



Episode 345 – Have We Gone Too Far Trying to Stop Bullying | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hey how's going everyone? This is whistlekick martial arts radio episode 345. Today, were to talk about bullying but we're gonna talk about it from a different perspective, have we gone too far in trying to stop it? My name is Jeremy Lesniak, I'm your host on the show, I'm the founder at whistlekick. You find all the products@whistlekick.com, use podcast15 to save 15% at checkout and hit at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com for transcripts, and photos, and every episode we've ever made, we don't put any of them behind a pay wall. Everything we do on that site is free.

Let's dig in to the to the topic. Now on the first one to admit, when I pose a title like this have we gone too far trying to stop bullying, there's an element of, I don't want to call it link bait, but there's an element of inciting interest that I'm trying to have there. But I think it's important that I let you know my background with bullying. I am a shorter o stature person. I'm 5'7 it was even shorter when I was younger guess what, low and behold. But I'm significantly larger, I was a very skinny kid and I had glasses and I was smart and I had no friends. I checked pretty much every box out and oh and I was awkward everything that wasn't martial arts. I checked pretty much every box for getting picked on, for getting bullied. And I had some absently terrible experiences. Some of those experiences have come up on the show. There are some things that I've contemplated as I've discussed other episodes or even on some of the interview episodes. And there are things that I'm still working through as I approached 40. Scars that I'm still working to heal. So I am not saying that bullying doesn't have a long-standing, lasting impact. However, there is an element of bullying, a place on the spectrum of bullying, that is getting lumped in



Episode 345 – Have We Gone Too Far Trying to Stop Bullying | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com

with the crueller stuff. It is one thing to have a kid stuffed in a locker and not let out for hours on end, it's another thing to make fun of the kid's name. And when we refer to bullying, we make no room for those different things. Now, why do I think it's important that we have space for gradation of bullying? Well, because there's a certain element of bullying that is human nature. It's hierarchy, it's social structure and if you look at any animal that has social structure you will see that there is a dominance that plays out, it is natural. It is part of our genetics, it is part of our existence as human beings and if we try to remove it, we won't be successful. It will be impossible to have two separate things: name-calling and people being mean to others. That is not to say that more aggressive forms of bullying should be tolerated, but for the most part those have a name already and it's called assault. An assault is not okay anywhere, with the possible exception of some public schools where the rules are so convoluted that I'm not even going to get into them right now. We've talked about this on other episodes. When someone is taken against their will and shoved into a locker and not let out, that is assault, it doesn't need another name. To call it bullying is to make excuses for it and to equate that with someone calling someone a name is ridiculous.

Now, why is that important? No one likes being called names, nobody likes anyone treating anyone poorly. I don't like it, it still happens, I'm an adult it still happens and that's why it's important we acknowledge it because it does still happen. And if we work this hard to separate it from school, if we try really hard to remove it from elementary education or any public-private education, what happens when kids suddenly become 18 and they don't have any of these people trying to sanitize their lives. Guess what? Calling someone a name is not illegal, it's not assault, it's not battery, it's gonna happen and if we've removed the ability for people to practice the skill of ignoring the words of people who don't matter, then it's going to take them that much longer to practice that skill, they will be that much older. What does it look like when the child who has been completely cared for to the extent that no one's ever set a bad thing to them gets into the workforce and they have an aggressive boss who may be isn't the kindest in doling out criticism. I expect that child will fall apart. On this show we've talked about some of the extreme things that have happened to our guests and from memory, when I've asked the question, "what would you say to that person or do you regret that?" I don't recall any of them saying that they do, or that they wish that it had changed because it shaped them into who they are. Bullying, and again, I'm carving out the separate stuff that gets labeled as assault, bullying is part of life and we learn by going through difficult changes, difficult times. Iron sharpens iron. We learn best by making mistakes. There are a multitude of clichés that I could throw in here to illustrate this point.

So, why are we doing this? There are people that have best intentions, they don't want children to suffer, they don't want their kid to come home upset, sad, crying, but it's going to happen and I would suggest that it has to happen. It's part of our human experience to grow up and to deal with people who are challenging. We're all fighting our own demons, we're all facing our own battles and you can't get rid of them. We have to work through them, we have to solve them. It's part of becoming an adult. So, what I would ask for any of you out there that have some influence on this is to speak intelligently about it, to stop lumping all childhood transgressions against another child as bullying. If you work in some



Episode 345 – Have We Gone Too Far Trying to Stop Bullying | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com

kind of school where you have influence, let's separate this stuff. Let's give kids the opportunity to learn what it's like to become an adult. I don't have kids, that's not a secret but one of the things that I heard in the last decade they completely change my perspective on children was that it is not the job of a parent to raise a child, it's the job of the parent to raise an adult. We're supposed to be setting kids up for success and if we know that name-calling and exclusion and manipulation are aspects of adult humanity, then we have to find ways to teach our children but how to navigate those things, rather than just put up a brick wall keep them away from it. And just as a separate bit anyone that works in public school who has expelled or punished a student for defending themselves, you're a piece of crud. Can't deal with that because that was the only thing that kept me from losing my mind as a child. The knowledge that I could defend myself and the very rare times that I had to initiate action to do that, those are what gave me a sense of empowerment. If you would give me the conflict of do I defend myself or and get expelled or do I defend myself, let me say that again. Do I defend myself and know I'll get expelled or do I take the abuse and risk physical injury. That is a choice no child should ever have to make and I hope to whatever I can hope to, that that trend reverses as quickly as possible.

I wanna know you think. This is an important subject. I know I say this at the end of every episode, I want to know what you think. Please tell me. The best stuff really it should be on the comments on the website, whistlekickmartialartsradio.com this is episode 345. Please leave a comment there. If you are uncomfortable leaving comments publicly, please send them to me jeremy@whistlekick.com and I'll probably get your permission post it anonymously. We can fix this but we've got work together on it. Thank you for your time. Hope to hear from you soon, I'll be back soon with another episode. Man, kinda shook myself up, I got to go decompress. Until next time train hard, smile and have a great day.