



Episode 44 - Sifu Angel Durnick | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com

Jeremy Lesniak:

Hey there everyone it's episode 44 of whistlekick martial arts radio, the only place to hear the best stories from the best martial artists like today's guest Sifu Angel Durnick. I'm whistlekick's founder Jeremy Lesniak and I'm also your host here for martial arts radio and here at whistlekick we make the world's best sparring gear and some great apparel and accessories every bit of it for traditional martial artists. I'd like to welcome out new listeners and thank all of you returning fans, if you're not familiar with our products you should check out everything we offer like our lightweight sparring gloves, softer foam and extra reinforcement means they're more comfortable to wear but still lasts much longer than the competition. We put a bunch of ventilation on the back too to cut down on the sweat build up. You can learn more about our sparring gloves and all of our other gear and apparel at whistlekick.com. All of our past show episodes all the show notes and a lot more are at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com and while you're on our website, why don't you sign up for our newsletter we offer exclusive content to subscribers and it's the only place to find out about upcoming guests. Now on to today's episode. On episode 44 we're joined by Sifu Angel Durnick, Sifu Durnick is like most of our guests a lifelong martial artist. She's trained in a number of styles and was well known on the New England competition scene for many years. But that's not why we brought her on. Sifu Durnick has dealt with some significant personal challenges over a fairly short period of time. Despite that, she's kept her chin up and faces every day with grace and a positive attitude she shared her stories openly and graciously which made my job really easy so with that. Sifu Durnick welcome to whistlekickmartialartsradio.com.

Angel Durnick:

Hi Jeremy thank you so much for having me I'm really excited.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Oh I'm excited to have you this is gonna be a lot of fun so why don't you jump into it why don't you tell us how you got started in the martial arts and when and where and all that other good stuff people like asking.

Angel Durnick:

Well actually I started a little bit later in life when I think some people who have been training 02:16 I've started at the age of 12 I saw kinda funny story saw the power rangers on TV and I was like that looks easy I can do that. It's not easy but I said hey I definitely want to give that a try so I talked to my parents and my mom was definitely a little hesitant and not too thrilled about me wanting to do martial arts and my dad said hey let her try it she'll probably stop after a couple of months anyway and here we are over 20 years later and I'm still involved in martial arts.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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That's great and it's funny that you know at age 12 seems to be late in life for martial arts isn't it?

Angel Durnick:

Right.

Jeremy Lesniak:

So many of us start I mean I started when I was 4 and I'm certainly not an anomaly and starting so early but starting at 12 is certainly the vast majority of your life and of course the part that counts.

Angel Durnick:

Right right.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Part where you're all developmental and everything so what styles or what style did you start in and what did you like about it that kept you going until now?

Angel Durnick:

The style that I started in actually was traditional uechi ryu karate with Master GM 03:25 and getting into that it was very traditional there was a lot of techniques and such that was really enforced there was no tricks there was no any type back flips everything was very straight edge you learn your basic forms 03:47 doing such like that and I just I really loved I was the only girl in the class. I used to absolutely love training with the boys I didn't shy away at all I loved sparring with them I loved learning forms I loved learning the right way to punch I loved my instructor he was absolutely fantastic I had several other instructors that I really love too. Master Tony West and Master Bill 04:17 and they were just absolutely amazing role models and amazing at what they did and from that point I knew I was hooked right from the beginning I knew I was gonna be in martial arts forever.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Even though you weren't learning how to be a power ranger?

Angel Durnick:

No. I wasn't learning how to be a power ranger so yeah I mean I started in uechi ryu and then down the road I started which is a very hard style actually and then kinda funny I got other 04:43 kung fu which is a soft style so completely opposite but it was really nice because they focus on different things like



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weapons doing more different types of self 04:56 forms which I really love and it's really flashy and I really enjoyed going out and doing some of the flashy stuff it's fun to do it just looks different it looks really hard and it looks really unique compared to what you know traditional hard styles look like out there on the 05:13 you don't see that every day as some Taekwondo competitors and just like that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Cool yeah and so what did you like about I mean you mentioned some of the contrast there but I'm guessing that there was some synergy there for you there was something about not just one versus the other but one with the other that you kind of pulled in I mean most people that I talked to would've trained in a number of arts have they start drawing connections between the 2 did you do any of that?

Angel Durnick:

Oh yeah I think when you're in that really good schools no matter style you're in there's a lot of things that are similar. The respect aspect and trying to develop the students into learning about themselves and pushing themselves, I think all sports teaches that to some extent but I know martial arts really builds off of that, you're really taught right from the beginning to push yourself past what you think that's your limits are and how to be a leader and how to motivate others and how to make healthy choices all those things regardless of the style that you do I think is really built in to the traditions of martial arts and I really love that having the traditions and being able to use 06:32 different styles together and taking the strength of each one and being a better martial artist because of it.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah I do too cause they're all absolutely wonderful things and of course here at martial arts radio we're big on stories I mean that's what we do we tell stories so I wanna give you the opportunity now to tell us your best now that we know a bit about who you are your best martial arts story.

Angel Durnick:

Oh gosh. I have so many stories. I think one of my favorite ones actually was when I was really young and I first started and I was in uechi ryu and as I said before my mom was kinda hesitant on me doing martial arts initially I think she was afraid I was gonna get hurt and all those things my dad said let her sign up I'm telling you she'll stop in a few months she'll be fine and I was sparring and just had a freak accident I had broken my collarbone and you know a 12 year old breaking their collarbone in the sport you think they're pretty much done and I cried my eyes out and it was because I wanted to keep training and I had to not train and I think at that point my parents realized uh oh 07:44 she's not quitting anytime soon.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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Now what was their response to seeing that dedication?

Angel Durnick:

I think they were really proud of me I think any parent would be proud of their child but they really saw how it helped me develop into the woman that I am today. They really respected the fact that I work so hard and that I would get up early in the morning and I would train eventually you know 08:09 train go to school, get out of school come home to my homework, that was always a priority I had to have good grades if I didn't have good grades I wasn't gonna be training or competing in martial arts at all and then I would go and I would train and I would teach until sometimes 9 10oclock at night and then get up and do it all over again and 08:28 they really were proud of that dedication that I gave to the sport.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I think any teenager that's waking up before school to do anything I mean sometimes I don't know if you remember I remember as a teenager good number of my friends not even showering before school

Angel Durnick:

Right

Jeremy Lesniak:

Barely you know making it out the door with an apple and their books but here you are getting up training I mean that shows a level of dedication and certainly passion for the martial arts it's kind of abnormal for kids that age.

Angel Durnick:

Right I'm not a morning person I never have been but I remember there were times even on weekends 09:05 there wasn't a tournament which was rare I would have private lessons and sometimes they were at 5 in the morning or 6 in the morning depending on what time the instructor could get there and I'd have one eye open but it was just it was part of it it's what you had to do if you really love what you're doing and if you really wanted to move on and be the best that you could be but you just you did have the choice you had to do and I don't regret one second of that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

It's fantastic and yeah learning that you're not a morning person makes it even more impressive.

Angel Durnick:



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Thanks.

Jeremy Lesniak:

For sure, so you started even if you're gonna call it later than most you still started pretty early in life so it's hard for us to probably imagine what who you would be without martial arts but I'd like you to try. Imagine what your life might look like and where do you think you would be today if you would never step foot in that dojo?

Angel Durnick:

Oooh wow, you know martial arts has really molded me into who I am to the point where I really it's hard for me to even imagine where I would be without martial arts. My parents from the time I was really little really demanded from me to be the best that I could I know I didn't have to be a winner all the time I could make mistakes but they try to instill hard work and dedication and all those things in me from a really early age so I think I would still have some of those skills however when you do something that becomes such a part of you like martial arts I think some people train and then they become whatever ranks they're gonna be and they look at it as it's a hobby 10:52 what's in a hobby that it truly it made me into a different person so I really couldn't even tell you where I would be right now I probably wouldn't be as successful or strong as a person as I am now some of the experiences I've had in my life has been no ups and downs I've had some wonderful experiences I've met some wonderful people and I've had some really hard times in my life even recently and I don't think that I would be as strong or as advanced with who I am and where I am without it. Period.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Fair enough so you mentioned highs and lows and our next question is about the lows. Tell us about a point I your life that you know maybe wasn't quite as rosy as the rest of it and how your martial arts training and experience helped you moved through it.

Angel Durnick:

Oh wow okay well I got 2 for you actually. One was a couple of years ago I've been married now for 12 years and my husband and I had wanted children and we were expecting twin sons and of course I already had little gis picked out for them I was ready to go and a little bit more than half way through my pregnancy I ended up losing both my sons and they were alive for a couple hours and we had you know some wonderful time with them but there is nothing harder in life I don't think than any parent burying their children it's just not normal it's not something that you're not doing it's not something that you ever think of even possibility in your life so the experience that was really really hard and you have to go through mourning obviously everyone handles things differently but I think right from the beginning the entire experience I really did look at it as when I was training in my martial arts there are times where



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you sit there and you say am I gonna make it through this is this my limit have I reached my limit in my life right now how am I going to 13:03 tomorrow how am I going to push myself a step further and when you think that you hit your limit there's so much more that you can do and so much further that you can go and that's really what helped to get me through that is remembering my training and remembering you know the test that you were on and your black belt test you know everyone I think remembers their black belt test at a time where you're like this is it this is how it ends for me, I'm done I don't know if I can go on any further but you have to trust the people that you care about around you and that love you and know and your instructors included they know your limits and their gonna push you beyond that and that just makes you a stronger person in the long run. So that was certainly one experience recently this summer actually | 13:51 I was in martial arts most of my life I have the normal aches and pains you know how that is you get out of bed you are like oh I need to do some stretching a little bit oh my arm my knee and my arm was bothering me and I thought to myself geez I wonder if I you know finally broke my rotator cuff you know it could've been anything so I go to the doctor and you know they do some tests and I get told to pay just to make me know we found a brain tumor so I was like I'm sorry what are you sure you must have wrong patient there's no way I this is not be happening to me and they said you know these found brain tumor we think it's non-cancerous but you need to see a specialist so I went to 14:40 hospitals in Boston because we have some of the best hospitals in the world and ended up having to have a 10-hr surgery to remove a donut sized brain tumor on the back of my brain | 14:53 and that was quite a wakeup call to me I wouldn't wish it upon anyone it really makes you sit and look at life and say hmm hey what else do I still need to do in my life what haven't I finished what haven't I accomplished what have I put on the back burner but doing going through the brain surgery I really really depended on my martial arts a lot I had friends 15:23 that came down and they were like brothers and sisters to me and they came to visit me and spend time with me. I was so determined when I went to the surgery after the 10-hr surgery I looked out of the ICU I was in a neuro ICU and the nurse asked me what I needed and I saw my doctor talking to some of the nurses sitting down on the hallway and looked at her and I said you need to unhook me and I need to walk and she was like are you kidding me you just came out of a 10-hr brain surgery a couple hours really I'm like 15:55 rest and I said no my doctor needs to see me walk I wanna get out of there. So she did she unhooked me from everything and I walked and I walked past my doctor and he just the look on his face was priceless, just priceless and I was determined they told me you have to walk 3 times a day I walked 8. I was out of bed I was moving around they expected to keep me I had my surgery on a Friday they wanted to keep me until Wednesday I went home Monday morning.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Wow.

Angel Durnick:

So there's no way I could've done that without my discipline and my determination from the martial arts that truly is what got me through and I know that. There's no way that I would have the intestinal fortitude to dig down the way that I did after that brain surgery and pushed myself to get back to where



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I was so quickly, there's just, there's no way. So here I am almost exactly 4 months after my brain surgery and people look at me and they came and tell that I had brain surgery.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Wow so 4 months I mean that's nothing.

Angel Durnick:

Right.

Jeremy Lesniak:

You know what I mean usually when someone listens and someone talk about a surgery that they've had of this magnitude it's 5 years 10 years 20 years we're reflecting back but here we are almost still in its 17:16 look back and this time and say you know it had just happened so tell us about what your just a little bit about what your life is like and how you're continuing to recover from that.

Angel Durnick:

Well I was so fortunate and I never take for granted at all my recovery I do not need physical therapy my positions were absolutely amazing I came home there was a lot of forcing myself to rest I'm one of those people that even after brain surgery after 3 hours of sitting around I'd be like hey what can I do, can I clean the house can I start on writing my book like what can I do? And that was really a learning experience for me and to be a little kinder on myself so I really on an everyday basis was forcing myself to just be me and recover and I'm now I'm starting to get to the point where I can start to slowly go back to putting on my running sneakers and go for a run if I want and do those things and start to hopefully train again soon and get back into the dojo and really start to go back to the sport that I love so much that helped get me through it because it's just it's something that is missing from my life and not having the opportunity to go and do that has been really hard so I really has been doing a lot of resting and just little things you know stretching here or there trying to just get back into shape again because it was it's gonna be a while before I'm 100% again.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Sure I mean of course something that huge it's gonna take time but how long was it after you at home that you did your first thing that you might term as martial arts you know throwing a kick or a punch or anything.

Angel Durnick:



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Oh geez

Jeremy Lesniak:

I have visions of you know of sneaking doing martial arts when no one's looking and I'm wondering if that's true.

Angel Durnick:

Right, right honestly I mean some blocks and some moves and stuff like that just to move around cause I'm getting really stiff and sore and tired I was able 3 months out just being able to move around being able to see if I have you know the coordination still I think coordination was so huge for me as I was so afraid that I was gonna lose all that I mean martial arts is so basic coordination and I was afraid in my brain surgery am I gonna be able to have that hand eye coordination I used to have am I gonna be able to do that and as I'm I would always gonna play around a little bit like ok you know can I if something 20:02 cancel block that or something like that and once I finally saw that I'm okay and I'm still me and I didn't 20:09 I relaxed a little bit so.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Good that's great and so what how long do you think it'll be until you're back training in the dojo?

Angel Durnick:

20:19 tomorrow, the goal is I wanna get through the holidays I wanna get through the holidays still really feel strong and 100% I don't wanna walk into soon and then take a step backward so I'm hoping that after the first year which is February time frame I'm gonna head up towards Vermont and train with Master 20:50 Alexander who I grew up with for years and years and do some training with him and try to come out of retirement a little bit 20:57 martial arts circuit a little bit and see how I do I think more fun this time rather than hard core competing.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Well that's great and of course anyone that's listened to the show for a while knows that Master Alexander was the first episode good friend of you know both whistlekick and me personally he's a great guy.

Angel Durnick:

He's a great guy.



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Jeremy Lesniak:

Of course he and I go back you know as long as probably you and he go back we all came up together so that's a wonderful story an intense story and I'm probably not the only one listening to this that was getting a little bit emotional so I really appreciate you sharing that piece and being so open about it.

Angel Durnick:

Oh no definitely I learned through the years if 21:47 that happens to you if you can motivate at least one person to not give up and push themselves I think we all sometimes we get caught in the you know this is only happening to me or I'm having a hard time and if you can motivate people that hey you're gonna get through it, just like that martial arts test that you had you're gonna finish gonna look back on it go wild that was rough but I did it that's huge that's what it's about.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Absolutely and such a wonderful attitude to use that experience into 22:19 say inspire others to keep plugging along and I'm certainly taking it that way I'm feeling very you know yes emotional but also you know really motivated and just having some kind of personal stuff floating in my head right now and saying yeah you can get past that.

Angel Durnick:

Right.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Absolutely you've got that so let's switch gears a little bit.

Angel Durnick:

Okay

Jeremy Lesniak:

And you talked about some of your instructors but who would you say has been the most influential in your martial arts upbringing?

Angel Durnick:



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Ooh most influential, yikes I have so many instructors that were influential to me 23:02 . When I was younger and I was in Uechi ryu Master Tony West was a female instructor that I had and she was so amazing and she was just the way she carries herself was so amazing and so strong and she was so confident I knew right then that's the type of 23:22 in martial arts I wanna be I wanna be just like her then as times went on I mean I had so many instructors that were so good to me and so wonderful even in kung fu that I had 23:36 Sifu Rick Wong who backed our organization out of Boston who was fantastic but even down the road I have trained in sparring and fighting with master GM Ed 23:50 and he took me under his wing for a long time and really helped build me into the martial artist that I am today he really dedicated a lot of time and energy in to making sure I could be the best that I could be and it was so inspirational 24:12 he's great I can't there were so many great people but he had a special place in my heart for sure.

Jeremy Lesniak:

As you're talking about these different styles that you've trained in really seems pretty well-rounded you know and I just that's something that's striking me as I'm hearing you talk about that and of course I know several of those names and absolutely wonderful martial artists and how awesome it is that you've gotten to train with all of them I think that's fantastic.

Angel Durnick:

Oh it's amazing I the people that I've had the opportunity to meet when I was competing and training full time was just unbelievable I would never trade it for anything in the world because I think they're such amazing people and they're not gonna be here forever so just the idea or the fact that I got that opportunity to train with them before they retired or before they you know moved on to other things it's just outstanding to me.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Absolutely and it's interesting you know you bring up that it's it was your connection with these folks through competition that happened and when I hear people talk about competition I'd say that's one of the aspects that's often left out we talk about encouraging people to compete to test themselves and to help themselves get better to experience it to learn how to perform under pressure and all these other things but one of the things that I think isn't discussed is that as a community as a wider martial arts community it's really only through attending competitions that you get to meet so many people and some of these absolutely wonderful people that you might not even know who they are cause they train in a different style.

Angel Durnick:



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Right right I mean you meet so many different people who do train in so many different styles but I think when you're around enough you meet those judges you meet people that are there and what's you know people that become your friends that are part of other schools you meet their instructors but through the years I've just some of the people that I've met has been so fantastic. GM Pete Porter out of Vermont he's been fantastic he's a great great martial artist master Wayne Mellow he's fantastic I could go through a whole list of so many people that I've met that truly are the icon of what real martial arts is and it's so nice to see that because there are so many other sports and other even martial arts schools and stuff that people are in it just for the money and these people aren't in it to build students and to really build people into being the best that they can be and that if you can find an instructor like that stay with them stay with them forever, don't ever leave them they're hard to find really thank your instructor because they really are doing work for you than you can ever imagine.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I totally agree, Shihan Mellow was on the show at one point I forget what interviewee number he was but an amazing man and I attended college in Worcester Mass in part so I could train with him.

Angel Durnick:

Wow

Jeremy Lesniak:

So just I have the utmost respect for him just as you do so awesome so that's a little bit about the competition side but tell us about your time competing and you know now you're talking about coming back to competition and how do you see that going differently?

Angel Durnick:

Yeah when I was competing I loved competing that was my life and I was on several teams I was on team 27:53 I had my own team for a little while I also competed as an independent for a while I had a sponsorship 28:02 which caters to some of the tournament 28:05 and the traveling and such like that and I was very very fortunate for that I was very blessed to have that opportunity 28:14 and I ended up going out and competing mostly in broadsword sometimes I did staff in weapons but mostly broadsword that was my weapon of choice 28:29 I also competed in forms and I absolutely loved competing in open hand forms I did a lot of traditional wushu and also sparring I did like sparring a lot but it just I'm a showman so I really love going out and doing forms and competing and it's a few the very few times that they would combine the men's and the women's divisions was for me the best I loved that absolutely loved it.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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Yeah you and me both it's the as you put it the showmanship is the piece that I love the most not that sparring is not fun and a blast to watch I think I probably enjoy watching it more than I do participating in it.

Angel Durnick:

Yeah no it's great and I loved it I was ranked number 1 in each division at one point or another when I was competing and it was great and it was a challenge for myself every year I always challenge myself to try to get a little better to do something slightly different or to just view things a little differently, 29:42 on the tournament circuit eventually I actually did have my own tournament on the 29:48 circuit I had started to be 29:54 I started that for a few years and then when I stepped away for a while I had handed that over that to 30:04 and she's done an amazing amazing job taking over that tournament it's awesome I suggest you go and check it out if you haven't been but I loved that and ippone was basically what I competed in the most I did do some NASKA in Ukraine and I loved doing that to that really challenged me going out and competing with some of the best in the world that competed you know all over the world all the time that was a real test if you really wanted to kinda see how far you've come you go and you kinda just go out there and wait on the line do something new maybe do musical form or something like that so it was a lot of fun. At this point in time I think if I go back one thing at a time I am a showman so we'll see I say that I just wanna go out and have a good time and I won't compete but once it's in your blood it's always in your blood and I think we'll see we'll see.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I didn't want to accuse you of anything but I had a feeling, I had a feeling and I hope when you do compete it's one of the events that will be set up 31:14 and I hope I get to see that so that 31:17

Angel Durnick:

Yeah absolutely that'd be great.

Jeremy Lesniak:

And I'm sure it would be a big deal for anyone there that knows you so and of course after listening to this episode you'll have to keep everyone keep us informed so that we can let everybody know when that's gonna happen.

Angel Durnick:

Absolutely, you'll hear about you'll all hear about it I'm sure.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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Absolutely, yeah. Cool so we talked before about who you had trained with let's talk about who you haven't trained with. Who would you want to spend some time getting better with?

Angel Durnick:

Oh gosh

Jeremy Lesniak:

Living or dead, we'll open it up even more.

Angel Durnick:

Living or dead oh my gosh. Well I guess I'm gonna have to say the classic being you know the kung fu practitioner at Bruce Lee like who doesn't wanna train with Bruce Lee. I really on my bucket list has been I need to get to a seminar and train with Bill Superfoot Wallace I haven't gotten there yet but I that's definitely on my list I mean he left me a message one day for my birthday and he just such a jolly nice guy and just how can you not wanna train with him so I definitely want that experience.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah

Angel Durnick:

And oh gosh like there's so many people I mean 32:39 so many different things with so many different people like there was a huge list but I think those are right on the top of my list.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Two great ones for sure and Bill Wallace is a great guy and for listeners that might not know our 32:54 catalogue of interviews we did have him on the show and we were fortunate enough to put on a seminar with him back in August of this year and it was just fun it was just a ton of fun everybody there had a blast and he had a blast and that's the best thing is to watch someone that loves what they're doing teaching other people that love learning what they're doing and that's you know just to be part of that was absolutely fantastic.

Angel Durnick:

That's the epitome of a martial artist it's just loving what they're doing and sharing it with others



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Jeremy Lesniak:

That love what they're doing as well.

Angel Durnick:

That's a great summation of what a martial artist is. Couldn't say it better.

Jeremy Lesniak:

So how about movies, are you a big martial arts film fan?

Angel Durnick:

Somewhat I think sometimes when I get into watching a movie than it's like 33:42 train or an 33:45 maybe that should've been done instead I have been known to enjoy a few movies I love 33:51 Blood sport that's just you know classic I really loved crouching tiger hidden dragon I think the new one is coming out this summer possibly I heard?

Jeremy Lesniak:

It is I don't know that there's a release date beyond 2016 but it's gonna hit Netflix the same day it hits theaters.

Angel Durnick:

Oh wow so that's great.

Jeremy Lesniak:

It's a big deal.

Angel Durnick:

Yeah I know that was a great movie. I love the Jackie Chan movies like Rush Hour you know the humor but he's just he's amazing at what he does he 34:20 and in you're in awe at how great he is.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Some of the best choreography I've ever seen so creative.



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Angel Durnick:

Right, right.

Jeremy Lesniak:

With the choreography.

Angel Durnick:

Right or you know when he did Legend of Drunken Master you know 34:33 kung fu that's just such a hard hard style to master and you have to really have an act for that and he just makes it look so easy and beautiful.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah for sure is he your favorite martial arts actor?

Angel Durnick:

Yeah I would say all around martial arts actor I would say probably Jackie Chan I would say Jet Li too I mean just really solid strong kung fu that 35:07 they're just to me 35:11 they were so huge when I was growing up in the sport and really what I looked at oh so that's what it's supposed to look like I'm gonna try to look like Jackie Chan.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Right.

Angel Durnick:

I'm not gonna look like Jackie Chan but I'm gonna try to look like Jackie Chan so yeah I would say he was probably be my favorite.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah if he's not my favorite he's definitely up there and of course Jet Li too just 2 absolutely tremendous martial artists first but then martial arts actor second so they have a tone of my respect.

Angel Durnick:



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Right.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Are you a reader any martial arts books you'd recommend?

Angel Durnick:

Not really to be honest I not read a ton of martial arts books there are a couple that I've looked through you know some of the Bruce Lee books such like that I do have a story 35:59 received though from I when I went to college I actually had an oral communications instructor and she had done a couple years over in China and she did some Tai Chi and such like that and she had had picked up I don't remember who the author was but it was a traditional broad sword book and she had got it back and she had it for years and it was on the bookshelf and she heard that I competed and I think she 36:28 with me or somewhere on line or something like that and she brought it in and she goes you have to have this like it was like I brought it back from China to give to you so that one's really special so I think that more than, than just sitting down and cracking up in the book that was something that was really special to me.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That's wonderful yeah, that's really cool so how about goals I mean we've already talked about some of them in getting back to training, getting back to competing but I know that those are gonna happen I mean I have no doubt I'm sure anybody listening has no doubt cause you have no doubt.

Angel Durnick:

Right.

Jeremy Lesniak:

But if we look out a little bit further if we look out you know 5, 10, 20 years what martial arts goals do you have?

Angel Durnick:

Honestly, I sat with before I had my brain surgery I sat and I mean like my own little bucket list and I put it together and I said I want not a retirement I want to train and all those things but I would really love to pick another couple styles to get you know really well versed in something different that I've never done, love to do a grappling style because that I haven't done and a lot of fights go to the ground but I think that would be really interesting for me so I would absolutely love that I would love to get



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acquainted you know if when I start training with Master Alexander I'd like to just get a little bit stronger in my traditional Taekwondo, do more traditional competing I think rather than you know flashy I wanna go back into a hard style I think more than a soft style I do miss that I think 20 years down the road I'd like to have another 38:11 black belt I'd like to have a book written I'm actually writing a book right now but 38:17 having out hopefully as at January 38:20 February and it's gonna be kind of a motivational autobiography about what I went through the brain tumor and such like that and also how martial arts really helped build me into the person that I was today through those tests in my life so keep an eye open for that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah I can't promise how many we can help you sell but I can speak for one at least one for me.

Angel Durnick:

Yeah well thank you.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That's awesome, please please keep us on the loop on that that's exciting we've I think we've had a couple authors on but we haven't had anybody pre author.

Angel Durnick:

Right right it's tough.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Fun.

Angel Durnick:

It's interesting to sit down and just write and put it all on paper but it's something 39:04 you for a while when now is the time now is definitely the time so I'm excited.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah couldn't agree more, so you've been through a lot and I'm sure that you've got a ton of advice for people listening but let's boil it down what would you suggest for advice and words of wisdom for the people that are listening to this?



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Angel Durnick:

Oh gosh, martial artists out there I would say 39:36 guess but always surround yourself with people who push you to make 39:38 self a better person and that's in everyday life not just martial artist I mean you want someone who's going to support you regardless of where you're at in your life but you want to surround yourself with people who are going to hold you accountable for who you are and what your goals are and help build you up so definitely surround yourself with great people that's really important and also to keep pushing yourself you can train for years and learn how to punch and kick and do all those things but if you don't develop as a human being and open yourself up to what the traditional martial arts teaches you on the inside I think you're missing out a lot on what the martial arts is. It's not just about earning a black belt it's not just about you know earning the title of Sifu or master or Sensei it's about the people that you can change and make better than you've become you're really passing on the tradition of the arts to people below you so that the art continues to be strong, that's huge and that's what I would tell everybody who's training.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Wonderful advice and if people wanna get a hold of you or learn more about you or follow you and know that they're gonna know the moment that book's available, how could they do that?

Angel Durnick:

I'm on Facebook being that you know I am married now I use my married name Angel Durnick Cummings so yes I am on Facebook you'll see me on the tournament circuit so I'm sure if people see me next year around please come up and say hi I'd be happy to update everyone on where I am with my book and all those great things so I think that's your best bet I mean I'll be out and about next year. I've been saying that a couple times then some really crazy things just happened so I'm gonna knock on some wood but right now the plan is next year it's time I'm ready I feel good I'm motivated let's do it.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Awesome and I'm pumped for you and I'm excited to see you on the circuit and we'll be putting out whatever we can to keep people up to date on what you've got going on so that's gonna be a lot of fun and I just wanna thank you for coming on and sharing all that with us it was some pretty heavy stuff and you were really open about it and that means a lot to me.

Angel Durnick:

Oh thank you so much I appreciate it it's an honor thank you for having me.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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Thanks for listening to episode 44 of whistlekick martial arts radio and thank you to Sifu Durnick. Head on over to whistlekickmartialartsradio.com for the show notes with link to everything we talked about today. If you want to be a guest on the show or you know someone that would be a great interview please fill out the form on the website and don't forget to subscribe to our newsletter so you can stay up on everything we do. If you liked the show please subscribe or download one of the app so you never miss out in the future and if we could trouble you to leave us a kind review on whatever platform you download your podcast we'd really appreciate it remember if we read your review on the air just contact us and we'll get you a free pack of whistlekick stuff. If you want to follow us on social media, we're on Facebook twitter Pinterest and Instagram all with the username whistlekick. Remember the great stuff we make at whistlekick like our awesome sparring gloves and those are over at whistlekick.com. So until next time train hard smile and have a great day.