



Episode 327 – Paradigm Shifts | [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com)



**Jeremy Lesniak:**

What's going on everybody. I have no idea what episode number this is going to be, I have no idea if I'm even going to let this get published. Here's what's going on. I had a thought and sometimes I like to explore those thoughts knowing that there's potentially an audience. Someone who will listen to this. I do some of my best thinking when I'm talking to someone, and so that's kind of what this episode is going to be. It's going to be my attempt to I guess pretend that there's someone on the other end, there is if you're listening to it, but rather pretending there's someone right there instead of the camera, someone is talking to me giving me their understanding or expressing that they don't understand this potentially weird dog that I'm going to talk about. This is probably the worst setup I could ever do for an episode, I'm sorry about that but I'm just gonna get into it. One more thing, if you like coherence and concise and polished Jeremy, you may not like this episode. This feels like it's gonna be [00:01:23.01] some of you like that, I've actually received feedback that some of you like when I'm off the cup. Those of you will really enjoy this one maybe.

I find it when the same idea is presented in two or three different ways within a short period of time. It warrants exploring. And the idea keeps popping up just over the last week the idea of service. This is not going to be a religious discussion, this is not going to be some kind of political discussion I mean, service in the broadest sense of the term. There's some other podcasts that I listened to recently that talk about service. Movies, TV shows just this idea of serving keeps popping up and I thought what does service look like in the context of martial arts? It's not something I've ever considered and I'm not sure why. So



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what is service? Service the idea that you're doing something for someone else. we could get into this pretty deep philosophical discussion about whether service for someone else is ultimately for your own benefit because it makes you feel good, I've heard that argued pretty intelligently in the past but I don't want to go there because I don't think it matters for the discussion that I wanna have. I think there are some examples of service that are pretty concrete within the bounds of martial arts, quite often we have individuals who will start a martial arts school because they feel called to pass on the knowledge that was shared with them. sometimes the schools operated at a breakeven minimal profit. some of them are knowingly run at a loss, some of them are done as nonprofits or very inexpensively. there are a lot of different ways that you could do that. but that also is not the place I want to go with this idea of service because I think it's so much broad. when I think about service, I think about it as a mindset more than an action. If I serve you, I could serve you a meal, I could serve you here's how you do that form and that's a bit more transactional, it's a bit more of a fixed time frame but shorter and that's pretty easy to do. I can serve you by teaching you something and I don't have to enjoy it. now the more I do enjoy it, more likely the better the job I'm going to do, I think we all have had examples whether it's in martial arts or other areas of life where someone has taught us something and they didn't like doing it, they didn't want to do it and thus the end results for the effort they put in, the energy they put was lacking. and of course you have the flipside, people who enjoy teaching or serving, sharing and they're much better as a result. what about service as a mindset in the martial arts? let's take the extreme example cause I find those are easier for me to think through. what if from here on, everything I did as a martial artist was under the umbrella, the guise of service. when I go to class I consider myself serving instructor and the other students. if I go to the competition I'm serving, if I'm competing I'm serving the tournament promoter, I'm serving referees and serving well competitors. if I'm a referee I'm serving those competing, the tournament promoter, if I go to a seminar I'm serving the other attendees the host, the guest instructor. not really a difficult wrap your head around and certainly you could do that in that way. if someone was really inclined you could probably go back in time, you could pull out a map and you could probably figure out where I am right now.

anyway, it's pretty simple I think to just look at individual actions or short compartmentalized actions, I go to class as a student and I consider myself serving the other students and the instructor. how is that different than me attending class in a selfish way. I think that's the alternative right? If your serving others, the opposite of serving others is serving yourself. the word selfish tends to be battered around as a negative but certainly have to be selfish at times, you have to take care of yourself, the cliché example of you've got to put your air mask on if the pressure drops in an airplane before you put on the mask for someone else cause you're no good than anybody else there right. so I think we all can get behind that, you've gotta do somethings for yourself. and I say that 99% plus of martial arts students are attending class for selfish reasons. they're doing it because they want to learn, they're doing it because they wanna learn, they're doing it because they want their kids to go, they're doing it cause it's a good excuse to get out of the house, whatever. they're doing it for their own benefit in some ways. and when you're doing that your accountability is only of yourself. so if you go in and you're having a rough day,



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maybe you slack off a little bit, maybe instead of delivering hundred percent of what your capacity is, you're delivering 60 or 75 or even 90, maybe 40. but if I'm there for other people, if I'm there to serve, maybe I'm one of the higher ranks in school and as I am personally and I want to set a good example in the front row for everyone behind me, I want to make sure that I'm modeling technique and behavior that the other students will be able to look to as an aspirational example of technique, of conduct. if I'm serving the instructor, they are ahead of time, maybe I help clean, maybe I am offering as much positive energy just in the way I carry myself during class as I can, those of you who have ever taught especially if you taught long-term, know how horrible it is to teach a class that has just no energy or negative energy never based on a new on that day having one person there is really fired up and excited to be there class in the terrible class and if I'm you know everybody just kinda bla that day, so having at least one person there who's just really fired up and excited to be there can be the difference between a great class and a terrible class. and if I'm serving others in my attendance in class, of course side effect is I'm going to get more out of it which is good, But I think everybody else going to get more out of it too. I think the irony is that by putting others first in the way I train, so the irony that I'm getting more out of it by putting others first. now is there magic in the idea that your martial arts training is service to others? I don't think it's that dramatic, I think there's an element of that in our culture we tend to partner up, we tend to in many schools our time to our instructors or higher ranks in a lot of schools its considered an honor to clean, to sweep the floor before class. So I think there's a lot of that is already there. if you are listening to the audio version of this you can't see the dirty faces that I am making, I probably picked the worst time during my drive to record this but I need to record this stuff up. so it's in the culture and if we focus on it, is there a better result? If I change my priority in my martial arts training from it's about me, it's about me getting better, it's about me becoming more well-rounded human being personal growth to I'm going to go to class because I will make others train better, I will help my instructor, other people will benefit from my presence, my energy, my focus, my dedication. so what changes? I'm less likely to skip class, I'm more likely to practice the things that I don't do well, I'm more likely to have a good attitude, are there negatives? I may work on the things that are important for other people's development. my instructor wants me to work on that maybe I'm not as interested in. maybe my self-exploration of martial arts or my I guess experimentation my own personal martial arts. I typically play music on driving so stereo is that the level that it was when I have music, actually it's a podcast. I guess so yeah there are some minor negatives in there but their pretty negative.

if I see overall benefits in treating my martial arts training as service to others [00:18:15.13] so rollback my last question. what do I do with this information? if I understand and agree for the most part and in most circumstances that my martial arts training, the world in general, is better served by treating my martial arts training as a service to others and I'm gonna be more likely to go to class, what do I do with that? is it just a mindset shift or is there something tangible? I don't think I need to tell anybody in fact I think telling others is contradictory because of if I want others to know, do I have people need to know? I don't think anybody needs to know, I think in telling other people it looks like you're looking for something, you're looking for a pat on the back. I don't need a pat on the back to do it because that's



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the opposite of service. true service is done without something expected in return. but here's the, here's the piece that I wanted to get to to my initial thoughts before I started recording, is there a time when my service mindset is going to give me something that my selfish mindset can and I think yes. one of the subjects that's come up, occasionally on the show, that it comes up far more behind-the-scenes I have these conversations with guests often, is the idea of boredom or taking a break things like that, we've tackled that on the show. and when I think about the people express that they never get bored that they never take a break, once that it felt that way for a long time, I believe universally [00:21:21.07] and when I think about those people and their personalities, these are the ones that I can really dig in to who they are, they do it because they love it, they feel I think, responsibility to it. and I wonder if that's the kind of this hidden idea for longevity in the martial arts is that you're serving others. when I think about this show I consider it a service to the community. yes there's absolutely commercial reasons, the show started for commercial purposes. but the only time the shows have failed to come out, 1-2 times in a Monday show did not come out, one was leading up to the whistlekick martial art showdown on 2016 because I was so overwhelmed. and then there's technical issue this past February 2018 where some recorded episodes were defective, but I was away, is on vacation and didn't know without enough lead time to do anything about it so we just didn't do an episode. but it's really easy for me to find the motivation to do these episodes. now I won't lie, there are times where there are other things I would rather do. I'm not gonna say that service to others means that actions suddenly your become greatest desire but I think it helps affect the priority of your actions. I've done four episodes in a day. maybe not four, I've definitely done three interviews in a day. I don't like doing three interviews in a day, it's too much but I've done it because that's what need to be done to accommodate guests that we wanted on the show to bring to you. I think have taken this as far as I can but it's something I'm going to continue thinking about and I would love for any of you out there who are still listening or watching to let me know what your thoughts are. is there something here? am I just stumbling onto something that everyone else knows, I don't know. this has never been articulated to me, the idea of martial arts training the motivation for it being service to others. yeah, let me know.