for my first degree of black-belt in Korea at the Kukkiwon in 1997, tested for and received my first degree black-belt. Prior to... So, you know, it's four years between white belt and black-belt. Prior to, you know, during that time, you know, I definitely, you know, went through the motions, it was very old school training. My father was an incredible instructor. I picked up a lot but I didn't have that... Well my memory of it is that I didn't really have that inner fire that some people have, some people don't. So prior to going to Korea to test, probably a solid six months before that, one of the black-belts where I was training, put together this whole chart and it was like a countdown calendar. And it played off a story that my father told about when he was stationed in Korea. You know, this was a countdown chart, that stigma chart. You know, forget it I've got my



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orders, you know, you countdown to when you're leaving. And he sort of made that for me and it was like, we're gonna make this happen and he was like way into it. And I was just... I just bounced off, I mean yeah, great. That sounds great. I'm gonna train and I did... it didn't really change my training. And it just didn't push me or I didn't, you know, move toward... whatever it was. It's a long time to look back, it's 30 years ago. But I look back on it and think, I just didn't, I didn't respond to that. You know, we got to Korea, we got incredible opportunity and I... it was hard. I tested when we get... I think we've fought the Korean National High School Team or something so we had to do some really interesting stuff and it was fun. But I did not love the training. I did not love the experience and I certainly didn't love the testing. And now I do. I love my practice and I love my training. I love everything about it so when I look back and now I realize there were people who, in retrospect, were going out of their way to bring out something better in me and I didn't respond to it. I didn't respond to it then. I'd like to think it just took me a long time to respond to it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Why? You know, we haven't talked about a ton about your father but you know, I have some outside knowledge of you and your father and it almost... I think a lot of people, if they had known, if they knew your father's legacy, they would look at the contrast between him and your self-described the lack of fire, and find that fascinating? Do you have any insight?

**Shawn Twing:**

Yeah, you know, I think it just happens. This is a pretty stereotypical thing, you know. The football coach with the, you know, son or daughter, I guess it would be a son who's just not really interested in football but is on the team and never really excels. I mean, it's kind of that. It was kind of that thing happening. You know, I trained from, you know, I was one of the original 12 students in Randolph. I trained years, night after night after night. I think one of those things that was challenging for me is it was not a choice. Which, as a challenge, was also pretty grey in retrospect. But we went over at Randolph Tuesdays, Thursdays, every single week, two hours of class each night. I think in the, I don't know, in the time, for four years, between white belt and black-belt, I don't know that I missed two classes, total. There was never a choice. And I think, you know, when you're 12 to 16, at some point, you're gonna think wow, this Taekwondo thing is really getting to be a lot and not having any choice, you know it makes you, you know... I'm sure at some level felt like I didn't have, you know, a lot of agency in the situation. I don't know. It could have been laziness. I mean, it could've been a million things, you know. I would love to blame... I don't actually want to blame at all but I could spend a lot of time and blame a lot of factors. You know, one of my best friend that you've also interviewed



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on your podcast, just an incredible athlete, he showed up. He was amazing. I am standing next to someone who's incredible, honestly I was like, alright that's it, I'm done. Is that true? No. That's not. That's not what happened. All of that was independent of what was actually happening. So I think I just didn't... I don't know, I didn't really have that drive to fall in love with it. And I didn't find that drive until much later in my coming back to Taekwondo as an adult after thinking, you know, I would never train again. So it's interesting to look back. I don't feel like it was wasted time, you know. I certainly, from a technical perspective, you know, I laid the tracks for technique, I laid the tracks for how to train, the power of development and lots of things, had great relationships. But I just didn't fully take advantage of that situation. I wish I had... maybe. Unless it would've affected my training now. Like I don't want to have gone back and mess up what I have for training **27:28** now, so.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah. We are where we are because of where we've been

**Shawn Twing:**

Exactly. Like I think I had to get through the desert or have a reference for the desert to appreciate the oasis. And I think I don't know that I would appreciate what I have right now as much. And I... my daughter also trains now. She started when she was 12. The difference between my age and her age is the same as my father's age and my age so all of that kind of synced up. And I think I have a little bit better understanding of how to manage that relationship because of how I was on the other side of it. You know, my father was technically in the gym environment. My father was the, you know, the head instructor. He was instructor first, father second, not in any weird, you know, mean way or bad way or whatever. But in that environment, he was the head instructor. His job was to be the head instructor and I was one of the students and I appreciate that. And with my daughter, I play the role of black-belt first, dad second for a long time, a couple of years. And after a couple of years, I realized I'm... actually, my job is dad first, black-belt second. So when I interact with my daughter, my job is to have that... and even if it's in class, even if we're in uniform, my job is to come to her first as her father and if she says hey I don't... I'm not feeling great and I don't want to, you know, I want to step off the mat. Instead of having the demeanor of, you know, the black-belt who's sort of asking her questions from that perspective, especially the dad black-belt, to come to her as her dad, okay what's going on? What's up? Your knee hurts? Okay. Does it hurt because of this? Are you distracted? What's going on? Do you wanna go five more minutes? Or do you really need to do it but to meet her there like dad and be caring like a dad and to be her cheerleader. You know, that was one thing my father wasn't and I think it would've been weird



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if he were. But my father wasn't my cheerleader in anything martial arts related. And for a million reason, 99% of which I probably can't remember accurately so I look at that with my daughter. I want to be her cheerleader. And not cheerleader like I'm on the side of the mat [29:51](#) the greatest thing in the world but to always leave with her with that positivity of, you know, I'm speaking to you as your dad and I just saw, you know, you just had a testing and it looked like it was really hard but you powered through so let's focus on all of the good in what happened. And sure, later, we can talk about the technical things you can change and how you can improve, that's great. We'll talk about all that and I'll come to you as the instructor role, I'm not her instructor but a black-belt instructor role later. But for now, I wanna be your dad and I wanna pat you in the back and give you a hug and tell you that was awesome. And now, and then we can move on from there, like that's it. That's a big lesson that I've learned.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Do you think things would've been different for you if he had been a cheerleader in addition to your instructor?

**Shawn Twing:**

Ah, you know, I don't know. It's a good question. I don't... You know, one of my rules of life now is I don't want to need external positive reinforcement or any reinforcement, you know, external or whatsoever. I want all of that to come from within. So if I look at it through that lens, you know, I start to cringe like ugh. Yeah, if you'd come up and say wow, that looked great and throw up my mouth a little bit so there's a weird discomfort. And in some of my better memories of him were when he was in a cheerleader role and my favorite memories of him was driving back from a... I tested for red belt, which I failed. I believe I failed my red belt testing or red... but took red belt testing twice. But this was my first failure as a red belt. Our testing for red belt, we had to travel about an hour and a half. I thought my testing went very well at that time. We had a requirement for that testing where you had to break three boards with a sidekick with each leg and I was, I think, 15 at that time. I was a tall kid, probably weighed 160 pounds or so. So three boards was pretty legit and you have three attempts around each side to do it. So I made my break... I think one of the times I felt like I didn't make my break but this one, I made my break, everything seemed like it was great. Everybody was called up for their rank and I wasn't called up. And you can imagine the car ride home, you know. Dad's driving in the front seat, mom's sitting in the front seat, not saying a whole lot. I'm sitting in the back seat not happy at all. I'm in... I did have people come up to me saying that was a good test, you know. It looked good. It was a great test and that's all anybody said. But I very distinctly remember somewhere on 89 South, my father reaching up, adjusting the mirror so he could see



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me. He said, you were not going to pass this testing no matter what you did because I didn't like what I've been seeing in the gym for the last three months. Adjust the mirror, that was it. So for the rest of the drive home, I started thinking about what's the last three months look like in the gym? I've been kind of slacking here and there and maybe, you know, I had to do the mental inventory. I wasn't psyched about it, you know. I didn't feel like well that's a great decision, dad, thanks. But it did remind me that we test every single night, not just testing night. And that's... I wouldn't trade that lesson. If I could go back and have passed that testing, I would never do it. Because that was a profound lesson, that things you can do or not do can and should affect whether or not you progress in rank, at the time. And you can have a blowout performance. We've all seen people like that. They screw around in the gym, they don't put the effort in, they're naturally talented, athletic. They go out on the floor, they're testing looks incredible, they get the rank, they get the rank, they get the rank. But they don't have the character and they don't have, they're not... And it doesn't disservice to them, too. So I, that's the kind of stuff that you know, if I could trade that I would never, never trade that.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Did you take anything from that in the way that you look at testing candidates? Cause I'm guessing that there are some folks listening, cause I think I'm putting myself in this group, who would look at that scenario and say well why test him?

**Shawn Twing:**

I think we, if we narrowly define testing as the time between when you're called up before the review board and the time that you sit down, that does seem like a pretty weird thing. But if we define testing as the moment you get your new rank until the opportunity presents itself to get your next rank, then it makes perfect sense. That I wouldn't... There wasn't a mechanism in place to say... I mean, I guess he could have said you know what, you're eligible to test but I just... I don't like what I've been seeing so I'm not going to put you out on the floor. That would have had some impact. And I probably would have grumbled and alright, you know, whatever. I don't know that would've been that excited about that. But the way he did it, that I didn't get to get out there and put myself in the fire, I did get to have that feeling of success of making the breaks. To have that belief like wow, I went out there and I physically performed. And to walk off the mat and have the focus on physical and then realize later, hey guess what? Physical's just part of it. It's, you know, you passed that part of it but the three months prior or six months prior or whatever it was all of the other stuff. You didn't do that. So now let's shine some attention on it. Which, it's such an interesting thing now because every time I step on the mat, every class does not matter, every technique. Every second I'm out there, I'm thinking that I'm



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testing. And I'm not due to test again for three and a half years. But every moment I'm on the mat, I'm... this is testing. This is preparation, you know. This is... Am I in ready stance, did my eyes wander a little bit? You know, it's not like oh, who's looking? Who cares? It's like, no this is I'm testing. I need to show up 100% every time. Well that's an idea, of course, we don't. But that's still the standard. That's still the idea - to show up that weight every single moment. So that's, I mean, I wouldn't trade that lesson for the world.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

What's going through your mind as you're doing that? I mean that's a lot of intensity to hold onto. It's something that I think for some of us, most of us arguably, we can do that for a finite period of time. If you say you have to maintain this 100% level for an hour or two hours or you know, a week of classes or even these 90 days. But the moment you say it's indefinite, that becomes a struggle for a lot of people mentally, emotionally.

**Shawn Twing:**

Absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

How do you approach it?

**Shawn Twing:**

So I used to hide from who I am. It sounds like this weird, like deep psychological... It's not what I'm talking about. Like I used to... You know, I can be super intense about things and you know, one of the things that I say a lot... you know, I was like teach in other situations, how you do anything is how you do everything. So the example I used a lot is if we're for running around the Dojo and we're going around the outside edges, you will see people who cut the corners. It's just some people just shave off the corners and they go. If we're starting a back and forth drills, there's a coloration change in the mats that sort of the starting point and you'll see people have a foot halfway into the next mat to shave off, you know, a little bit of effort. If you do that, if that's how you approach things, then it shows up, in my opinion, in my experience, it shows up everywhere. That if you cut corners in how you, you know, present your uniform, how you fold your uniform, how you've run a drill, your attention to detail, wherever you cut those corners, you know it's that death by a thousand cuts that overtime, even the math it's kind of crazy. You know, like one of the examples I used is we have a... like a kicking drill up the line from the back of the gym forward. That extra half step seems inconsequential. Maybe every





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other time you get one extra rep. But you do that five times and you do that three nights a week, and then you multiply that by 30 years and you realize, you've probably lost tens of thousands of reps from that one little decision. Or tens of... I don't know, hundreds of miles of jogging before class by cutting that corner consistently. So the way... when I look at that within that model, from my personality, the way I approach things, I don't do stuff halfway. It's either I don't do something at all which is, you know, selective attention, but if something has my attention then I've accepted this idea that I'm going to do me. I don't ask you to do, you know... I don't ask you to do me. You do you. And you know, if your approach is like listen, I'm not gonna change you - when I say you, I mean the Imperial of you. If I'm talking to talking or like oh, you know, I kind of like my training I like 2-3 years between testing to just kinda kick back and chill and sort of just have and really enjoy my time on the mat and then I want to hit it had for six months leading up to testing. And that's you and that's your thing and that works for you, that's it. That's perfect. I don't need to impose me on you. But what I used to do is I used to kind of tell myself like, it doesn't make any sense to me at all. I would never do that but I would be apologetic. Like if someone says like, why are you so intense on the mat? Or why are you putting so much power into that drill or why are you doing that? I would almost feel bad and it was a fairly recent change. It was just last year or 18 months or so. Whereas like you know, I'm not going to interrupt your thing but I'm also going to draw boundaries around mine and say you know, if you wanna get water during the water break and I want to do push-ups during the water break, I'm not commenting on you getting a water. That's not what this is. This is not me editorializing. I'm not working around saying why isn't anybody else doing push-ups, why is everybody else getting water. I don't have any judgement bout that at all but at the time, I'm not thirsty and I have an opportunity for 30 or 40 push-ups and I'm gonna take it. And I'm not going to apologize for it. And I think that's... I think you just have to find your own groove. You know I was at a seminar last weekend and you know, I asked a lot of questions. I mean, detailed questions and I could tell like, I'm asking a lot of questions but I was like, you know what, this is me. I wanna figure this stuff out. I'm showing respect to this person because I really care about what you're teaching and I'm really immersed in it. And I'm going to ask the questions to really understand it and I'm gonna be okay with that. And if somebody else wants to just passively watch and think, oh that guy, he sure is asking a lot of questions. Okay, that's cool. You do you, I'll do me and everything's A-Okay. That's kind of my overall life philosophy. That's a long answer to a short question.

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

But a great answer. I like it. I think the heart of what you just said was that you're not editorializing. And so often, whether it's in martial arts or the world in general, when someone does something differently than we do it. We look at it and think well, if they're doing it that



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way, they must believe that what they're doing is right and thus what I'm doing is wrong. And that creates a defensiveness.

**Shawn Twing:**

Right.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And of course -

**Shawn Twing:**

That's exactly the problem and that happens a lot. And that's where what I said can go horribly wrong. So you do have to communicate. And I think I'm better at that but that is... That's the first step I should've mentioned what you just touched on. And said this has to be external and clear to everybody else that I'm doing my thing because that's for me. And I'm in a... you know, we talk about all the time that you're your imaginary opponent on the mat and it's, you know, the person's your same size, your same everything and I think that's a beautiful metaphor because that's who I'm competing with. I'm out there competing with me from yesterday and I want me tomorrow to be better than me yesterday. And I'm not competing with you. I'm not judging you, I'm not anything you. I might... If I switch gears, my role is to help you, I will help you with the same intensity that I help myself and I have to be a little cautious about that but I'm not judging you. And once people get that, I think they get it but you're absolutely right. That if they don't get it, it seems like a real slap and a real like judgement. And that's where I drop the ball for a long time.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I've heard some fantastic stories come from you, you know, at the various events that we've been at. And listeners, you may have picked up that Mr. Twing was one of the victims of the technical issues where we lost his first episode and he was kind enough to come back on and you told some fantastic stories then. I would love for you to tell us one now your favorite story from your time in martial arts.

**Shawn Twing:**

Yeah, I told this last time. This is my all-time favorite of all things. I was in 5th grade, funny to remember things that long ago. But I remember 5th grade, went to a tournament. I was not a



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martial artist at that time. I started in 7th grade. My dad, you know, my father was stationed Nonsan in Korea, got a black belt in Taekwondo. At that time, Tangsudo, Taekwondo and also black-belt Judo. I joked around, I'm 6'2", weigh 225 and my leg to torso ratio was perfect for Judo so I look back to the little sadness that my father could've chosen Taekwondo or Judo and he chose the one that physiologically I'm least likely to be successful in. My father came back, there's always a martial arts instructor. So I grew up in it. I didn't, you know, the fish wasn't aware of the water. I didn't... I wasn't aware that that's what I was growing up in and I was just around it all the time and we went... I accompanied him to a tournament and the person who was the tournament director had recently been promoted to Master rank so... You know, it's very common. We've all experienced this that you've called someone mister or miss or missus for years, you know, some 10, 12 years and then one day their rank changes. They're Masters. And it's not disrespectful, it's just habit that we will occasionally refer to them as mister or miss or missus, often correct ourselves immediately. But it's not disrespect, it's just habit. So this particular tournament director was, I remember, there was a large crowd around him and people were engaging with him and asking him questions. And it was clear he was getting very angry and finally he just stepped up, like stepped on a chair and then stepped on the table. And it's such a weird thing to remember cause it's just this person towering over the crowd, wagging his finger to the audience saying, you know, my name is Master so-and-so and I will not be referred to as Mister and if, you know... Basically, if you do that, you're not welcome here and I mean really, he was mad. And I kinda looked over it, you know, like my father. My father, you know, at times, was Mister, I never heard him... I don't even know that I was aware of the term Master other than my colleague at that time. But my father looked over at me when the thing died down and as we walked away, he looked over at me saying, that's an important lesson. So you're gonna meet two people, two types of people in your life. You're going to meet people like that who demand your respect. And then you're going to meet people who command your respect and those people, you want to be around. And you want to be somebody like that. Don't demand people's respect. You just, you do what you need to do and if you're earning their respect, it'll show up, you know. And that was it. That was... I don't that we ever talked about that again. I don't have any memory of referring to that conversation again but here I am, 30-ish, I don't know how many years later, that I remember that conversation like it was yesterday. And I think about that conversation almost every single day of my life. I think about that - am I putting myself in the position where I am demanding somebody's respect? You know, hey look at me, hey don't you know how talented I am? Hey don't you know how smart I am? Or am I just showing up and doing what needs to be done whatever the situation is. And if I've earned that respect or not, that's what happens. That's what I get. So if I wanna show up and be an idiot, then you know... I can't show up and be an idiot then have like why is everyone treating me like an idiot? Well, I showed up like an idiot so that kinda makes sense. You know it was funny, I had this... this past weekend, I was at this seminar where there were no uniforms



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and lots of different styles. And probably 60 or so participants there, if you lined up all 60, after like... we had 20 minutes to just kinda hang out and engage and then 10 seconds of conversation. If I could walk down the line and have 10 seconds of conversation with each person who was there, I would be willing to bet that I would have an 80 or 90% hit right to tell you who... the people there who were Master rank or referred to themselves as Master or in some sort of tradition that had that. With of significant level of accuracy, yeah you can recognize it instantly. And you can recognize the people who maybe they have the title but they... or they don't have the title or they wish they had the title but it was so incredibly evident by each person's presence. If they were commanding of one's respect or if they were demanding or just not looking for it at all; very interesting experience.

#### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

How did that manifest? For someone that may be is newer to martial arts or just otherwise isn't quite sure they get what you're saying, what was the difference in those folks who conduct themselves as, we'll say, a Master equivalent or not.

#### **Shawn Twing:**

I think it's humility. You know, it comes down... there's a courtesy element of it too. But I think the signal was humility. I see that more often and you know, there's this saying, game recognizes game, master recognizes master. I mean if you're good at something and you see somebody else who's just really good at something, could be something totally different, you recognize if somebody's good with what they're doing. And I think there was a certain element of... You could see those people there who had humility, who had... who carry themselves in a ways where it was they were there for the experience of training with this person. They were there to learn, they bought an empty cup and they weren't trying to say, you know, okay I'm hearing what you're saying, I payed to learn something from you but now I'm going to tell you why I think I am right. You could just sort of see it there. There was a question or there was a drill or there was something happening. And they were, you know, it was beginner's mind or as you're doing a partner drill. You could tell that they were not, they weren't trying to show you that they were great. They were just trying to be there, present, and learn. And really, that humility. But what became very interesting is by the end of the, you know, you're pairing up with a lot of people over the course of many drills and by the end, there were probably, I would guess, six or eight pairs of people working together. And out of those six or eight pairs, there were some cross-pollination where there were sort of people mixing with other group. My guess is that group was all fairly sophisticated martial artists at the end of the day. I think everybody's still selected with a lot of the criteria being no ego, total humility. But recognition,



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that... okay this person knows what's up. And we weren't doing drills that would've shown martial arts technical skill, really. I mean, you'd sort of tell how you carry yourself comes out, shows a little bit but that's not what the indicator was. So I think it's just... You know what, I think there is a humility to someone who is... It's like you know, I was security in a bar for a couple of years in college. The person running their mouth, wanting to fight is not scary. The person who stares at you in the eyes, knowing there's violence all around and looks really calm, that person's scary. That's the person you take very seriously. And that is... it's the humility, it's the calmness, it's... There is a certain... I had an experience years later being in, just happening to be with a friend in a bar where sort of a classic right-out-of-the-movies bar fight happened and it was my friend's group and of friends and this other group of people. It had nothing to do with me and I wanted nothing to do with it. And across the way, I noticed somebody watching it. And it was so interesting to watch it, man. It's like that is the one person in this whole situation that I would not want to tangle with. Because he looks very calm and have passively watching it. And after like the mayhem stopped and the police came and the mayhem was ended, I went and talked to him. And he was a PDR spear instructor. And not a huge guy or anything else but he was perfectly okay in that environment. We had a great conversation. It was kind of funny because we were both watching each other and like, why is that guy look totally calm in this situation when there's violence all around? I just found that fascinating. That's the same thing that you pick on the seminar. You can look around and know who... you know who needs to be in your face to assert that they're great and who needs to just stand back and let that reveal itself or not, and not care.

#### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

We started off the conversation talking a lot about ego and it seems like that dovetails it. You know, it's the need to getting your face and remind people that you're great or you deserve a title or something Whereas the other folks who have, we'll say accomplish things, who have earned respect, who know that they've earned the respect of those around them. They don't need to ask, they don't need to talk about it. It just... it is.

#### **Shawn Twing:**

Yeah. And I think there's also an element of recognizing the more that you learn, the more you realize you don't know anything. Like that was what I experienced this weekend. I've been involved in the martial arts 34 years. You know, I'm a 4th degree black belt so and I have some, some competence in the martial arts. I couldn't fake it this far. I feel like there's, you know, I kind of get some things. But you know, when I... You know, I was talking to my best friend after the event, you know, what did you think? And I said, I think it's going to take me the next 10



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years to unpack 5% of what I learned. And I wasn't saying that, I wasn't being facetious. It was kind of like that recognition like... yeah. And I mean there's certainly a level of expertise in this area. But that's one path up the mountain. And we're all climbing the same mountain. There are lots of other paths so I could go laterally and go explore a different path. So I know that there's a lot that I don't know but the fact that I'm on a path, I'm not on a hundred others so there's that. And then, to be around someone and train with someone who is truly a Master. I mean in the purest sense of the word, who brings content and a way of seeing things, it is just so profoundly interesting and to realize okay, just for me to understand what he explained at the most basic level of it, he understands it. I probably need a decade to really, to really get there. Even with that, you know, to his expertise showing where all the kicks quicksand is and what to avoid, I still need a solid 10 years to internalize 5% of that. Like I think that's a big part of it. You know, the instructors who don't... well not just instructors but any practitioner of any art, not just the martial arts, who are like okay, I've got the rank or I've hit the level and that's either I'm stopping or I'm gonna focus on some other thing. And maybe the other that you focus on, there's an opportunity for tremendous amount of growth. Maybe you're a competitor now, you're an instructor and you focused on your growth as an instructor which changes it. It's less about bringing the best out in yourself and how do you bring the best out in others. Well that's an art, too. And there are certain people who will do that and they will pull it apart and reconstruct it and realize that they really don't know anything at all compared to what there is to know. And that to me is, that's such a beautiful thing to see. Or to be around somebody who is so profoundly masterful at something and to have them total humility and no ego because they know so much that they know they really don't know anything, you know. They're seeing the void. And when you see the void, you realize okay, alright. So... You know, I used to example a round-kick all the time. You know, there's... I've been working on my round-kick for a long time. I don't expect to have my round-kick perfect ever and there's always more work to be done. I mean at the same time, I'm not going to quit working on it. I love working on it. But I have no expectation ever. And I'm like, you know what, this is it. My round-kick? It's undone. I've got to figure out, I can't, you know, on demand it'll be perfect. No. It's just forever. Always something to learn. I've spent half an hour this morning like with some epiphany about pelvis position with the round-kick. And I'm like where did that have... 34 years, how did I not notice this? Like what just happened here? How did I miss this obvious thing? I never would've seen it had three things, three disparate things not coming together within five days of each other that... I mean totally random things that came together and I realized, wow. I've been approaching something that I do as a fundamental movement in my practice incompletely for the last 34 years. Now I have to reset and think about it. That's just... That to me is what's so beautiful about this.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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It's fascinating stuff. And it's amazing how those epiphanies, those moments of clarity can come from the strangest sort of non-martial arts scenarios, you know. To watch someone moving around, one of the things you and I have in common that the listeners don't know it fitness. That you know, we both have some rather a passionate views on exercise and fitness and strength. And I'm gonna for you, cause I know it's the case for me, that my time spent in gymnastics and in parkour and in cross-fit have led to epiphanies in martial arts.

### **Shawn Twing:**

Yeah, absolutely. It's funny that you... it's such an interesting... I love serendipity. It's such an interesting... that you said that because this weekend at the seminar, one of the realizations that I had was exactly that. Like I didn't have a metaphor for what I was learning. I didn't have some scaffolding I could hang it on. And the person who was my partner at one point, for some reason we just got talking about previous training, he mentioned that he had trained in kettle bells for years which I did as well. And we both simultaneously realized like it immediately realized that the drill that we were doing was 100% analogous to the kettle bell snatch. So when you learn the snatch, for anyone who's not familiar with the snatch it's a ballistic movement where you take the kettle bell from a hips-loaded position, hips back, body upright, kettle bell between the legs and then propel it up with your hips, up over head and insert your hand in the handle. And because it's ballistic move, you can't half do a snatch. So the way you train the snatch is you train a one-handed swing, progressively higher, and you train a one-handed cling where you're bringing up the kettle bell at a chest height to get your hand in the handle. And then at some point, someone just says snatch. The instructor, whatever it is, and you put those two things together and there's no rule for like, oh didn't quite do it. The kettle bell goes up, your hand had to... You know, it's 53 pounds or whatever it is, 70 pounds, the kettle bell goes up, the hand has to go on the handle up over your head in one moment. That was the three things or two things or many things becomes one thing. And as we were talking about that, the movement that we're doing, the practice that we're learning, I was like this is the kettle bell snatch. Because we're doing, we're learning something... you know, we're learning the one-handed swing right now. We're learning this thing and then we've also learned this other thing. And this other thing, in my guess is tomorrow, these things that feel like free things are going to become one thing. And that our mind will see what was three things, we will now see as one thing. And when the mind sees it as one thing, that's where you get the efficiency, that's where you get the myelination of the circuits in the brain in you physiology that fires it faster. You know, that's where that expression comes from that you know, when an amateur practices something till he gets it right. And the professional practices something until she can't it get wrong. You know, when you've wrapped the circuit with so much myelin and then your brain, that it fires so fast, that you can't do it wrong. Like I've mentioned my best



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friend several times, Master Gordon White, we've been friends for 32-ish years. I don't know if he can do a round-kick wrong. You know, it'd be interesting. I think he would have a really difficult time doing a poor round-kick because he has a circuit that... he has a lot of different variations but he has circuit in his physiology that is labeled round-kick and when he fires that circuit, a thing happens so efficiently and so effectively that he... I don't that he could do it incorrectly. And that really, to me, is such a fascinating thing. We can take something that we already know how to do and use that as a scaffolding to build something else onto it, recognizing like okay, this is the same thing. Like this drill, which was a power generation drill to show how we pull power out of the ground and express it in our extremity, knowing that that's a kettle bell snatch, in my mind, now I know the progression from here to there. And how long it took me to learn how to do a snatch effectively. I know what it feels like now. And now I know what the next couple of years look like for me in this other of practice. I think that's so deep... There's something about that that's so powerful.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

This has been awesome. This has been a lot of fun and you know. A bit of a different conversation than we had last time but I think better. Huh?

**Shawn Twing:**

Yeah, it's great. I...

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah

**Shawn Twing:**

It's funny cause I don't, I never know what I'm going to say till I hear myself say it. So I kind of remember the last conversation but not so much that I don't really remember. I think things happen for a reason, right? We covered some ground last time and I think...

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Exactly.

**Shawn Twing:**





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Wasn't, for whatever reason, the universe steps in and says yeah, that was a great conversation with the two of you to have but the world didn't need it. Or our small world didn't need to hear it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah.

**Shawn Twing:**

Which is funny, you know. To think about it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Right. Right. Now, you know, I'm gonna see you in a week which is awesome. I'm excited for that. But for those folks not fortunate enough as I am to that we'll get to get some time with you soon, if people want to reach out to you, if they wanna get a hold of you, you know, how would they do that?

**Shawn Twing:**

The best thing to do is send me an email. It's [stwing@gmail.com](mailto:stwing@gmail.com). That's the easiest way to reach me. I am not a professional martial artist, I'm a hobbyist. I run my own business. By day I train, you know, I train during the day and I train at night as well but I don't have a gym to promote or a course to promote or anything like that. I'm a beginner's mind. I'm right after learning, learning, learning with everybody else. One thing I do want to mention though which I think is really interesting, this is... It get backs to that weird universe thing. So at our last conversation, one of the questions you asked me was if I could train with any martial artist in the world, who would I train with? You know, my first answer was my father cause I lost my father when I was 29 to cancer. But my second answer was this gentleman, DK Yoo, who is a Korean uhm... He's been called the reincarnation of Bruce Lee. And he's just tapped into something. I've been following him for years on YouTube and trying to find anything I could find about him. So after... The challenge with DK Yoo was that he offers courses in one-on-one training in Korea. And he's occasionally travelled to Europe. And we, you know, I haven't been back to Korea since I tested but I've had it in the back of my mind, you know, our next Korea trip if I go, then I would, it's with the bucket list thing, I would go train with DK Yoo and try to make that happen. But a couple of friends of mine and I were going to Europe in the fall. So literally after our last call, I said you know what, I need to see, you know, maybe there's this crazy chance that DK Yoo is going to be in Europe. And you know, while we're there and I'll



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just, if he is, I'll just stay a little extra, I'll go to the thing. I mean absolutely, I was totally psyched for it. And not joking, within an hour of our last call, I went to... I'm sorry, it was the day after our last call. I went to his website and there it was. February 24th, 25th, New York City, first time DK Yoo in the United States. And I was like, how weird is that? Like how crazy is that? And that's the seminar I went to last weekend. And I don't think I would've seen that. I might have stumbled on it, who knows. But I would not have actively gone and look for that had we not had this conversation last time. And I would've missed the life-changing martial arts experience, training experience. So... I owe you a huge thanks, and to Europe for making that happen. Which I think is incredible.

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

Well I think 101% of any debt is to the universe not to me. We just talked about it and we wouldn't have talked about it had it not been for you. And this is a good time to mention folks of course, if you are new to the show, [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com), it's where we'll drop the show notes. You know, we'll link to Master Gordon White who we've talked to about today and DK Yoo's website and anything else that we've talked about that seems worth sharing with you all. I thank you for being here. It's been a lot of fun, as always. I love our conversations and you know, this one we just happened to record but I know we'll have more in the future that listeners, you won't get to hear it because you know what, I can't record my whole life for you. And I would just love for you to send us out with some parting words, some last bits of wisdom for everyone.

### **Shawn Twing:**

This took me a long time to figure out and I hope this works to everybody else's learning experience, you know. We... there is a science to practicing well. A deeply studied science of how to practice well and how to practice effectively. You know, it's a gentleman by the name of K. Anders Ericsson who's really pioneering this research. He's the one that came up with it. Research that Malcolm Gladwell used in *Outliers*. Unfortunately, Malcolm Gladwell completely misinterpreted the data, completely misinterpreted the research. Never talked to Ander Ericsson so if you've read *Outliers*, you're like, oh yeah, I know it's 10,000 hours and that's how you become excellent at something. That's actual not true at all. But K. Anders Ericsson has written a book, it's called *Peak* and it's about purposeful practice and the different types of practice. Deliberate practice probably isn't accessible to most of us because that requires coach and some full-time and other things. But purposeful practice is how we've been taught to practice isn't entirely effective. Going out and doing things that you're doing, that you know how to do and repeating them over and over and over again, whether it's a form or a technique



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or whatever it is, the research is pretty clear. Actually, the research is exceptionally clear. You're not getting any better. You're doing the same things over and over again is not the path to getting better. But there is a very clear evident space of path to getting better. If you can get it for like 14 bucks on Amazon on a Kindle format, it'll take you two hours to read it. And it will transform your practice. Martial arts practice or any other ones. If there's any wisdom I an offer is that, it's not my wisdom, it's the wisdom of others. And that book is an absolutely essential to any martial artist practice

### **Jeremy Lesniak:**

What a great episode. Thank you Mr. Twing for sharing your ideas as well as your values. I admire your passion, your humility, and the openness with what you spoke. Thank you for your time and your friendship. If you want to check out the show notes with everything that we've talked about today, you can find those at [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com). Sign up for the newsletter, and maybe you share this episode or another one of your favorites somebody who hasn't found the show yet. The numbers keep going up, we keep finding new listeners, and that means the world to me. As I've said before, without listeners, I'm just a crazy guy on a microphone talking to himself or in this case, one other person. That's lonely. So knowing that you're out there listening, that's helpful, meaningful. I appreciate it. Feel free to reach out. You can comment at the show notes, you can get to us via social media. We are @whistlekick. Or if you'd like to email me directly, [jeremy@whistlekick.com](mailto:jeremy@whistlekick.com) until next time. Train hard, smile, and have a great day.