



Episode 317 - Reflections on Street Fights | [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com)



### Jeremy Lesniak:

Good day to you! welcome, this is [whistlekickmartialartsradio](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com) episode 317. today, we talk a little bit about the history and the philosophy of one of the most misunderstood misrepresenting martial arts, Krav Maga. if you're new to the show you may not know my voice, my name is Jeremy LESniak, I'm your host for the show and the founder of whistlekick and I'm the guy that gets to have fun talk about martial arts couple times a week. its a great gig but no, you can't have my job what you could have is a snazzy shirt with the whistlekick logo or maybe a martial arts radio T-shirt? we got a bunch of cool stuff, check it out, [whistlekick.com](http://whistlekick.com) you can find all of our equipment over there, our shirts, our sweatshirts, our, what else we got? i think there's some baby onesies in the store i mean, there's cool stuff and were constantly rolling out new things so check it out. you can find the show notes including transcripts, photos, video, lot more for this show at [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com).

I don't know when I first learned about Krav Maga. it's been a while it's probably been 20 years that i've have been aware of Krav Maga. but over the last 5 to 10 years especially because of whistlekick, I've come to learn that a lot of people have misunderstandings of Krav Maga, of where it came from, of who participates in it, what it's intended purposes, all of that. now I'm certainly not going to pretend to be an expert, but we have put together this episode short but it digs in to some of the history, talks about some of the original founding principles of Krav Maga, but I do want to throw a disclaimer out there. this is not the only way the Krav Maga can exist, you may train in Krav Maga school that is different than what I'm going to express. you may do something completely different and call it Krav Maga. you may



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do Krav Maga and it's really not and you know what? I don't care. i dont care because it doesn't affect me, I'm simply trying to put out some information so if you're listening to this and you get butt heard about it, I'm sorry. youre welcome email me if you want to have a discussion about it we can do that but this is really just based on information that we've done up from primarily primary sources early on in history of Krav Maga. so here we go.

Krav Maga or contact combat is a self-defense system that uses the best techniques of different martial arts and uses them wisely depending on the scenario. the objective is to deliver a counter attack as quickly as possible and target the most vulnerable parts of the body without lowering one's defenses. the often cited main purpose of Krav Maga is to teach all types of people to respond accordingly to different forms of attacks knowing that no two scenarios are ever exactly the same. confrontations are avoided as much as possible but it's not always possible. sometimes a person will be forced to engage and defend himself or herself or even other people. therefore, one must train physically mentally and emotionally to be efficient in diverse situations. another purpose of Krav Maga is to develop the confidence in an individual by learning the principles of self-defense and knowing how to perform basic attacks. once a person is confident and has the necessary technical abilities that person can walk in peace and be ready for any attack. well, as ready as anyone can be.

Krav Maga was created by Emrich Imre Lichtenfeld aka Imi Sde-or for the Israel Defense forces, the IDF, Israel security agency and Mossad, Israel's national intelligence agency. the self-defense system was then adopted and taught by different organizations around the world. Lichtenfeld was born in 1910 in Hungary but he grew up in Slovakia. he was a renowned athlete during his time having won the youth wrestling championship in 1928, the adult division in 1929, a national boxing championship and an international gymnastics championship. Lichtenfeld was also an excellent swimmer but he focused on wrestling not only as a contestant but as a trainer. times change in the 1930s in Bratislava, the capital Slovakia, when anti-Semitic groups began to write and cause trouble for the Jewish people. as a number of troublemakers grew, Lichtenfeld decided to lead a group of Jewish boxers and wrestlers to defend their neighborhood. this was the first experience for looked and felt in real-world combat and he suddenly realized that it was a very, very different from fighting inside a ring. this led to the development of his own self-defense system where he incorporated the techniques of different martial arts and systems that proved to be useful in dangerous real-life situations. in 1940, Lichtenfeld left Europe with his family and they took the last refugee ship bound for Palestine. Lichtenfeld's desire to protect his fellow Jews never changed so he joined the paramilitary organization called Haganah with the stated purpose to protect the Jews from the Arab forces. he provided training for the fighters and skills that he was knowledgeable in such as wrestling, swimming, physical fitness, and attacking with and defending from knives. his training was recognized by many and he trained the elite forces under Hagana. Lichtenfeld became the chief instructor for physical fitness and Krav Maga at the IDF school of combat fitness in 1948. during his stay the IDF for 20 years, he was able to develop and refine his techniques of self-defense. for example, it wasn't until 1965 that judo techniques were introduced to Krav Maga at least officially. in 1974, at age 63 Lichtenfeld retired and turned over the Krav Maga training center to his best student Eli Avikza. Avikzar was the first student of Lichtenfeld to be given the black belt in Krav Maga in 1971. before this, Avikzar was already a black belt in judo. he'd trained in



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aikido in 1960, he got his brown belt in '71, in France and this led to the introduction of aikido techniques to Krav Maga with Lichtenfeld's assistance. In '77 Avikzar went to Germany and finally received his black on aikido from the European Federation. Avikzar successfully proliferated the knowledge of Krav Maga in IDF is the head of Krav Maga, he required every physical education instructor to learn Krav Maga and teach it and even increase the number of courses to be taught. in 1970, Lichtenfeld together with six other people establish the very first Krav Maga Association, now known as Israeli Krav Maga Association, IKMA. It's a nonprofit and nonpolitical organization that aims to become the ultimate authority in Krav Maga. Avikzar are retired in 1987 at the age of 40 and he trained over 80,000 male soldiers and 12,000 female soldiers. in 1989 he was still an active member of the judo Association and he was one of the key people who establish the professional and rank committees. Avikzar was replaced by Boaz Aviram, who is the last instructor to study with both Lichtenfeld and Avikzar.

like other martial arts and systems Krav Maga, follows a set of principles that govern and discipline. it strongly discourages being involved in a fight but if unavoidable Krav Maga's principles and techniques are effective in most real-life situations. some of those principles include being mindful of the surroundings, when engaged in a fight victory should not be assumed even if the opponent seems to have many disadvantages. it is important to find escape routes and objects nearby they can be used advantageously if outnumbered escaping is the best option. having presence of mind one of the most difficult things to do was to remain calm while being attacked. since Krav Maga teaches the basic techniques of self-defense, mastering these will help practitioner to respond accordingly and not panic when attacked. counterattacking immediately. if the opponent attacked first a counterattack should be devised immediately. attacking and defending simultaneously, unlike other martial arts Krav Maga does not offer the opponent the time to recover. attack and defense are performed at the same time deliver and attack soon as possible. neutralizing threat immediately, though Krav Maga teaches fatal techniques it does not teach to eliminate the opponent but to preserve life is much as possible. however, as there are no ground rules and life-and-death situations, a self-defense technique may end up killing the opponent more permanently incapacitating. making techniques as simple as possible, unlike other martial arts Krav Maga does not teach kata or forms. the techniques of Krav Maga aim to immobilize the opponent quickly mostly by striking, holding, and grappling but without complexity. being aggressive physically aggression will help to overcome fear and to deliver attacks as quickly as possible. attacking continuously, the opponent should not be given the time to think and to recover when attacked. attack should be delivered continuously until they are all mobilized or incapacitated. striking vulnerable points, to defeat the opponent quickly, attack should be pointed to the most vulnerable parts the body such as the eyes, throat, knees, solar plexus, temples fingers etc. finally, Retzev or continuous motion. Retzev is a Hebrew term that literally translates to continuous motion where the defender should consciously move while attacking and defending and its most important purpose is to inhibit the opponent from planning further attacks thus affecting his or her mental capacity to decide properly on what to do. probably guys not a textbook based system that has predefined forms and techniques. rather, is very dynamic and is continuously evolving to adapt for current real life situations. if a new type of weapon is invented for example, Krav Maga practitioners will find a way to develop techniques on how to defend against that weapon. therefore, there is no universal curriculum of Krav Maga that is being followed by



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practitioners around the world. still the techniques taught in different locations are very similar to each other.

the techniques in Krav Maga can be divided into two groups derive techniques. Krav Maga is a diverse system that takes the most effective self defense techniques from other martial arts styles, some of them include from boxing the hook punch, from Muay thai elbows, from karate punches, from judo aikido wrestling, throws and take downs. and then you have original techniques. now examples of original techniques include certain defenses against a rifle or a bat or a carjack. this is not to say that other martial arts schools and systems don't have techniques for these but within Krav Maga they are presented let's say differently. the grading system in many comic schools is similar to that of Judo most of the organizations around the world, although not all, now use belts to distinguish the ranks. other organizations such as Krav Maga global, KMG, uses patches instead of belts. the patch system was developed by Eyal Yanilov. Yanilov was one of the the students of Lichtenfeld and one of the key people in propaganda Krav Maga around the world. the grading system is separated into three main levels practitioner, graduate, and expert. each main levels divided into five sub levels, to move up one rank the student must learn the corresponding curriculum and pass an exam. each sub level can span up to six months and that is with regular training. the practitioner levels mainly for civilians who want to learn the basic self-defense against common assaults. the graduate levels for those who want to teach Krav Maga and become an official instructor. moreover, the students in this level must have consistent proficiency in the techniques taught by the practitioner. the expert levels for instructors want to learn how to deal with the most complex situation. students in the expert level must display proficiency in all krav maga techniques. usually the expert levels taken by those who used to serve in the police the military professions like that. the places where you might get stabbed.

sparring that contentious form of practice differs greatly from one Krav Maga organization to another for example in Krav Maga global ,there are five different levels of intensity of sparring slow, light, medium, hard and full contact. each of these levels has different pace, impact, goal, mindset, rank, and even equipment. for example with regards to equipment, slow sparring only requires mouthguard and groin protection, on Full Contact sparring, it requires full protective gear and impact reducing suit. most of you probably know what I mean when I say that suit. Krav Maga is self-defense system with the original intention of teaching the Army as well civilians to fight and defend in real life. it is not generally considered a sport. as lichtenfeld realized when he first fought the real world, fighting inside the ring is different because there has rules and regulations that ensure the relative safety of the participants. but on the other hand, fighting real life often deals with life-and-death situations. in other words Krav Maga to just protect oneself with the last resort of limiting the opponent. now despite this the IDF hosted its first Krav Maga competition in 2013 and has become an annual event since. it was started to create a buzz about Krav Maga and to embed into the Army as a way of life for a fighter. thats a quote. be that as it may, the competitions were safe and regulated. the dangerous techniques like I strikes were prohibited contestants had to wear full protective gear.

so there you go there's a bit about Krav Maga. if you're not a Krav Maga practitioner you probably pick something up in there. if you are, hopefully, we still taught you something. now when I think back on



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what we just talked about, it's those principles that I find most interesting. some of these things are not principles that I've heard discussed in most martial arts, most traditional martial arts and yes I consider Krav Maga traditional martial art because of its age. if you've ever done any work with Krav Maga folks, for me, it's that continuous attack principal that resonates the most. the idea that you do not stop hitting the person until you know that you safe. I like that and it is something that I've brought into the way I approach self-defense.

so tell me what you think. go ahead leave us a comment on the blog, website, whatever you want to call it [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com) this is episode 317. you can go ahead, you can talk to us on social media, we are @whistlekick, find us on Facebook, twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, tumblr, what else is out there? Google+ I think I just found out we still, something still show up on Google plus for us. haven't done that intentionally. or if you really want to, you can email me [Jeremy@whistlekick.com](mailto:Jeremy@whistlekick.com). that's all I got. I hope you have a wonderful day and until next time, train hard, smile and have a great day.