



Episode 330 – Mr. Nishan Grout | [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com)



**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Hey welcome. This is [whistlekickmartialartsradio](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com). My name is Jeremy Lesniak and today I'm joined by a good friend of mine, Mr. Nishan Grout. If you've never checked out our website before you should, [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com). Good stuff over there photos, video, links, transcripts, signup for the newsletter, find the sort of secret Facebook group that we have for the show. Lots of stuff more than I can even remember right now. Have you ever notice the intros and the outros are always a little different? It's because there's so much stuff going on that I don't remember at all and I don't want to rehearse it. I like these come off the cuff I've gotten better at that and you know what's off-the-cuff? This episode, they all are but in today's episode my friend Mr. Grout and I like calling him my friend, because especially after this episode I feel closer to him. I've known this man for several years but the things that he shares on today's episode were some of the deepest, most honest, authentic stories that anyone has shared on this show in over three years and the fact that he felt comfortable talking to me about these things, I can't help but feel closer. I can't help but feeling more friendly to him. It was an honor truly I don't know what else I can say so I'm gonna say nothing and just step back and welcome him to the show. Mr. Grout, welcome to [whistlekickmartialartsradio](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com).

**Nishan Grout:**

How are you today Jeremy?



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I'm great, thanks for [00:01:59.14] were in a little bit of an echo-y space but that just kinda adds to the authenticity, I don't know how well the echo it is or isn't gonna show up on that, bit that's okay. Cause it make people feel like they're right there in the next chair we're sitting in metal chairs and hanging out.

**Nishan Grout:**

Relaxing.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So the place we have to start I know you've listened to the show but we've got a start in a place that, honestly, I don't even know the beginning of your martial arts journey which is funny because I've known you for I don't remember how many years.

**Nishan Grout:**

Awhile.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah and so I'm almost embarrassed that I have to ask this but at the same time it's good because it puts me in the same place as the listeners. So how did your martial arts journey start?

**Nishan Grout:**

Back around the beginning of elementary school my mother was really into martial arts movies, mid 80s,

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Van Damme movies?

**Nishan Grout:**

Van Damme, Bruce Lee everybody the whole gambit and so I showed a lot of interest in them and the she signed me up for shaolin, kempo, karate with Master Freddie LaPan.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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Who's been on the show.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely. Studied with him often on for years and then took quite a long break. Didn't actually end up getting back in the martial arts until my son was born and my wife decided to get back in the taekwondo which she had done for several years. And I was like, I used to do martial arts that'll be a fun thing to do together. Went to a taekwondo class with her and was hooked. Been going to studies with Master Joe Lenahan who also been on the show

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Who's also been on the show

**Nishan Grout:**

Ever since then.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Nice. You know, it's not too often that a couple has a baby and says you know what, let's add something to our now dramatically busier lives. What was it about having a kid that she said we have to go to taekwon do.

**Nishan Grout:**

For her I think of stress relief and getting away from the kid. For me it was that so much was then revolving around at that point, the three children that I felt like we didn't really have a whole lot that we are doing together anymore. So in an effort to not take away from my kids, I was like well I want to do things with you I want to do things with my kids, I'll go once a week instead of the twice a week and that was the arrangement that we went with for quite a while. That didn't change until I tore my ACL not doing taekwondo,

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Was it something dumb? You don't have to say what it was.

**Nishan Grout:**



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It was something unfortunate, I was traveling with a university paintball club to an event down in Connecticut in the winter and I was running down a hill into this village that they had it was a scenario game based on the eastern front. And the closer I got to the building that at the top of the hill I was sure I want to be hiding behind, the more I knew I didn't want to be behind that building. I planted my right foot to turn to the left everything went out from underneath me I heard a pop and I laid there thinking that wasn't good. And then I started getting shot.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Insult to injury literally.

**Nishan Grout:**

Because I'm right in the middle of a firefight on the ground behind nothing as I got up and I hobbled my way up to the top of the hill I wasn't getting shot anymore. A ref came and asked me if I need any help, I was stubborn and said no I went back to the staging area and that's where I spent the rest of the day until we finally got back to Vermont. And I went saw the doctor and found out that I completely torn my ACL.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Running in the cold downhill does not, doesn't sound like there's a lot of option for it to go another way.

**Nishan Grout:**

It was a recipe for disaster for sure.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So how did that change the frequency that you're going to class?

**Nishan Grout:**

Because it was good in addition to my physical therapy after I had my seal replaced with to physical therapy along is really getting back into things. Getting my next belt became kind of a bigger goal for me because I had that extra thing that I was dealing with. I want to prove to myself that I can still do it, I convinced my wife that it was good for my knee, she agreed so I switch to going to every class on top of the physical therapy appointments I was going to to three times a week.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So how long into your martial arts journey was that? Or into your second stint your taekwondo stint.

**Nishan Grout:**

I was getting ready to test for my high blue belt in taekwondo. And oddly enough looking back on it it was probably the easiest testing I had ever not because obviously the lower ranking tests are easier but I was in so much better shape because of the physical therapy and the extra work I was doing at home.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So here you've taken, at that point, you take another step in, you jump in, you go little deeper to the pool so to speak now you're going more than once a week. What's that next period time look like, other than being in better physical condition you know is this scratching more of an itch for you that you're going more often now?

**Nishan Grout:**

I was really enjoying being there all the time the kids weren't quite as young, quite his needy, grandparents really like having time with them and I didn't feel that same fresh new dad guilt as I did when I first started leaving their sides. So it was good for everybody including the kids to get me off their back.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Nice. Now from what I know of you now and even a little bit that you've said it's very clear that martial arts is something that belongs in your life, it's something that is has kinda become kinda who you are, there are quite a few pieces revolving around, we had a bit of a sidebar conversation before we started recording maybe we get into some of that maybe we don't totally fine. But you had quite the hiatus between your time training with Master LaPan and your time training with Master Lenahan. Were you aware that this was something that you were I mean, is missing the right word?

**Nishan Grout:**

I think I was not a first well. At first absolutely I grew away from it, come from a fairly low income family couldn't always afford the classes which means come 15 years old enough to work on a farm and that's where I was working as soon as I was old enough to work at a restaurant, I was working at a restaurant work my way through high school. Actually dropped out of college because of working, I spent one year



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in college at the end of the year I was like, I've work so much I have actually retained much of this stuff and yeah the piece of paper is gonna get me a job but what I learn is gonna keep the job for me. So I dropped out of college went back to work, went back finish my associates degree afterwards and really toyed with the idea of going back a lot visited in school occasionally but never really clicked.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay. Can you, not the where, but are you willing to speak to the why, the why what wasn't clicking?

**Nishan Grout:**

I think it was for me that I was concerned about tying up much of my income, that's something is always really kind of been a sticking point for me. When I was younger we had a house that our family quite frankly, three boys in one bedroom is a recipe for disaster like no other.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Literal disaster.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely. Nothing but fighting, nothing but yeah messes, my parents made the right choice in getting a different house, bigger house. That ended up not working out as we ended up spending a summer living out of tents and a winter living on a friend of the family's couch essentially. Tying up money sense then and big changes in life has been something that I have a hard time with since then.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It's an experience that I haven't had to go through and one of the things we haven't talked on the show much about was, I grew up in a lower income home, it was just my mother and I and she made the decision when when I was young that she would work for herself. I mean no surprise I'm a multi time business owner that does go to the family, but what you're describing your kinda attitudes in terms of being conservative and just the way you're talk about your children remind me a bit of my mother. You know, some of the some of that kinda depression stuff that stepped down to my mother and you know obviously different generations but I can certainly relate to it as much as I cannot having gone through it. The priorities are pretty important especially when there's a family. When did the 1st children come in to the mix.

**Nishan Grout:**



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All of the children came into the mix at the same time my two daughters are from my wife's first marriage and they're absolutely mine.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Sure I've seen you with them.

**Nishan Grout:**

They're are both teenage girls now so I'm not cool enough to be seen with and usually the bane of their existence

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

That's a father's prerogative.

**Nishan Grout:**

But they're very much mine even they know it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So you're looking for the right school, if I can rephrase what you're saying, I think I hear you're saying that your resistant to spending the funds, you know taking those away from your family but if you find the right school, you're willing to let that happen is that what I'm hearing from you?

**Nishan Grout:**

Looking to go back was prior to the family. So for prior to meeting my wife and gaining the family. I did go and check a few local schools out and I always found excuses not to go either it was too expensive or the timing didn't work out or I wasn't terribly interested in the style. Oddly enough one of the schools that I went to was a different take on the school in this area, this was far prior to the family and I never saw myself as a taekwondo practitioner. There are lots of jumping spinning kicks that are really high in taekwondo and I've never been terribly flexible, never really saw the point in the flashier stuff. I'm working on the flexibility, it's gotten a lot better since one of my testings were you told me that I should get, spend some time in a sauna and really start stretching.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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That sounds like something I would say.

**Nishan Grout:**

It's still something that I struggle with a lot but I'm getting there. That is one of my big goals for my next testing.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

If we look back on this time, and I'm focused on this because I think there's some interesting stuff that the listeners might hear, that might resonate for people especially people who are earlier in the martial arts journey. If we look back on that time or your checking out other schools and in your words making excuses why you're not going, was there something maybe deeper maybe you weren't ready to go back and it almost sounds like it's something you felt you should do but you didn't, you consciously thought you should do but maybe in your heart you didn't believe it is time or you didn't, you just weren't there yet.

**Nishan Grout:**

Yeah that something along those lines, I can't break down the psychology of it but I'm sure you're onto something there. There is definitely part of me that felt like I should get back into it but something was stopping me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And I think it's only clear to me because of the contrast, because you tear your ACL and now you're going to class more you know, and knowing what I know of you as a martial artist and your dedication now and your involvement your wife, your children and other aspects. I mean it's such a 180, that there was some transition there may may be you know and you don't know what it is and you know if you don't know what it is we're certainly not gonna figure it out in the next however many minutes, but there is there's something there that, I don't know, I'm guessing the listeners can hear it too. But anyway.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely. So yeah that's really how I got into out of them back into taekwondo or martial arts and really the choice of taekwondo, I still don't know that it fits entirely for the aforementioned reasons but it's actually adopted me since my wife brought me into it because she was very much, she's going back





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to taekwondo or not back to the martial arts at all. So if I want to do martial arts and I want to do that with my wife I was going to become a taekwondo practitioner.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I've always said I know you've heard me say that it's you choose the school, the instructor and the people not the style. You choose the style you're gonna go wrong much more often the other way. You know, I know your tae kwon do instructor and you know your tae kwon do instructor. Longtime listeners know your tae kwon do instructor because he was episode 10-11 I mean, it was pretty early on. I remember roughly when we did that one and interestingly, the other episode has been recorded in a masonic lodge, there have only been two, they're both did in person and a whole different one. So we've heard about you with martial arts, we have heard about paintball, we've heard about injuries and those are all good stories and whether it involves your your wife or not, maybe, I'm not fishing for anything cause I don't, but families that train together tend to have some interesting stories especially around the kinda the flocks in authority we can say because, does she still outrank you?

**Nishan Grout:**

No.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay but she did for quite a long time.

**Nishan Grout:**

She did for very long time until recently. She outranked me until I received my second stripe. And when I did receive that second stripe, she had a really hard time with it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Tell me about that.

**Nishan Grout:**

So probably at this point, 7 years ago? At work, my wife Toni hurt her back and back injuries are tricky things as anybody that's ever had one knows, misdiagnoses. Concern from physicians that she was just hunting for pills, trips to the doctor, there was one trip to the emergency room that culminated in a weeklong stay in the largest local hospital before they would be let her leave because she could walk



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again. She couldn't, stand she couldn't, I need to get help to physically get her into the vehicle to rush her to the emergency room because she couldn't get out of bed and they refuse to let her leave the hospital until she could walk 20 feet and up to the stairs. Cause that's what she need to be able to do to get into the house. That makes it difficult to train taekwondo. So she was unable to train taekwondo and that's when I caught up to and surpassed her in rank. She had a hard time with it understandably.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

How about you?

**Nishan Grout:**

Yes.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

She's the reason that you started training again and.

**Nishan Grout:**

I've honestly had a hard time with it since she stopped even participating. Our kids participating for a while made it easier but with no one else in the family participating, I honestly between that and being a black belt in the certain level of contentment that often creeps its way in there, I've had a hard time some nights just getting to class.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Talk about what that feels like or what thoughts are going through your head that make that difficult?

**Nishan Grout:**

Before class my mind will go through all of the things that I could be doing around the house with my life, with my daughters, with my son and I'm back to the point when we first started where I feel like it's taking more time away from my family than what I'm getting out of it. Like I would get myself and my family together, we get more out of it if I were not at class, which is a strange place. I am very accustomed to putting other people's needs before mine, but it's weird to have taekwondo be that thing that's taking away from family and not, taekwondo, martial arts in general as we've all said and heard you say you get out of it exactly what you put into it, I like to think I put quite a bit into it and to still have that feeling that that's not as much as what you can get out of being with your family is strange.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Did they ever pressure you?

**Nishan Grout:**

My wife pressures me continuously to go to class.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Okay so even in the direction to counter this feeling, the families pushing you to go to class and you're still having that feeling.

**Nishan Grout:**

Yes. They've always been very supportive of it even so it just that there's a level of contentment that I've gone further than honestly I expected to already and kids grow up quickly it's easy to feel like you're missing it so that makes it a lot easier to talk myself out of going to class. I'm realizing there's a pattern here of talking myself out of things.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I mean that's one pattern but indeed the other one I'm seeing that I'm pretty sure is the most driving force for who you are is your consideration for other people. I mean, that's up until now we're you know, 20 something minutes in and you've told three or four stories about either your putting others first or your admiration for your parents putting the kids first and that's pretty core to who you are so that makes all kinds of sense.

**Nishan Grout:**

It really should be about other people in the community. There is nothing that you can gain during life that you're going to take with you might as well help people that are going to be around after you.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Leaving a legacy.

**Nishan Grout:**



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I have no illusions that I'm going to be remembered for generations but it's nice to know when I'm older and not able to do all the things that I can do now that I helped some other people get through some tough times.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Well it sounds like it's the same vein that you're putting your family first, they are trying to put you first and pushing you out the door to make sure that you go and you train.

**Nishan Grout:**

Either that or they're sick of listening to me complain about not doing their chores.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Maybe both it could be both. Everybody wins. What else are you into besides martial arts and paintball?

**Nishan Grout:**

Big into paintball have been for years, martial arts, I'm actually Master of the lodge that we're sitting in right now which was also the lodge that my grandfather was the Master of. Other than that I work and I dabble at a bar.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Now what does dabble mean? Cause dabbling at a bar could mean different things to different people.

**Nishan Grout:**

Fair enough. I was part-time, I have for 14 years as a bouncer and doorman and I've just started learning to bartend. So it's kind of a fun little thing that I'm doing for myself.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Now how does working the door, the bouncing at a bar, how does that relate to martial arts? We've heard some stories on the show about folks who either, it usually seems to go in the other direction they start martial arts and then they end up working the door some place because someone finds out that they can handle themselves but you're the opposite.

**Nishan Grout:**



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I started there because they open the kitchen and I had a falling out with my previous manager who cut my hours overnight from 60 hours a week to 10, and I got a call within a week saying that the owner of this bar heard that I was looking for work and I said yes and he said to come see me and I had a job instantly. So I helped run the kitchen for three years they decided that the kitchen really wasn't working out the way that they thought it was going to, they were gonna close the kitchen and asked me if I want stay on. Absolutely. So I started working at the door. There are absolutely some stories there.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah how can there not be? Its alcohol and its people and you were the first line of defense. No I think we should set the tone for the audience. Now while I have, I have started you and you are certainly competent in that way and if I was to make a list of people that I would want to get into a fight with, you are nowhere near the top. But neither of us are large people. Neither of us are people that when someone is filling out there dear dream team of people to work the door and work security at a bar, we're not gonna be in the top few slots.

**Nishan Grout:**

Not gonna make the top hundred.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I'm glad we're on the same page. Yeah so I'm sure that it that had something to do with it too. Does that contribute to the stories?

**Nishan Grout:**

It does kind possibly in a different way than what you're thinking now. For a while I worked with the bouncer that was a marine fresh back from tour and his biceps are as big as my head and more people wanted to fight him than want to so much as argue with me. Because they want to prove something, they want to prove that the big guy can't tell them what to do. There's nothing to prove the little guy doesn't. Beating me up to the average drunk is nothing because I'm not a big guy. When I started there, there were quite a few fights. It was a different time, there was a lot more fighting in bars, in general, in this area at that time. I helped break up a lot of fights. We're in a really rural area there is not a lot to do when you're younger, one of the things that my friends and I used to do is get together behind somebody's house and just wrestle for hours. No formal training whatsoever anybody that does jujitsu, anything like that mop the floor with me all day long but I take a lot of pride in the fact that 14 years working at a bar breaking up fights, I've never hit anyone, I've never kicked anyone. Grabbed a hold of some people, escorted some people out by their head, I have never had to hit or kick anyone.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Never had to injure anyone?

**Nishan Grout:**

Never injured anyone.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

That's great.

**Nishan Grout:**

Some people walking up sore, I'm sure but I've never injured anyone and that's a big thing for me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

That's a pretty solid accomplishment. I mean kinda like you said almost the opposite of what I think a lot of people would expect that as a smaller man, more people would want to test you because you seem to be an easy target but then again someone gets a few drinks in them and they are looking to prove something and you're not someone that there to go around bragging that they've hit so what's the point. I'm gonna brag beat up the marine with biceps as big as my head, except that they didn't I am sure.

**Nishan Grout:**

No they absolutely did not. And I grew up in this area so a lot of the people that I'm kicking out are I went to school with. People who are children of teachers that I had. One such 21st birthday party, student of a former teacher of mine. Got kicked out next thing I know he is in the bar, like how did you get back in the bar? Oh he jumped the fence we've got a backyard it's all fenced [00:34:48.18] in the backyard. He climbed the 20 foot fence somehow and ended up back in how he didn't break his neck jumping over the fence is beyond me but he made it back it. So he went back out. Next time, he's back in there, his buddy let him into the side door. So [00:35:07.14] listen, now your entire group needs to leave, I found the sober guy, I talked to the sober guy I'm like listen, you've pushed your luck as far as you can push your luck. He's gotta go, you gotta get him out here because he won't stay out. 101-5 minutes later she still in the parking lot he wants to fight his friends he wants to fight the cops, he wants to fight me and I just told him, look, you've got three choices at this point we can call the cops and you can spend the night in jail, you can come back up this ramp and we can fight and you can probably



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spend the night in the hospital or you can let your friend take you home and you can spend the night in your bed. His friends all knew me from school, I had a little bit of a reputation in school and his friends dragged him out of the parking lot and brought him home. So that ended really well for everybody.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So what was this reputation, were you rougher youth?

**Nishan Grout:**

I got to that point yeah. So of course small-town, poor family, people are gonna get picked on. My graduating class is all 22 people so very small area everybody knows everybody, if you're not at the top of the food chain you get picked on or you suck up to the ones at the top of the food chain to not get picked on. I don't suck up, so I took a lot of bullying for a long time and my parents were very much of the philosophy that if you ignore it it will go away. So I ignored it for about three years and just never went away and I honestly couldn't tell you to save my life, what it was but somebody said something in sixth grade and I snapped and I got into a fight. Went to the principal office principal said did you hit him yes, did you hit him yes, you're both suspended for three days. Very cut and dry. But I made the decision that day that it wasn't going to go away and that I wasn't going to take it, so if somebody was going to run their mouth is going to run my mouth back. But that was the last time I was ever to throw the first punch. If you're run your mouth, I run my mouth back. If you want to fight I'll fight, told my dad that I made that decision and he got very serious and told me that didn't matter how big I thought I was, not big how fast I thought I was, how good of a fighter I was, I was always going to find someone bigger, faster, better. It was inevitable, it was going to happen. Well, being young and dumb I decided it's inevitable why try to avoid so I spent the next year getting in so many fights that I almost got expelled from the school. Just people pushing me, I push back and it would escalate. But the next year nobody messed with me, I stood up for myself, I showed them that I wasn't going to be an easy target and I stayed true to what I said was that whether or not I won that fight because dad told me was inevitable that I was going to lose one, they were going to know that they were in a fight. So I ended up as a reputation that somebody that you didn't mess with. Occasionally I got into a fight when there was a new kid in the school and they want to somebody talk them into it to see if they get beat up or they want to try and beat up somebody. I'm not a great fighter by any means but as somebody who spent his summer throwing bales of hay working and a hayfield, had previously trained in martial arts and wrestled his friends for fun at that age, I was pretty decent.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It sounds like a pretty good recipe for a schoolyard fighter.



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**Nishan Grout:**

I was able to take care of myself. And again in small areas the fish always ends up a lot bigger by the time someone hears about it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Right. You don't seem super comfortable isn't the right word, cause you are certainly comfortable talking about this, you don't seem like your' holding back but it almost seems like your kind reliving some elements of this and it seems like there might be some emotion popping up for you? It is one of the advantages of us conducting this live, I can see your face.

**Nishan Grout:**

It was unpleasant. It was really unpleasant and looking back at it I think if truth be told I actually ended up swinging to the other end of the pendulum in times. I think looking back at it there were times where I was probably the bullier.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

How does it feel now to see that?

**Nishan Grout:**

Like hell, yeah. On even more so because in at least some of the instances it was people that I felt were my good friends and I felt like we were just joking around but in looking back at it, it was not reciprocal. There was one kid that I went to school with the looking back at it I mean, we've considered ourselves friends looking back at it, there were certainly points where I was bullying him. And I don't know if this happens anywhere else on the face of the planet but the school I went to, if you get suspended so many times for fighting your expelled. If you fail all your classes and you're expelled. So the big thing used to be, oh we'll go meet at the driveway next-door after school so they were off school property fighting and we can't get suspended for it. This friend that I look back at and I certainly bullied was also the same guy who agreed to a fight that he most definitely was going to lose. There was no doubt about it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

With you or with someone else?

**Nishan Grout:**





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With someone else. And I remember going up to him and being like when do you want me to step in? I'll be there for you, I'll stop it whenever you want me to stop it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

How old are you at this point?

**Nishan Grout:**

I was probably a sophomore or junior high school. And he said if somebody else steps in. So even if he is really wailing on you don't, no. As long as it's a fair fight, if he beats me up, he beats me up if it's on me. And like okay and sure enough he went to that fight and he got beat up and nobody else stepped in but it was like there were two groups of people there each supporting one side of that fight and were certainly the potential for disaster there. And I remember my friend's dad showing up, pretty much as the fight was over and giving us a look I felt directly at me but really just at the group and saying that he was really disappointed in all of us. I did what my friend asked me to do so, I have a clear conscience about that that person never messed with him again though. He stood up for himself, he wasn't an easy target there were easier targets, less struggle more fun.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Now that you're a parent or how do these experiences you know, filter down into the way you're raising your children?

**Nishan Grout:**

So a few years back my daughter was doing track and there was another person on the track team that she had a lot of trouble with in class. And she came over and she complained that this person was pushing and grabbing her hair like, you need to tell the coach. Okay she goes, she tells the coach. A few minutes later she comes back, still doing it. What did the coach do? Nothing go tell the coach again. She goes, she talks to coach she comes back a few minutes later still doing it. If he pulls your hair, you pulled his hair. If he pushes you, you push him if he punches you, you punch him. Like you tried the proper channels they didn't work now you need to stick up for yourself. And she's like but I'm gonna get in trouble, I'm like, if you get in trouble I will go speak to the coach and I will find the kid's parents and I will speak to his parents because it's not acceptable. But us getting involved is not going to change things the way you sticking up for yourself is going to change them. In about three minutes later this kid went flying over three-year gear bags because she pushed him so hard and that was the last time that he messed with her.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

The way you're talking about handling yourself is pretty, it's spot on the way I was raised. Right and were similar in age and unfortunately that's my personal feeling, unfortunately the way bullying kinda lump it all under that heading is handled these days is very different than what it was when we were kids. You know, my mother taught me, my martial arts school taught me until someone is actually trying to hurt you, you don't use anything, you use your words you avoid the situation, you back up get out of there you run, whatever you've gotta do but the moment someone crosses that line, you do what you gotta do. You know, it kinda reminded of the quote in what is it, karate kid 1 or 2 from Miyagi, best not fight, if fight, win. Right? I mean that's how I was raised that's how it sounds like you were raised and I think without schools being able to set their own rules, every martial arts school probably set those same conditions for their students in. And I suspect most of them permit that but schools don't always look at it that way. Schools look as doesn't matter if you're the first person to fight.

**Nishan Grout:**

The person who usually gets caught

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

The person who defends themselves defends their well-being is often equally guilty the person who initiated it because apparently getting the snot beat out of you while you lay prone on the ground is a better choice to some of these administrators. There's a topic I could get very ranty about but I won't.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Does your knowledge of martial arts and the fact that your children have been to martial arts and your wife, the mother of your children is a martial artist, does that change the way you look at this? Would you offer the same advice to your children if you weren't a martial artist? If she, had she trained at that point?

**Nishan Grout:**

She only trained very briefly. High yellow belt I believe, sorry high white belt I believe is as far as she got



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Very little.

**Nishan Grout:**

Very little. Absolutely that that advice comes all the way back from my experience but if the proper channels are going to take care of the problem, absolutely let them do it. That is by far preferable because normally the person that reacts to the instigator is the one that gets caught and in the most trouble. So I mean if they're not going to take care of it then one way or another, you've got to make it so you are not the easiest target. Somebody's going to be an easy target if you're able to help those people absolutely do it, I've done I hope that if my kids that if it ever end up in that situation they'll call the bully out and try and help somebody that's getting bullied. Whether it's physical verbal, it's gotta be what way works for you but you need to stand up for yourself and not be the easy target targets.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It's a hard decision. It's hard to get older and see that bullying still exists will sure you've experienced it in your adult life which is just utterly ridiculous to me. I deal with it, I even deal with it in the martial arts community which I find so baffling. Let's switch gears let's talk about some lighter subjects for a little while.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

If you can train it anybody that you haven't anywhere in the world anywhere in time who would that be?

**Nishan Grout:**

I'm a horrible guest that I didn't double check on this gentleman's name but, a couple years back Daniel Hartz posted what he called an island day and we got together and trained outdoors in the grass all day and a gentleman from Maine, Mr. Wynn, I can't remember his first name.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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Aaron.

**Nishan Grout:**

Aaron Wynn went came in and the level of excitement and just pure joy in his entire body as he swings a stick at you so fast it's going to break something if you don't block it is infectious. Out of everybody honestly, if not him someone with that same personality. But I would definitely enjoy training with him. The one time that I've got to training with him that day I really enjoyed it. It is probably on par with the level of energy and enthusiasm that Bill Wallace had when we did the seminar down at [00:52:50.09]. It was very much that same feeling just in a smaller group.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Sure. I've had the opportunity unfortunately only once to train with with Master Wynn and he has not been on the show and would love to have him on the show and he certainly has a standing invitation, had a very small amount of contact but I knew of him by reputation long before I had met him and ended up at an event in Maine and was sitting next to him and then went, oh you're new and he said yeah how do you know who I am and so they I explain that I knew Mr. Hartz and Mr. Earl smith. Yeah he's like a big kid.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

The kids at this particular event love him I'm sure in the same way that that you did because yeah his passion is absolutely infectious. Is that something you find you respond to a lot in life, just people that are very passionate about things.

**Nishan Grout:**

Yeah. People that are passionate and people I can make, I mean swinging those sticks is dangerous and he makes it fun. All the danger out of disappears, if he's smiling, it's fun shows you exactly what you need to do and he's proficient enough in it that there's actually no doubt in your mind that as long as you do what you're told it's going to be fun. It's not just going to be safe, it's going to be fun.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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How about competition?

**Nishan Grout:**

Not really. I've done two or three tournaments here in the Vermont area. I didn't start doing competitions until I was already a black belt and the reality of it is if I didn't have to go in order to coax the other students into going, I probably wouldn't have done it then. I'm considering getting into forms and possibly board breaking competition just on some of the local ones but not sparring. For me there is too much the margin for error and the chance of getting hurt is just too big even with the head issue even with the headgear, when I was a senior in high school November 13, 1999 at 3:49 in the morning.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Clearly a significant moment in time.

**Nishan Grout:**

I was involved in a car accident on my way to volunteer at a hunters breakfast for a church in Greensboro bend and I died.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Burying the lead on this episode.

**Nishan Grout:**

I was driving a 1987 Buick Skyhawk, two door coupe and I lost control of the vehicle going around the corner the vehicle fishtailed and I went over the yellow line to be t-boned by a brand-new 2000 Chevy suburban that was converted into a hearse and was carrying a casket to Connecticut for a funeral.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Morbid and the little bit funny.

**Nishan Grout:**

My stepmother and I laughed about and she can't help but wonder if they had to notify next of kin. Out of that I ended up with a hand crushed to the point that I needed four, yes for metal rods in it, a broken collarbone, a punctured lung some broken ribs, my skull was fractured in seven places, and I had



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cerebral fluid leaking from my left ear. I had to learn to walk again, talk again, the whole 9 yards. My memory still shot from it. I had an air pocket on my brain the danger of getting hit in the head and suffering another injury like that just is not worth it to me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

How much of that is physical concern how much of it is, I'll be blunt fear.

**Nishan Grout:**

Most of it is likely fear. The damage is already there, I'm not willing to take the risk that something goes wrong and it gets worse. The odds of actually happening pretty slim, I mean the headgear is good, the refs are good the contact is low, it would have to be a pretty serious accident happen. But I've been pretty serious accidents they happen so, I'm just not willing to take the chance. I've done it a couple times it's just not for me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

The reason I asked, reason I kinda pushed on the sparring piece is because of the events at martial arts competition that tends to be where the most adrenaline is and if you're participating in paintball, I've done paintball a little bit and I know that the adrenaline is through the roof and most people I know that love paintball it's because of that rush.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely and it's great. But yeah I'm just and I've toyed with the idea of trying MMA but for the same reason, is just the chances of a head injury for me especially with the kids still very much needing support if nothing else, or me to open the wallet occasionally in the case of the teenagers it's just not worth it for me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah

**Nishan Grout:**

And I'm not that good at it anyway.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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Moving forward with your goals?

**Nishan Grout:**

So beginning next month, if all goes well my wife and I are opening our own tae kwon do school. Right in the same location that our instructor just closed his school.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Is this something that you two had talked about prior to that?

**Nishan Grout:**

It's something she has dreamed about since she was 12 years old and that I never really given any thought.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So there's another point where the two of you are connecting on martial arts.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Exciting.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely and obviously were not gonna agree on everything but, were going into this making sure that we agree on enough that's going to work, it's not going to be the contentious issue in our marriage or in our training and our instructor is fully supportive of it and the other students of the school are all supportive of it. They're all very excited. I did warn them that I'm a hack and I'm not the martial artist that Master Lenahan is but that we will do our best.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Most people are not. He is a good man, he is an exceptional man.



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**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely. And I suspect at some point and possibly even before this airs, the school have a website or Facebook page or something, some way to get a hold of you at this point we have an email address but that's about. It we will have a Facebook page sooner rather than later.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So then I guess I'll just tell people that are listening go to the show notes [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com), find the notes for this episode and I suspect by the time it's up there will be, we'll have some kind of link there.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely go to the show now it and read about how to get a hold of us.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Now the best part is so, we just talk about I want to make sure you're the one that brought the topic up but when we sat down to talk about this, the listeners should know I didn't know that was happening.

**Nishan Grout:**

Nobody did.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

This has been very quiet and so the release of this episode is going to be fairly close to that the time were you to start speaking about this publicly. We talked about it kind of a soft launch you know just working out some of the [01:03:06.08] bringing in the the existing students or so to speak the old students from Master Lenahan school and then no after few weeks that talking about more openly and this is going to pretty closely correlate with that which is super fun because it was completely unplanned and I love stuff like that.

**Nishan Grout:**

Absolutely, the only people other than filing paperwork and what not, the only people in the martial arts community to know about it really are the existing students and the person that we will be training with until this airs anyway. As I'm about out 30 seconds ago.





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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Big news big stuff awesome. You know how we send it out, so what what words do you want to get to the people listening, what parting advice?

**Nishan Grout:**

Parting advice for people has gotta be to make sure that you present your best self to people it doesn't matter what you are doing present yourself well meet everybody on equal level with you and they'll prove to either be worthy of being on that level or they want and if they're not then you really don't need them in your life. If there on the same level with you if they are putting effort into their lives and trying to be good people, help them out. People that do that seem to naturally seek each other out even if it's just random circumstance and were all better for it. We need to realize they were part of a larger organization larger community and a larger organism and unless we all work together it all just kind of falls apart.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

When we talk about the martial arts relating to every aspect of life, I think this is a good episode there's so much context to who this man is that comes from his martial arts training and that when you train with him, because I've been fortunate enough to train with him on a number of occasions more than nearly anyone that's been on the show, you can see that come through in the way he conducts himself. This is someone who loves martial arts but as you heard maybe didn't know how strongly a place in his life it needed that he deserved to have. However you want to look at it. I'm glad he's found it I'm glad that he's continuing his path, his journey and I'm excited to get to watch because I live nearby. Thank you so much Mr. Grout for coming on the show today. I'd love for you to head on over to the show notes maybe leave a comment under this episode tell us what you thought or if you're more comfortable, you can go ahead you can email me privately [jeremy@whistlekick.com](mailto:jeremy@whistlekick.com) and of course we have social media all over the place we are @whistlekick, Instagram, Facebook, twitter and I won't say their name because they can give me permission and I didn't ask but recently one of our more public guests from the show the past said in comment on our instream feed that ours is one of his favorites. This was completely unsolicited. Made my day. I sent it over to the media team and it made their day too. Super cool. We had fun with what we do. Hopefully that comes through. If you want to check out the products, the other stuff we have fun doing, find it [whistlekick.com](http://whistlekick.com) and of course I will see you soon whether that be in your ears or maybe around an event. Until next time, train hard, smile and have a great day.