



Episode 75 – Avoiding Fights | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com

Jeremy Lesniak:

Hey there everyone, it's episode 75 of [whistlekickmartialartsradio](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com). The only place you are the best conversations about martial arts, like today's episode tackling the subject of avoiding fights. I'm the founder here whistlekick but better known as your host, Jeremy Lesniak. whistlekick, in case you don't know, makes the world's best sparring gear and some excellent apparel and accessories for practitioners and fans of traditional martial arts. I'd like to welcome our new listeners and thank all of you that are listening again. If you're not familiar with the products, you can learn more about them whistlekick.com. Our past podcast episodes, show notes and a lot more are on a different site and that's whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. And while you're over there go ahead and sign up for our newsletter we offer exclusive content to subscribers and it's the only place to find out about upcoming guest for the show.

Now today's subject as I mentioned is about avoiding fights. In the martial arts we spent a lot of time, the majority of our time, training how to win a fight but as some would say the only way to truly win a fight is to avoid it altogether. One of the things that I'm most proud of in my martial arts career is how successful I've been at avoiding confrontations altogether. Now when I say confrontations, I don't mean that I've avoided people confronting me but I've managed to find a way out of those situations to avoid the engagement that other people were seeking. And my strategies for this goal quite a ways back and to be honest, most of the stuff that we to talk about today is stuff that I developed on my own. I don't talk about myself too much on this show and that's intentional especially when we have a guest on, you know it's not about me it's about the guest. And when we do these topic shows for Thursday, it's really about the subject but I think there is some value and understanding little bit about who I am when it comes to the strategies. I'm smaller, some of you have met me I'm 5 foot six, I'm, I've got a little bit of muscle on me now but back when I was in high school, I was a small guy you know, weighed a hundred and 20 - 125 pounds, I was the stereotypical nerd glasses, honors classes, small frame, and I was the kid that should've been picked on all the time and I was. And when I say should have I don't mean it was right I mean, it just it was cliché, I was the kid they got picked on a lot of the time. And as I look back on that, I was really good at implementing some of the strategies that I'm to go over now and those who serve me really well even through adulthood. Through my 20s, my best friend was someone who tended to get into a lot of fights and whenever I was with him, he was fine because I was able to defuse situations with some of these tactics I'm gonna talk about now. So rather than give you too much context and go down that rabbit hole let's just jump into it.

So obviously the best way to avoid a fight is to avoid dangerous situations dangerous locations. One of the best ways that I've ever heard it expressed is don't go to dumb places with dumb people and do dumb things. Quite often, certainly not always, but quite often these situations that will and up in a physical confrontation are coming out of places with people that one might expect. Anywhere that alcohol exists, bars, concerts, things like that, those are prime places because people's energy is up, a lot of times people are posturing, sexually they're looking for a partner or you know somebody to have a



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romantic relationship with any couple that with alcohol and that can quite often lead to situations. I'm not someone who frequents bars, I will go out from time to time with friends but those of us that have been the bars and other bars that are rougher than others. You've gotta pick your battles you know figuratively, you've got to make a decision is going to this seedier bar because it has a band that I want to listen to or a friend that I want to meet, is it worth that risk? And I'm not saying that you shouldn't go to the place I'm saying that you should be aware you should take calculated risk whenever you go anywhere. And if you do go somewhere that is risky, or not, it's about awareness. We did a whole show on awareness and how to build that skill of being aware of what's going on around you, but if you go somewhere be a little bit more cautious keep your back to the wall keep your eyes open to what's going on. If you're at a bar, don't get hammered. You know, just don't set yourself up for failure really. Now, let's suppose that you've done all those things or you know that there's something that just can't be avoided, someone has confronted you and hopefully your first strategy is not to physically take them out. Most of us have the skill to do that, hopefully we all have the skill to do that or were working towards a skill to do that but, as I said, today show's not about that you've already got that covered I don't need to teach you how to do that. So one of the best things you can do is to really just talk people down. If someone confronts me and they're carrying on, I looked at them funny, whatever it is, the first thing that I'm going to do is just try to diffuse the situation. Hey you know, I'm sorry I didn't mean to take some humility really knock yourself down a peg if you can and just let them know hey you know my bad, and quite often in these situations people are looking for someone to rise up against them, to get defensive, so you totally take the wind out of their sails when they come at you like that, you know it's the whole concept of yin yang, they come at you hard you balance them out soft.

Now let's say that doesn't work they're in your face their angry they're aggressive and you've tried to talk him down and that doesn't work, well, walk away. Say you know what, let me get out of here you have a good night and quite often that'll work too. It's not worth getting into a fight whether or not you're going to win to save a little bit of pride. Pride is such a foolish emotion, a foolish sense in my opinion because it makes people do really dumb things quite often. So you walk away, what is a fall you or what if they block your path? What if escape isn't an option. Humor is a great one. Maybe are not a funny person but let's suppose you are or what suppose that you you know a joke or worst case, you can make fun of yourself. You know hey you know sorry about that you could offer telling someone a joke as let's say retribution. Hey you know what you're right I was a jerk, I'm sorry let me make it up to you me see if I can make you laugh. I think everybody just in general and life should have a joke or two at their ready, something quick you know a knock knock joke or whatever that you can without a moment's notice great icebreaker and maybe try throwing that out there or maybe you're a little bit better off-the-cuff with your sense of humor. I tend to be in situations not so much when I'm recording a podcast, I could tell you a knock knock joke but we're gonna save that maybe I'll save it for a really desperate time on the show right? Now humility being self-deprecating, cutting yourself down I think is probably one of the best strategies for you, you may reorder this list I'm running down in a list that I tend to go through in my head first resort to last. So we're about halfway down the list I am completely willing to make



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myself look terrible to avoid a fight. You may not be willing to and that's okay so if someone's in my face, they won't let me leave, I've tried to talk myself out of it I've tried to be funny and lighten the situation none of that has worked, I'll just be honest and this works because I'm a small guy. You know, where's the challenge look at me I'm tiny, I'm a nerdy guy what is it prove for you to beat me up? And I'm sorry this let me get out here, you know it's gonna make you look bad to beat me up, I mean really. And something like that you know it's not always gonna work, but again it might were working through this list.

Now once we get past that point if I realize that hey this guy, this person, this group of people, aren't letting me out of it. My mindset starts to shift and I start to very slowly turn on that same fight reflects, you know fight or flight right? So everything up until now has been flight, it's been very defensive, very almost submissive in a sense but now are starting to make that shift. And this next one be crazy. Nobody wants to mess with a crazy person because there are no rules. We've all heard examples, some of us maybe have seen or unfortunately being in in altercation with someone who others might say doesn't play by the rules. Quite often when men fight, there's this unspoken rule of not kicking in the groin. I've heard people say you know, it wasn't fair, he kicked him in the groin. There are no rules in a fight right? And to go even beyond that, to portray yourself in a way that you aren't in respect and any rules. Maybe you develop a nervous tick, maybe you start to shout, to do something that appears outside of the norm of what someone would expect someone to do in a situation where they know they're going to get into a fight. If you can escalate yourself in that way, if you can start to bring up your own energy and projecting it out there through the appearance of being nuts, that will often back people off because they don't know what to expect. When someone is coming after you they're expecting a certain outcome, they're expecting they're going to win. Very very rarely is someone going to pick a fight that they don't think they're going to win. They might not, we hope they don't but, let's work with that psychology for second. If someone is pretty sure that they're going to win a fight with you and now you start bending those rules you start making them question what they believe beforehand, they're much more likely to back down. So practice your crazy face do it in the mirror, come up with your own persona that you can pull out and I would argue that practicing this is just as valuable as practicing punches and blocks, in fact this might come in more handy. Now the last strategy and when I present this material this is the one that always catches some flack, you've gone through this whole list, you've been crazy and that's not enough, there's another level of crazy and it's called being gross. Now I'm not to get too detailed here but, let's pretend that you pick your nose and whether you end up with stuff on your fingers or you don't you can act like you do. If that's not enough you can keep going and I'm not going to keep going with examples but I'm sure you could come up with some because that's a level of crazy that almost nobody is going to work with. Now I'll be honest I've never had to take it to that point. Just being crazy has been plenty for me but you might have to go little bit further. Now the advantage let's say you get through all that you've been crazy, you've been gross, and that's not enough, this person, group, whatever they're still coming, you've brought your heart rate up you have to a certain degree started projecting an energy of confidence, because hey if you're confident enough to pick your



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nose and show it to people you're confident, your confident enough that you can be ready for this altercation and you've just given yourself a better chance.

So I'll run down through them one more time don't go to dumb places with dumb people do dumb things, if you have to or choose to make sure you are aware. If you do end up in a situation that you can't avoid with that first method try disarming it try having a conversation with the person try talking them down. People are people and sometimes mistakes happen. If that doesn't work get out of there, walk away, don't be too proud to run. If that doesn't work, use some humor, tell a joke whatever you gotta do there. Be willing to be self-deprecating cut yourself down, make yourself less of a target, make the reward for the altercation to the other party be less than they thought it was. If that doesn't work you start to pump yourself up get crazy, and if that's not enough get gross.

So that's my list you might have your own and if you do would love to hear about it. If we miss something for avoiding a fight any strategies you might have go ahead shoot us a message on social media, we're on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram username is whistlekick, most you guys know that by now, we love hearing from you. And if social media is not your thing or if you want to do something little more privately, you can email us info@whistlekick.com or head on over to the website whistlekickmartialartsradio.com fill up the contact form there, and don't forget you can find all over podcast episodes over on YouTube. Now if you want to be a guest on the show or maybe you have an idea for a show topic, go ahead, shoot us a message fill up the form on the website and while you're over there, don't forget to subscribe to the newsletter so you can stay up on everything were doing. You can learn more about our products at whistlekick.com. Well that's all for today so until next time, train hard, smile and have a great day.