



Episode 316 – Sensei Nathan Porter | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hey there thanks for dropping by this is [whistlekickmartialartsradio](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com) episode 316. Today I'm joined by Sensei Nathan Porter. If you're new to the show I'm Jeremy Lesniak I'm the host of the show I'm the founder whistlekick where we make sparring gear and apparel and a whole bunch of other stuff that you can check out online whistlekick.com, Amazon maybe at your own martial arts school. You know a lotta stuff going on. Let's talk about today, let's talk about Sensei Nathan Porter. I had the opportunity to watch him and then train with him over a couple years at Master Terry Dow's symposium his weekend long training event. I saw him last year Sensei Porter that is working with quite a few different people primarily children and some of the more acrobatics that are adjacent sometimes smack in the middle of martial arts and I loved his energy. Well this year I made sure that I took his class loved it had a great time wonderful instructor wonderful energy and I just had this gut feeling cause after 300 something episodes you can get a gut feeling that he would make a great guest well guess what he said yes when I invited him on. We scheduled, he came on and it was great. This is a wonderful episode I had a lot of fun he's a really thoughtful person and I'm sure you're going to enjoy it as well. So sit back as we welcome Sensei Nathan Porter. Hello Sensei Porter how are you?

I'm doing well thank you how are you?

Jeremy Lesniak:



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I'm doing great. Thanks for doing this.

Nathan Porter:

Oh my pleasure.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Before it gets..

Nathan Porter:

Thanks for the invitation and..

Jeremy Lesniak:

Of course before it gets disgustingly hot today.

Nathan Porter:

Oh it's gonna be brutal.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Man what are we on day 4 day 5 of this?

Nathan Porter:

Yeah just the time.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I was talking with some some folks last night I don't remember this many days in a row of this hot you no 3-4 days sure but I think we're getting up to seven in Vermont of 90+

Nathan Porter:

Yeah it just keeps on climbing you know and well what what do you do just smile and nod and take what comes right?

Jeremy Lesniak:



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Exactly exactly there's an air conditioner about 2 feet from me that I've been running all morning to cool the office down so I could talk to you while turning it off because you know the air conditioner doesn't make for background noise.

Nathan Porter:

Yep

Jeremy Lesniak:

Well let's talk about some martial arts.

Nathan Porter:

Sure.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I mean that's why that's why we're here right you know what I mean we could we could talk about weather but I don't think anyone's tuning in to hear us discuss meteorology not it's not maybe it's a passion of yours maybe you're even you know educated and I'm not I just I know enough about whether to go to complain about.

Nathan Porter:

Oh it impacts our training and you know we have to make sure that we're really adjusting for everything so there we go.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah hydrated summer classes in the lake I don't know if you've ever done that that's a blast.

Nathan Porter:

Oh that sounds great not yet but I will.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Give it a whirl or a river training training in a in a river with some current I mean that that will that will help you find a balance for sure. Alright well you know this is a martial art show we do talk about martial arts and we're here today to talk about your journey in the martial arts and the best place that we can



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really start with that is the beginning because that's going to give us context for who you are and all the other stuff that we're going to talk about today so if I say hey how do your martial arts journey start what would you say?

Nathan Porter:

Well growing up I was always fascinated with the martial arts always wanted to do them but you know sadly it just wasn't really available. You know we didn't really have the time or the money to devote to classes and it wasn't until high school that I had my first martial art experience and my friends dragged me into the wrestling team and I tried out and I joined the team and I took to it and I it felt like wow this is what I really need and from there I started to do kickboxing to lose weight and maintain my weight from wrestling and my first day in the kickboxing class I broke the bag just with the just by you know I mean there's a little overzealous then in and then you know the instructor said you know what you should do the karate and from there great I started doing the karate as well so I was doing the wrestling to kickboxing the karate and I just I just took to it you know you just mentioned jumping in a Lake and a river and I was just I was swimming was beautiful and from there I started doing okay so I have my wrestling you know I'm 16 now so I've got a job and all my money that I'm making is just going right to martial art lessons and I I said this is this is wonderful and down the road there's a tae kwon do school so I would I signed up for tae kwon do lessons and across the street from the tae kwon do lesson I saw another dojo and that was aikido based and I signed up for aikido and so here I am I am 16-17 years old and my day was going to wrestling over to kickboxing, start for the karate, Drive to the tae kwon do and do the aikido you know and that was that was my day. A lot of those martial arts fizzled out you know but I had I stayed consistent with the kenpo with the karate there and the kickboxing I stayed a little bit longer and so here I am and I'm training away and started to compete and then a few years go by and I have an opportunity to open up my own studio and I was really young I opened up when I was 20 years old and I've been running martial arts studios ever since.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Wow you know we've heard from plenty of people who fell into martial arts early or discovered their passion pretty early pretty young but I don't know that we've heard from anyone who built their life around martial arts that young to be 16 to be active in what did you say four I mean if I include wrestling in there wrestling and Kenpo and tae kwon do and Aikido did you have time for homework did you sleep?

Nathan Porter:

You know my high school grades they did suffer a little bit yeah yeah and you know and then it was maintaining that job too you know a few days a week but it you know it it felt right. Before doing martial arts in that capacity I started to just pick up martial art Books and I started reading those thereto and this is right in that transition when I started wrestling like you know what there's gotta be some cliff



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notes or something and I started reading some wrestling books and then I was like oh alright let me see what else is going on martially that no maybe there's a strategy or some principles that I can apply and so I kept reading all these books everything else and yeah and then sadly you know again those other martial arts kind of dropped and fell to the wayside but yes school definitely took a little bit of a turn there and coming up to my senior year it really prepared me and I was planning on joining the Marines I was gonna be all military and that was going to be my next career path you know so it was quite a jump there.

Jeremy Lesniak:

But you didn't go into the military?

Nathan Porter:

No, no I didn't it was I was took the test ready to rock I realized that yeah still pretty small and I figured I take another year off and just train train train train do more tournaments and you know at CA I ended up being the Massachusetts state champion at the time for sparring weapon and forms as a brown belt and you know trying to achieve my black belt and so yeah I figured you know what another year in and then I'll be a little bit stronger I'll be a little bit more disciplined a little bit more focused and then I'll be prepared and in that process I got I got recruited for an athletic and talent management company and they were looking for these athletes that they could kind of promote and push and now here I am I'm I'm in California for a little bit and there they are they want to try to find athletic projects for me and as I am okay coming over here and then I'm coming back to the East Coast and and in the process there is the opportunity to open up my first studio it just kind of came and you know what alright let's give this a try and I opened up my first studio right there so I achieved my black belt and grew and that's kind of my beginning story in the martial arts.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Nice I wanna go back just a little bit when for training in multiple arts there's usually a reason a story something that I like to pull out of why they ended up with one over the other so you know you could've going on to college and pursued wrestling you could've stuck with tae kwon do you could have become in aikidoka, as your primary pursuit you didn't you honed in on kenpo so why? What was it about kenpo or the way it was being taught to you?

Nathan Porter:

The kenpo to me it really focuses on the adaptability of the individual and with that there are so many fingerprints and so many systems that are they were being taught in this kenpo curriculum and the expression that I could put forward I could use my wrestling with my Kenpo. I was encouraged and as much as we we have these traditional systems that are that are locked and yes we have the forms we



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have the katas we have had these certain techniques. Kenpo allowed you to really grow and develop your mindset and let that come forward with your techniques you're creating your own you're finding your own flow and with that comes the teaching you know it really forced a lot of self-development and my kenpo time allowed me to really think about my actions not just react and act.

Jeremy Lesniak:

How much of that philosophy which I can hear from you you know I can hear it in your voice and in the little bit that you know we've met and I had the opportunity to work with you a few months ago it seems like that fluidity that dynamism in martial arts is something that's really important to you and that would make sense because you were bouncing around you were training in different things. So how much of that philosophy coming through in what you are learning from kenpo do you think is inherent in the style and how much do you think is the instruction you were receiving?

Nathan Porter:

Well that's the key balance you know I mean especially in today's world you know it's everybody is their own individual you know and the instructors now really have to adapt to the student you know I mean there's so much more there's so much more knowledge readily available, students are much more informed parents are much more informed they expect a lot from their children and from the kids and their development and I think it really forces the teachers to again really put themselves in the place of the student and and grow their teaching methods with that said there is definitely a place for the traditional ways of all right this is how it is and and your children do need to develop in it to to flourish in his heart and you want to have this you have to have this and yeah that's that's paramount that's key you have to be able to do self-defense if you're doing martial arts you know you have to whether that self-defense is fighting aspect in network jujitsu based or aiki based you know there's there's that martial art the fighting art but with that said now now again it's that self-realization that empowering the student make them realize what they can do and and I think that now even though at times it's still tough and tricky in the world we're in a pretty good place overall and a lot of the old lessons a lot of the hard lessons from you know wars gone by their we're losing that time and if we don't if you don't recognize and remember certain points and pass that memory forward pass those stories on no students they're not going to they're not gonna have some type of thought process on okay this is where it comes there is that tradition how we build our thought process from there you know I mean we're in a again a great time a great place in the world and yeah everyone's having fun games and training and enjoying laughing but the seriousness comes from understanding of the past where it is. I would say that I would probably go with a good think at 60-40 you know or 70-30 as much as keeping the traditions and adapting to the individual and then what you do is when you have those those moments with the adult that's when you cater and that's when you fine tune the style.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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So to say it another way you're willing to let that ratio that split between I guess we could say tradition and individuality flow a bit depending on the student and depending on

Nathan Porter:

Oh of course

Jeremy Lesniak:

the age group..

Nathan Porter:

Yes yes definitely.

Jeremy Lesniak:

But it's something that not all instructors will do some instructors will say you know this is what I teach this is how I teach it and you adapt to me or you but you're on the other side of that fence have you always felt that way or is this something that's come from your time as an instructor?

Nathan Porter:

I think that as martial artists you know and we're always trying to we're trying to build we're always trying to grow a lot of times it leaves us on edge you know and we put up these walls we put up these barriers and I think that you know hierarchy is important of course sure but there's a there's a respect there that's that's given it doesn't have to be it's it's an earned respect without asking for it and you know overseas they're really not wearing a lot of belts in the systems and I mean the styles over here same thing it's not really belts but some these oldest Masters they they sit down and talk to you know they consider you family and and yes different styles they'll have the whole discipline behind it you know you have that warrior mindset but it's the off-hours that a lot of you know a lot of principles really get communicated and I'll never forget overseas I'm in the Philippines and now working to train with this master it's gonna be incredible and you know and next morning you know we don't know what time he's coming we're just kind of waiting around and to do at his leisure he starts coming in and he sits down and we're just talking and all [00:16:39.22] why we're gonna grab some sticks we're gonna grab some blades and we're gonna train train train train and but that essence that relaxed point you know it really it gets deeper in the heart and they've learned all these hard lessons that we don't really have to learn they did all the hard work for us and as long as we respect their teaching and pass it on and and we're listening to them then yes you can put it forward we can put it forward. There does have to be a skeleton to the systems there does have to be something holding it up and if you lose that then we kind of had a hodgepodge of a collection of motions but you're not really sure on the thoughts behind it you



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know I think that as long as that structure and the skeleton of the method is there then you can just fill it in then you have the body motion then you have what's going to work per individual.

Jeremy Lesniak:

What did that experience in the Philippines do for you in the way that you teach?

Nathan Porter:

That experience so when I was in the Philippines and I stayed there for about a month it felt you could feel the difference between coaching and teaching and the balance between the two and when to coach and when to teach I think is a very distinct difference and you know you can have these you can have these pushes you can have this you can have this drive and then you have these these educators these instructors these teachers and they're really they're really kind of getting you to learn something important they want you to kind of learn the lesson. When I was in the Philippines a lot of it was just that kind of relaxed teaching part and they would wave in between the two and that relaxed moment really showed how how different the teaching concepts can be from the Philippines to here I was over in Indonesia for little while and I'm practicing [00:18:59.29] in there okay it's everything is relaxed and calm but then when you're on the floor or in this case it was I think the grass you know what the heat that we have here today my goodness same thing over there and the ground itself is clay you know right under this grass and you have to hold this position you have to hold these postures moving strong strong strong and it's that constant correctness and you know some of it is some of it is translational language barrier to no and that's where I think a lot of the the kind of individuality kinda dissipated over the years.

Jeremy Lesniak:

When you think about your teaching now because you know it is clear you're continuing to train and experience and it sounds like you're really open to adapting anything you know it's the kind of the sense of getting from you but you started teaching pretty young so when people are doing something at a high level when they're young there doesn't tend to be a lot of individualism in the way they presented they tend to look back on how they were taught things so you didn't have a ton of time in there to learn I don't want to say learn well I mean you certainly learned well you are an instructor it takes a tremendous amount of skill and effort to do that anyone who has done it knows that but I suspect that you've grown a lot as an instructor since then is that fair to say?

Nathan Porter:

Definitely yes sir, yep.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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If we were to watch you training teaching you know at 20 early 20s versus now what things would we see that would be noticeably different?

Nathan Porter:

A lot of it was just the do this because this is how I was taught kind of mindset you know we're we're learning the how and not necessarily the why before starting out and you know walking in and teaching a class and then teaching adults you know that are twice my age you know I have I have youth and athleticism and a lot of it yeah that was the skill that was the first impression and so I kind of went with a little bit you know and then only when they're asking these questions that would force me to think and it was it was quite a crunchy time you know it here I am I have to try to keep myself above these adults that have been no training when I when they were my age and here they are again picking it up and I have to try to show that I'm so much more knowledgeable and yeah I wasn't I mean to a point I was sure I had a lot of training but I could only teach what I knew and that kind of grew my understanding later on you know it's my 17th year in the arts as far as running schools go and with that it really forces the it really forces a thought process behind what I'm teaching and then you can you can sprinkle that into whatever the technique is going to be.

Yeah there's always something to be said for immersion and longer-term immersion and that's really how you started I mean you didn't dabble you jumped in both feet and week if you had more feet you would been in with those as well I suspect that there's a that's the the heart behind your teaching is that you still love martial arts if not you do a good job of faking it I can say that from watching a few months ago at the event.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Oh yeah that was a lot of fun great event.

Nathan Porter:

We've got a good idea of who you are I think now is that anybody listening probably nodding their head at certain things whether the folks listening are like you or not they know someone like you someone who once they found martial arts like that this was that this is this is what I will do for the rest of my life I think it's pretty safe to say that's the path that you're on well let's tell some more stories if you are up in front of a a few hundred people and asked hey tell everyone entertain them with your best martial arts story. Oh boy.

Jeremy Lesniak:

What would you say?



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Nathan Porter:

Oh you know there's been a whole bunch over the years and I'm sure we all have our our stories that we can relate to I mean I remember some Dojo horror stories where here I am being being that young instructor I'm trying to gather my kids class together and okay I FINALLY have them all focused and they're finally in the right spot they're finally ready for their lesson and all of a sudden were about to jump into our basics and a mouse just runs right across the dojo floor and all the kids see it John Bob started screaming and running and okay here we go you know and when I when I first started my studio is very very small and you know a little run down and yeah that was a nice nice little wake up in the things that could happen and of course working with kids so yeah regathering regrouping and okay there is that and I think we all have stories of certain instructors who alright the adult students a little overzealous or trying to overstep a little bit more and then you know baboom get hit a little too hard or thrown into a wall or but probably my favorite story actually comes from the symposium an old Terry Dow's event. I remember it's probably one of the first ones I attended and and I didn't really know anyone yet I was getting to know Terry and I was invited as a guest but I wasn't instructing yet there I was just kind off to check it out and see how it goes and you know growing up I really I didn't really grow up with a father figure you know and I remember going into the event thinking well here I am everything kinda happens for a reason I'm just gonna put my best foot forward and you know get some great training attend some events and as I'm walking in and I and I being respectful and bowing of course and meeting new people and I'm just sitting down and watching and taking it all in and this little man just kind of walks up to me and you know I bowed to him when I entered and I recognized his [00:26:28.09] and he sat down next to me and he starts talking and and his name is Grand Master Robert Howe you know [00:26:38.00] systems and he's sitting down talking to me and we had this conversation for about three hours you know we separate for a little bit I had to attend a seminar but we just gravitated to each other just started talking martially over and over again and I mean he was 60 seven at the time now he's about yeah I suppose he's in his early 70s mid 70s and you know what to hear him talk about you know just instruction and the value of martial arts now it really left that impression on me you know and here I am bringing him and he becomes my main instructor you know and he was doing seminars teaching privately I'm going traveling and meeting with him and you know that moment where you kind of put something out there you know just unsure and kind of thinking down about certain things but when you allow the good to come in now and sure enough I'm at this event not expecting anything and poof there we go the instructor walks right in and you know and you know being an instructor they say finding a student finding a good student is hard you know but finding good instructors is just as hard to you know you have to you have to adjust to the teaching style and and then you develop that synergy and then you start to think like each other and that was a really key turning point you know and it just seemed one of those days where everything clicked everything came together and I you think about as far as an instructor goes oh that was the perfect class the perfect lesson you know those days that just shining everything goes right and that was one of those days.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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If you could design the perfect instructor and I don't mean by naming specific people though I'm sure you'll reflect on people from your past what would the perfect instructor look like what could we say about them? A little bit of a curveball this this wasn't this certainly wasn't on the list of questions I sent you.

Nathan Porter:

Well you know you always think about you always hear that saying about you know be like water you know that fluidity that's [00:29:04.25] from Bruce Lee all the way down and you know I would say for the for the instructor you have to put yourself out there you know people have to have an impression of you I mean everyone has that first impression, everybody has that that point of okay I can sum you up really quickly but how quickly you take off those masks and how quickly you can look into somebody else that's that growth and that's what really comes from experience you know reading a room being able to teach what needs to be taught and that's a very important part that's the big thing we we're always so we want to learn want to learn we want to learn but a lot of times the hardest lesson is the thing that we need to learn the most and if that teacher can find it then that's the ideal one.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I think anybody that's been an instructor for more than a little while has had one of those moments where you're able to dig through you're able to find exactly what it is that student needs to hear in that moment and you share it with them. You tell them you show them whatever it is and their life changes and for me in a very limited time I had a school I had a couple of those moments and it was the majority of of my motivation to continue. You know that you had an impact.

Nathan Porter:

Jeremy you hit the nail on the head, that's exactly right you know.

Jeremy Lesniak:

How do you get better at that? How do you get better at reading the rumor or reading the individual?

Nathan Porter:

Well you develop a little bit of sensitivity a bit of the sensitivity to it and I've been told that yeah oh we you know I have a gift [00:31:18.08] thing and my schools are successful and you know we have 300 students and da da da da da but you know it really comes down to checking the ego, putting yourself in that person shoes you know and having a strong memory of what you were like growing up. What this child needs in relation to you? You know and when you can see yourself in them as far as this one is very



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energetic and flying around and you know where this one is just more reserved and calm and trying to get them to open up what would work for you and it keeps you flexible it keeps you young and the way you grow hopefully is in the years the students are kind and come back you know when life gets in the way they remember those stories, they remember those lessons. I can tell you most of my grade school teachers but the ones that I'm sure I can the ones that really stand out are the ones that I have stories with you know the ones that taught that lesson not the ones that were yelling and screaming not the ones that were you know making you feel really down you kinda lock out. It's those good memories that really shine. You have some bad sprinkled in there to and some really negative ones sure but it's those good impressions hopefully that stick on a little bit more, [00:32:50.22]

Jeremy Lesniak:

What you do outside martial arts do you have any space any time in your life for other pursuits?

Nathan Porter:

You know a few so I mean martial arts it opens up a lot of doors and I've you know aside from running my my studio and I have 10 satellite programs that might teach martial arts and I also I get hired to do comicons and teach Jedi light saber techniques. I've been getting recruited for some gym work actually I'm an equalizer to in one of the opening scenes there just kinda hanging out in the scene with Denzell so there's there's that whole thing but as far as hobbies and pursuits go I like to go hiking, reading, writing just kind of relaxing you know but a lot of it again is more physical and that that reading and writing is there but a lot of it relates to martial arts too.

Jeremy Lesniak:

If we look back on the film that is your life we're gonna bump into some things that you know worth going well times in your life where life wasn't all roses. Tell us about one of them and how you were able to handle it better because of martial arts.

Nathan Porter:

Well so when growing up you have and you have all these pursuits and everything and then yeah we have relationships that go sour and you know all these different things but when it really came down to it you know when I was presented with this school and I knew I wanted to do this but again it wasn't easy. I felt like in my my early mid 20s here I am like what am I doing them not making any money with this school I mean I like teaching I can see myself getting better at it but here I am living with my mom and thinking how am I doing I'm driving here and there [00:35:05.09] own money I mean I'm making the bills you know they're getting paid however there is no income coming in you know. I'm getting gas money to go back to my school – that's it and that was a really hard time for a little while and then you know you have you have their family members and everything in our lives it looks good then asked



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questions as well you know what's going on what's next part what's the next point my personal life suffered too but it really focused and forced a reevaluation of what needs to happen and you know when you when you get hit this point and and I remember okay here I am I've got this this small studio and now we're going going forward a little bit I've got this small studio and here I am on doing this again you know I had to close down one of my earlier studios and and I still have no money and you know you're opening it on just like a wing in a prayer and here we go I'm gonna just try to do what I can and you know here we are if anything goes wrong poof done out of luck shut down you know but you trust in yourself and you try to again think through the students and fortunately it grew you know in my own practice my own teaching and leading to sample was put forward and built a great name the community but it was a very hard time for little while you know success it doesn't come overnight.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Now if you had the opportunity to go back in time and and let's let's forget about the the fact that learning lessons is generally better than having them handed to you right so you know often if when I when I ask people if you could go back in time and talk to your your younger self and share advice with them you know quite often people say what you know I would want that because I needed to learn those lessons and I completely understand that and agree but let's let's forget about that piece of it for second know what were already embracing time travel is a possibility I think we can we can bend the rules on personal development what would you tell your younger self if you went from what you know now to back then how would you fast-track yourself? We have a lot of martial arts instructors who are starting out listening to the show we have people who are interested in becoming martial arts instructors so your advice on this could be really impact.

Nathan Porter:

I think as martial artists we we think that we were the only ones who can do it and one of the biggest things that I would love to do more of is ask for help you know and you think about that and as a black belt oh no I gotta do anything myself and yeah self-learning and you know it really it makes life easier when you're asking for help when you're seeking out people for advice when you realize there are different ways to do things and being older now and talking to my younger self I think that just simply asking for help the right way the right people can make me grow, can make anyone grow much quicker and stay the course a little bit longer. We get to can you borrow that cliché mantra man falls down seven times gets up eight you know that seems to come from a martial tradition and set a little more the modern way the best path to success is always just try little bit longer. To try one more time whatever it is just to not give up.

Jeremy Lesniak:

How do you work with that with your students? Is it through drills is it through lectures or is it both?



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Nathan Porter:

You know it's to both and the way I usually work in is you have your drills develop develop develop okay and drills are the growth of your motions technique is what stops the drill so without drills technique isn't going to have a place you want your technique to spark out and drills are the closest thing to constant motion that you have to really work on that technique has to spark out and so drill drill drill drill drill technique stops the drill now the technique that's the lesson and how you want to approach it how you want to related to dimensionally you know right there single point there's there's a lesson right there but depending upon the age group that lesson can be on you know the drilling you're working with somebody else you work with the higher belts or lower belts somebody you know different build with what you do you know and you're going to encounter kids building into their coordination growing their bodies they're gonna hit a little harder, they're gonna get bumped a little bit but it's how they adjust and react and how the instructor decides to handle it you know and that's that's the difference between a kid shutting down and going I don't want to do this anymore or that was too hard or having a parent coming in and saying hey what's going on and the acknowledgment you know it's you don't want a child or an adult to walk away with a problem and it happens an awful lot so how you how you drill the technique comes out but how you respond to said technique how the class responds you know the dojo we bow into it it's it's like a living thing you know I mean and with that comes a certain feel and when you have all of these bodies in their you know that's the feel of the room you have that you have that energized feel well oh everything is now shining and sparking and then you have those those days where oh the energy it's sucked right out of the room and you're just you just feel like you gonna just sit down it's just gone but how you balance it and how you can spark it the right way you know putting the student on the spot so they benefit from it you know and they are the ones leading through example they are the ones that are showing the technique you're given the correctness you know they feel little bit more of that motion they're receiving that technique they would see how it feels and pain is a great teacher it's just you don't want to learn from it all the time.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Absolutely. We've heard a lot today about you know the different places that you're taking education inspiration I mean just now you know we we could almost say it another way that you I expect hopefully I'm not putting false words in your mouth that you're learning from your students you know that exchange the energetic flow and you've talked about some of the folks that you trained with that you've learned from but who's not on that list? If I gave you a magic ticket you know we're kinda playing monopoly and it's not quite a get out of jail free but it's a get to learn from anybody anywhere in the world any point in time alive or dead who would you cash that to get into train?

Nathan Porter:

That is a tricky one I mean you have yeah so many notables you know keeping with what we've been talking about there's gentleman by the name of Seiken Shukumine and he developed a style called Taicho have you ever heard of this one?



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Jeremy Lesniak:

I haven't.

Nathan Porter:

So Seiken Shukumine was he was a World War II pilot and is a kamikaze pilot and he lived.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I'm sorry I shouldn't laugh but that's either a a very good or very bad kamikaze pilot

Nathan Porter:

Exactly yeah it makes you think and hah okay where does that leave him you know is that good or is that bad blessing or a curse what do I do? And he comes back and he practiced a form of karate. But he comes back in his Okinawan masters then and when he was spiraling and practicing these maneuvers he thought that the karate practice was too linear so he wanted to add more turning and more spins different footwork and this was this is back in the 1960s where you know okay the arts is just starting to flourish a little bit more you know there is that growth that is starting to really come out and Taïdo he based these acrobatic techniques in the tradition in the traditional system on flight maneuvers. So you'll be seeing this traditional classical kata and then all of sudden level 6 gymnast technique boom right in the middle solid stance then right back in and adding that that level of progression I thought was pretty impressive you know and you think about all of that all of the Do arts you know aikido judo and Taïdo was along those lines but different a little little extra piece in the puzzle. I would really like to know his thought process behind it how he was coming up how he decided to change all of these things I think I would be a very interesting conversation learning those techniques I would probably like to meet him and try to pick his brain a little bit. They also run something called the [00:46:12.29] which is basically a hero is in the middle of the dojo and they have five or sometimes 10 opponents and they have to do a sequence of techniques a choreographed movement defending themselves for a good 30 seconds against all these different attacks anything else and you see these demonstrations and tournaments and things now of course sure but back then that was part of the curriculum they've had to create these these scenarios and I think it was I think if we are moving back it was pretty a pretty good point to move in time and check that out you know it will be very interesting thought.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Let's talk a little bit about competition and before we do there's something that I want the listeners to know because when I met you there was something so I never asked people their age on the show you are welcome to share you are near my age as far as I can tell I just turned 39 and we have something in common in that we are both kind of pushing physical capabilities. We are still learning new ways to



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manipulate our body whereas let's be honest people that are our knocking on 40 whether it's one side or the other you don't generally see them flipping literally and doing things of that nature which is a bit of a homework for you in fact the instruction that you were offering at the symposium the class I took was all about that more advanced body movement and I was one of I believe two people over 18 in your class. It was primarily children and you know I'll go off and all I'll teach you know the parkour that I've learned and I'll work with people on gymnastics and things like that and these are all skills that I learned as an adult most adults don't have that that openness to I guess I would say failure in in something like that that can have some physical consequences.

Nathan Porter:

Sure.

Jeremy Lesniak:

You don't seem to have that quality and we talk about you starting martial arts at 16 and then I know a little bit of your competitive career this is something that that's an important piece of your personality that I just want the listeners to know before you start talking about competition. So I'd love to hear it again and if you want to respond anything I just said that's absolutely fine please do. I wanna dig in I wanna know what it was about competition that resonated for you.

Nathan Porter:

Well a big part as far as competition goes after wrestling you know you you you have that all right, it's in there you know you have to you have that competition bug and alright I have to put myself out there I need the adrenaline. I need to feel that push. I need to to set that goal you know I need to train for something and competition is a great thing you know it helps you realize that a belt is just a belt you know you get to be exposed to what else is out there, different ways of doing things sure. As far as movement goes I met a good mover named Ido Portal a few years back and he's a yogi he's over from Israel he's traveling the world right now he's actually Connor McGregor's trainer and during all of the Connor McGregor yeah before the controversy and all the other headaches you know back when he was building up a little bit more he was a gentleman in the corner he was the one showing McGregor how to move how to move how to develop timing how to really build that and you know one of the things that he said to me which really resonated was your body is always trying to improve that's it that's the goal of your body it's always trying to improve and if you sit down all day long your body is going to try to improve your spine is going to tighten up your hips are going to tighten up it's going to get better at sitting you know. If you eat a lot of food your body is going to get better at storing that food it is always looking to get better it has its best mindset for you know but what we need to do is improve in what we want you know for standing all day long alright our knees are going to tighten up we're gonna get better at standing. We want to improve the right ways you know as far as falling and tumbling goes kids are fearless the yeah they're smaller to the ground but they don't have those restrictions yet all those what-



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ifs having set in you know as adults we grow we experience all these things and we limit ourselves what if I [00:51:27.19] my ankle and I'm a full-time martial art instructor that's a royal pain or you know I remember I was doing I was running off the wall doing doing backtuck off of one leg or something crazy and I went over the mat and I I slammed my knee down on the cement and okay that's not a good feeling you know that I just did I crack my knee what's going on you know and we all have these limitations but what we need to do is really we have to try to work through it you know and any any advice for a martial artist kind of just starting out you know we have to remember that here are not the same person you were 10 years ago 20 years ago five years ago you know if you haven't trained in five years it should take you a good five years of training to improve you know you have you have your yet counter production and you have to move through with that you know you can go twice as hard and try to do it twice as fast but you're gonna get that burnout. You're going to get that point where the alright yeah this is discouraging or yeah I had been there done that again and the longevity in the arts is seeing how you move how your body adjusts to certain ways you know the lifespan of a football player as far as game wise it's not a long time their bodies are beaten and and yet when you when you freeze on that on that pivoting motion and their knee is completely out of alignment and their hip and their it's totally not there as someone who knows the Alexander technique is going oh my gosh what is going and yet they are the professional athletes it's that adjustment that adaptability that they're so good at that carries them to that pro-life you know on that football game and and it's the constant adjustments and how our body is going to get better and improve for us that's going to carry us through and it's worked for competitions with me as far as the traditional tournaments go you know now I don't do as many know you have to really build a name, you have to be known by a lot of people. They have to see that consistency if anything I'll just jump in to some grappling tournaments you know where it's all right I'm going to jump in I'm gonna swim I'm gonna see how I do win some great lose some great you know nothing but learning and I and that's kind of my mindset now.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I love it yeah longtime listeners to the show know you know that that's kinda my attitude you know this openness this willing to continue pushing and in its something I'd kind of heard about you and that was that was a piece of why I wanted to train with you because I wanted to see you know where you like that in in the same way that I was absolutely and yeah I do Portal for folks that don't know that name we'll drop the name over in the show notes if you're new to the show it's whistlekickmartialartsradio.com but he is an absolutely exceptional person and anyone that I've met who is taken any training with him they've said it was life altering. I mean I've watched people that were on a certain past with movement with exercise fitness whatever you want to call it and they just took a hard left after a weekend with him.

Nathan Porter:

Yup yup

Jeremy Lesniak:



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Pretty incredible stuff you know yeah yeah let's

Nathan Porter:

[00:55:20.25]

Jeremy Lesniak:

For sure for sure I haven't been fortunate enough to train with him but everything I've read everything I've seen in video has been pretty exceptional. What are your goals? You're still out there you're still doing it you're still training you just talked about jumping into grappling competitions you know we haven't even talked about grappling today so that tells me that you know you are just as is I thought as I suggested to the audience you're still out there trying new things.

Nathan Porter:

Oh yeah.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Which is not typical right so what is it that keeps you doing that are there are there specific goals motivating you?

Nathan Porter:

You know teacher who stops learning will run out of things to teach you know and you have to keep re-sparking that reason of why you're doing what you doing if you're if you're not feeling good about it you got to get up and do something about it you have to get up in go and you get a lot of connective points martially you know the advanced techniques of one system are the beginner of another and and when you are more training at these oh I understand now I finally got another puzzle piece that I can just kind of plopped right into my own mindset you know and now it makes sense this oh I can relate to this now you get that one that one sentence or that one correction where wow why the heck didn't I see that and it's those points that was those little aha moments that really really make you shine and you have to you have to apply it if you don't test your mindset and you don't get out there and and look for results it's just a what if. It's just going to be something there's nothing backing it up and you have to you have to back up your training you know and and when you going out there and you're experiencing all these different things it renews life in you it renews life in your students. They see the instructor getting out there and doing new things, bringing something fresh back and and that will energize them.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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So let's give the audience some ways of getting a hold of you knowing and why they might want to you know what we've we've talked a lot about you and who you are but you know you're out there you're teaching seminars and you know whatever else we kinda call commercial time so give everybody the skinny on that and will make sure we get it on the show notes.

Nathan Porter:

Yeah well I run the Rising Storm Training Academy and I can be reached at well my my email link is on my website risingstormkarate.com. You can also Facebook me if you'd like and you know I do seminars, I do events sometimes I go around the country international travel and yeah I do seminars coaching. Sometimes I'll just hop in and teach everything from yeah soup to nuts or I'll just put in my two cents as far as teaching style for another instructor you know just building a good atmosphere making sure everyone is learning working hard and focusing on progressive steps that kids and adults can take to consistently improve in their body.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah and again folks will link in the show notes so if you're driving or on a treadmill or something no need to risk life and limb just to jot these down. This has been a lot of fun today I appreciate your time and your openness but we ask all the guests to send us out some parting words of wisdom so what would you suggest to all the listeners today?

Nathan Porter:

Well I'll tell the listeners today I just say remember where you are remember where you're going and as you set that goal remember walking that path. It's okay to look around and admire the view and that's the important part that would be my my advice make sure that you have some goal and if it's a little far deserve the little steps and if you need more don't be afraid to turn around and look back you don't have to walk back.

Jeremy Lesniak:

You know I really appreciated 24's willingness to dig to consider one of the things that we don't often talk about here on the show is how insightful people can be. Sure we talk about that but how insightful they can be when I kinda come out of [01:00:07.20] field everybody gets a set of questions they're all the same most of you know that. So when I throw a curveball when I ask a question the kind of pops out of nowhere something I want to know the answer to our guests aren't necessarily prepared for that most of them handle it really well some of them will offer some kind of cursory answer and a few of them like Sensei Porter stop. They consider the words they contemplate they go deep now we get great stuff as a result thank you Sensei Porter for being so open and so willing to share who you are with the audience. If you wanna check out the show notes with links and photos and a bunch of other stuff that



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