



Episode 370 – Mr. Jordan Brown | [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com)



**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Hey, everybody. Thanks for coming by. This is whistlekick Martial Arts Radio episode 370. Today, I'm joined by my guest, Mr. Jordan Brown. I'm Jeremy Lesniak. I'm your host here for Martial Arts Radio. I'm the founder at whistlekick, and you can find everything that we're making at [whistlekick.com](http://whistlekick.com). Don't forget. If you do choose to make a purchase you can use the code `PODCAST15` to save 15% on shirts and hats and sweatshirts and sweatpants and uniforms and sparring gear and other kinds of sparring gear and other kinds of sparring gear. There's a lot going on. You can also find our stuff on Amazon. There's no discount code there but you might find that more convenient, maybe you even have an Amazon gift card. So, don't forget to find our stuff. Just search whistlekick and you'll find all kinds of things.

Martial artists are great people. I just think that overall, martial artists are the best group of people on the planet, and that's why I'm so honored to be one of them. And even more honored and also humbled to get to speak to them, and make it part of my job. And that's how I felt when I was talking with Mr. Brown today. We clicked on a bunch of different levels. I felt like his story was my story. I felt like if we had grown up in the same area and the same school, we would have been great friends. And for all I know, maybe we will be one day. But until then, here's my conversation, and I hope you enjoy it. Mr. Brown, welcome to whistlekick Martial Arts Radio.



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**Jordan Brown:**

Well, thank you for having me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Thank you for being here. You know, it's really one of the best parts of my day, one of the best parts of my job, that I get this wonderful excuse to talk about martial arts to other martial artists knowing that other martial artists are going to listen to it not because they have to, but because they want to. And that's incredibly surreal at one's respect but it's also very, I don't know, humbling, and at the same time feeds my ego a bit. You know, it's the best. So, thank you for being part of the group that gives me that warm fuzzy feeling.

**Jordan Brown:**

Absolutely. You know, I'm just excited to be able to talk about martial arts with anybody, really. But the opportunity to be able to sit down and talk about martial arts with you is a humbling experience in and of itself as well.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Well, you are too kind and I appreciate that. You know, as much as we could talk about me, I don't like talking about me which is the irony of this show. So, I'm going to flip that back around on you and ask you the question that we always ask everybody when we get started here. And that's how did you first find the martial arts?

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. So for me, I grew up in the late '80s, early '90s. So, you know, the first big thing was G.I. Joe and then Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. So, I went around the house chopping and kicking all the furniture. And, I think, my parents started to get kinda sick of it. Then came along Power Rangers in the mid-90s. I was pretty old to be watching Power Rangers when I was watching Power Rangers, and my friends let me know that too. So, it was always fun. So, my parents let me try a Karate. I don't even remember the style. It was... I don't even know. I can't find it anywhere so that's what's funny. It looked like, from what I remember, like Shorei Ryu or I don't... I don't even know. I don't know if that's the style but I can't find it. The school's gone. It was in Terre Haute, Indiana. And I remember going in there and dropping down into the splits because I was just naturally flexible. And my brother-in-law told me, hey, don't do that. I'm like, why not? I'm just stretching like everybody else's. Yeah, just don't do that. So, I felt that was strange but we did that Karate class, and I loved it. I think I trained there for maybe three months but it was like a half an hour away



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from where I lived. And so, my parents didn't really want to take me and I could only go when my brother-in-law was going. And probably, that was like 1995. In August of 1996, there was a Taekwondo school that opened literally just down the street from where I lived. Like, I could walk there every single day. And we went in and met with the instructor. And it's funny because the Dojang, the training floor, was really small. You might have been able to get 6 people point-fighting in there at one time in a small area. That old like green carpet, no mats, wood panel walls, concrete block walls - just a dungeon looking place - and I loved it. And we signed up and that's when I got started, and it's kinda been there... That was, what, almost 23 years ago. So.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Now, the initial interest - The Ninja Turtles, The Power Rangers - I mean, this is not an uncommon story for us here on Martial Arts Radio. We hear about this. I mean, I was influenced by Ninja Turtles, by The Karate Kid movie. But quite often, when people start with martial arts as you did in this Shorei Ryu school, if it doesn't work out, they don't always go back. And in fact, I don't have any data to back this up but I would argue that most people don't go back. What was it for you that even though you had to stop, you were still so fired up that when another opportunity came up, you jumped at it?

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. For me, the kicking and punching, and more so the kicking than the punching, just really kinda lit a fire in me from an early age. Like I said, from when I was kicking and punching the furniture, probably when I was like 5 or 6. And I remember... I'll be nice and not tell you that... Okay, I'll be mean. So, Karate Kid came out before I was born, just barely by like 6 months, I think. or 8 months or something like that. So, I didn't see that until I was almost a 5 or 6. And watching all the martial arts action in that was, you know, awesome and amazing. But then to watch, same thing with The Ninja Turtles then to watch The Power Rangers, I think that's what really just kinda lit it up for me. And seeing them do something that was very different, right, because [06:57](#) was not a martial artist but some of the kids that were in the original Power Rangers series, they were martial artists. And to see a good sidekick around in the TV show, and it was like, I want to do that. And it wasn't necessarily all of the flipping and the acrobatics that the martial arts that I really enjoyed. It was just the down straightup technique that I really, really enjoyed watching. And to get a taste of that and then kinda have it taken away a little bit kinda made that burn a little bit brighter. So, when that next opportunity came along, I was like, hey, let's do this.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Nice, nice. That makes sense. If you were continuing to watch, if you were continuing to be influenced by martial arts and pop culture, absolutely. Makes all kinds of sense. And it's great that



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you have that opportunity to find another school, something so close. Now, you said literally just down the street and you could go there everyday. Were you there training daily?

**Jordan Brown:**

So, I was there every day that they were open from the time they open until... Basically, I was the last one to leave. My instructors would get so upset because I have been waiting so long to call my parents to come pick me up. Because at first, they wouldn't let me... I think I was 10 or 11 when I started. So, they wouldn't let me walk home at night but they would let me walk there. It was only, like I said, only a few blocks away. So, I would walk there and then, you know, classes would start at 6, I think. I would get there at 5:30 and sit right in front of the door. And they would be sitting there waiting on a chair until my parents pick me up. And then they would shut the lights off and the lock out and leave themselves. So, that was probably 9:15 or 9:30. And I think we did Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays or the days that we train. And I was there every single one of those days.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Wow. Now, there is a certain personality type that, you know, wants to be incredibly early to things and stays super late to things, but something in my gut tells me that that's not how you are for everything, that it was something unique to martial arts.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah, absolutely. I'm not early to most things unless I... Like, if I can be, I'll try to be early but it's not kind of something that's built into me. But it involves martial arts, you better believe I'm there early. I'm stretching out before the lights are on sometimes, and the facility that we're using or whatever else that comes along. But with martial arts, it's always just been different. It's always... It's never been a struggle for me to go to class. It's never been a struggle for me to go train. It's never, like... I go, I wanna be there, and I don't want to leave. So.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Do you have any insight as to why?

**Jordan Brown:**

You know, I wish I did. It's funny. It's just... It's always been like one of my biggest passions. And, you know, I remember being like... I still remember my first class waling in and there was a gentleman, I think his first name is Ryan, he was a blue belt. My instructor, who would become my instructor, he was the school owner, said to me, hey, this is Ryan. He's gonna be the next world



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champion that we have. He's really good. And I remember thinking, I wanna be that whenever I get into the the ranks. I wanna be the next world champion. Its just... Every little thing - getting my orange belt, getting my sparring gear, getting a yellow belt, going to my first competition - everything is always just like... I remember all of that stuff. I can still sit here. I'm a 5th Degree blackbelt, and now I'm gonna test for 6th Degree next year, and I can still remember the whitebelt form that I learned 23 years ago. So, I mean, that stuff has stuck with me. I can remember all of the color belt material, blackbelt material - I can remember all of it. It's not like I have an amazing memory. i can just remember that stuff and I have no idea why, other than the fact that it's just something that is ingrained in me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I'm going to guess it's because it matters to you.

**Jordan Brown:**

Absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

That something about martial arts, either fill the void or... How old were you when you started?

**Jordan Brown:**

I was 10 when I started those Karate classes, and then I was 11 when I started doing Taekwondo.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So, I'm gonna play the odds based on what I've heard from a number of guests over the years. Maybe in martial arts, you found a version of yourself that you wanted to be, that you weren't or struggled to be outside.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah, I would say that that's pretty accurate. You know, it's funny because I remember being, and my parents would tell me this too, that I was a pretty shy kid before doing martial arts. And then, you know, the confidence that you get from doing martial arts. I remember breaking a board as a whitebelt and thinking like, oh, this is amazing. And I still have that board, too. It's [12:19](#) around my shelf right now.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Oh, cool.

**Jordan Brown:**

And the confidence that developed in me from that point.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It's so powerful, the stories that we hear on this show. It's so amazing to me to see that my story is so similar to your story, so similar to so many stories. And there's really only two ways that I think we can look at that. We can say that the people who find and stay in martial arts, you know, needed martial arts more than they needed other things, and thankfully, we found it. Or, and I think this is probably more likely, we all need martial arts. We can all benefit from finding that place that helps us feel confident. We all struggle with self-esteem from time to time. I mean, you have a school now. Is this something that you're witnessing in the students coming in your doors?

**Jordan Brown:**

You know, absolutely. And it's the funny part because not only do we have little 4-year olds who come in, who need to be doing it. But I've got a guy who started doing martial arts at 55. And the growth that I've seen in the 4-year olds and the growth that I've seen in the 55-year olds is amazing. When you step back and look back, the 55-year old's been with us for over a year now, and I don't even mean in his physical abilities but just the way that he talks about what he's doing and how he's doing things. The confidence that has improved in him. And he told me recently, we just had testing this past weekend, he told me Saturday when he came in, he said, you know, you told me that you used to stand and watch martial arts videos and you would work on your balance. And he's like, I couldn't understand what kind of person has the time to just sit and watch martial arts videos. And then next thing I know, it's three o'clock in the morning last night and I'm up watching martial arts videos, and I do that for three hours. And it's like, now you see what I'm talking about.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah. You know, if we were to describe what we do to someone who doesn't know what martial arts is, it's utterly ridiculous, right? I mean, there's so many elements to what we do that are silly. The people that we tend to build the strongest bonds with are often the ones that will challenge us the most or maybe even hit us the hardest.

**Jordan Brown:**





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Uh-hum.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

We form friendships that kinda defy what friendship means outside of training. But yet...

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah, I mean...

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

There's something so fundamental about it, isn't there?

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. And that's... You know, I saw something posted on social media recently where it's like, it's only a martial artist that would get kicked in the face by somebody and then be bestfriends with them right after that. Like, you know, there's something that is innate...

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I think that was ours.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah? I have to say, I saw it posted a couple of times. It was like everywhere.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I think that might have been ours.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. I have to say, I think that you guys posted and I think I saw Master Chip Townsend post it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah.



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**Jordan Brown:**

It could have been from you guys, too. But you know, it's so true though, right?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It is.

**Jordan Brown:**

You know, I still remember going to all those competitions and literally wanting to tear that guy's head off that's across from me, you know, on the other side of that line. But then, we get done and be like, hey, man. What are you doing later? Like, let's hang out.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Right.

**Jordan Brown:**

It's just what you want to do.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

The only other sport I've ever seen that in is rugby.

**Jordan Brown:**

Uh-hum.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I never played rugby but I had friends that did, and would tag along to some of the events. And these guys would beat the tar out of each other, and they'd all go to the pub and go drinking.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. Yup.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**





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And we don't always wrap it up with drinking but I see it at competition all the time. The person who won first and the person who won second are off on the side after they're done competing, sharing, helping each other get better, knowing that it's going to make it that much harder for them to win next time.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yes, and that's the part that always amazed me. And even now, I still compete and I'm gonna be getting back into that quite a bit this year as long as foot stays healthy. But I have a YouTube channel where I do a lot of martial arts sparring tips. The last tournament I went to, I had a guy. He goes, have I seen you on YouTube? And I was like, oh, God. Yeah, you probably did. And then I thought, uh-oh, he knows all my secrets. But at that point, I don't care. It's just I enjoy helping other people to see them grown and even in competitions. It's so fun, so.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Sure is. So, I think we've got a pretty good idea of who you are and where martial arts fits into your life. And when you think about that life as a martial artist, that time that you've put in training and instructing and competing, you have stories. We all have stories, and I love to hear other people's stories. So, what is your favorite story from your time training?

**Jordan Brown:**

There's a couple. The first one is really a fun story, and that I didn't realize that it was gonna be a martial arts story. So, a couple of years ago... Actually, it's about a decade ago now. My wife and I were dating at the time, and she introduced me to this really tall guy. And he coached basketball. He was older. He was like her parents' age, and he coach basketball for a homeschooling group. And his son knew... His son and my wife were friends, and I just kept looking at him and I'm like, he looks really familiar. And I couldn't place it. My wife asked her mom about it and we randomly ran into them in like Walmart or somewhere. And then he looked at me and I looked at him and he goes, didn't you teach me martial arts? And then the light bulb clicked and I realized that I had taught their entire family when I was like 13 about sparring. And here I realized, I was this kid teaching this grown man who was probably late 30's, early 40's at the time. And the fact that there can be these connections that still... I knew I could place him but I couldn't figure out where it was, but there's these connections that occur. Whether you were, you know, doing martial arts, teaching martial arts, competing in martial arts, that act of the kicking and the punching and then the stuff that goes along with it can kinda transcend a lot of different things. And then you don't realize the impacts that you make until years later.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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So true. Was that weird for you in that moment, realizing that someone from long ago, from a pretty different time in your life - I mean, from 13 to an adult isn't always a ton of years but certainly you look different, you act different - was that... I don't know. What was that experience like?

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. It was funny because it really made me realize that I was... When I was doing a lot of teaching at 13 and 14, and, you know, at 13 and 14 you know everything, right? I realized how much of a kid I was. Because at 23, I actually felt like a kid then, too. And it was like how much you can gain from people that you don't expect to gain stuff from. Even though it was myself, I realized, okay, well, who else can be teaching me something that knows a lot about something that I'm taking for granted? So, in that sense, it was very different and kinda helped me realize that not everything is exactly as we think it is. There's still a lot that we can learn from the most strangest of places if we are just open to it. Like, if our cups are empty, we can fill it up with stuff and it can come from, you know, big pots, little pots - doesn't matter where it comes from.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

That's right. Now, you mentioned you had more than one story?

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. And the other one is a story that was more recent. And it's just the fact that I started my martial arts school in 2012, and had the opportunity - I think it was right about two years ago, about this time... Two years ago, maybe a little less, I went back to my hometown. I live about an hour away from my hometown where I grew up. I was in town to see my parents, and I drove by my old school, my old martial arts school, and the lights were on. And there was a car out front. So, I was like, you know what, I'm gonna stop and see if anybody's in here. So, I go in and there's a woman who I haven't seen in a long time but I taught her like white and orange and yellow belt. And then, I think she got blackbelt when I went, and I went to her blackbelt testing. I went to one of the world competitions with her, and she was there. I actually had my daughter. She was a real tiny baby but it was weird coming from owning my own school, of owning my own facility for the last five years, and then walking into my old school and realizing again how small it was. But then, kind of all the memories that were there too, and how different it was now as well. Like that green carpet is now blue carpet. Still not matted but it's got carpet in there, and just things like that. You know, to look at where I am now and look from where I came allowed me to kinda sit back and think about my journey. My journey from whitebelt, I literally started as whitebelt in that school, to where I am now. Lots have happened, right? We talk about, a lot of times, blood sweat and tears that go onto the mat. Well, there's lots of blood, sweat and tears in that facility. And you know, when lots of



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blood, sweat and tears in my own facility, just in the last almost seven years here. And it just puts a lot of stuff into perspective for you, too.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Absolutely. You know, just this past weekend, I was at an event and we did some video. And the question that I was asking everyone was, what would you tell yourself if you could find a time machine and go back to your first day of training?

**Jordan Brown:**

That's a good question. You know, I think for me, I did a lot of top 10 competition in my late teens, early 20's. It wasn't really until I hit 21 or 22 that I was really good at sparring. And at that time, I was only training a day a week, and I took it somewhat seriously. I didn't travel as much as I should have for it. When the end of the year came around and the top 10 go to compete for world champion, I would always end up slightly out of it where I would be like 11th place or 12th place. Just outside of points, and it would be because I wouldn't go to one of the national tournaments. But part of me just... I just wish I could go back and train harder. Like, do more. Really put in effort into it. Because I feel like now, being 33 and being on the side where... You know, I train a lot more now than I did at 23 but realizing that my body takes a little bit longer to heal than it did before and that things are a lot... Are just starting to slow down for me. I wish I would have just done more then and really went for it. Spend a little bit of extra cash. Because here's the thing, I was always very money intolerant. I didn't want to spend a lot of money. But now, I kinda wish that I would have because then, I would have those experience. Like for me, I realized over the years that experiences are greater than things, and that would have been an experience for me that I could have looked back on and say, yeah, I'm glad I did that. So, every now and then I feel like, you know, if you don't give something your all, you'll leave with regret. And so, that's kinda my mentality now that I have. Whatever it is that I'm doing now, give it my all. So that way, there is no room for regret.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

One of the things I find that I'm telling myself lately if I'm not sure how to make a decision - for example, do I spend the money and go to this competition or do I save the money possibly for something else? I try to fast forward. If I'm, God-willing, 100 years old and on my deathbed and I'm reflection on my life, which will I have had more value in? And that's been a pretty good yardstick for me, especially someone who is an introvert. I prefer to be inside. Let's face it, this is an audio show and not a video show for a reason. So, yeah.

**Jordan Brown:**



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I mean, that's a good point. I mean, that's the thing for me. Like, I sit back sometimes and think, is this what I want to do for the rest of my life? Do I want to teach martial arts? I could... There's plenty of stuff I can do that would make me a whole lot more money, but it wouldn't leave the impact. You know, I left the advertising industry when I started my school, and started working at my school full-time. I kinda left it, and I keep coming back to that decision that I made. And it was because how much value am I bringing, [27:17](#) how much value am I bringing the world? What kind of impact am I making by helping other businesses sell 10 more widgets, right? By advertising their products as opposed to truly impacting one more life? Every student that walks in this door, every new person that comes in to try a class [27:42](#) is one more person who we could ultimately impact. And what we do on that mat for that person could literally impact the rest of the world. I mean, who knows what their potential is. And that's the powerful one for me as being a martial arts instructor now, is what am I doing now that's impacting the next generation of people to do amazing things? And that's really why I step on the mat more often now than the training aspect. Because, let's be honest, this training hurts more now. Ten years ago, it was a lot easier. Now, it's not as easy. It hurts more and you feel it for a couple days longer, but you see a new student who's struggling on the mat and it's like, let's go. Let's get their confidence up and let's get them going in the right direction.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah. You know, that discussion around what is a successful martial arts school, because that's kinda the question that you pose. It has so many different ways to look at it, and I know so many different instructors who love their school and they love where it is. They love their definition of success and that's what they've achieved. And there are different ways to achieve that. There was... I just saw a post in a martial arts school owners' group the other day where someone was asking for a coach to help them get better, to help them advance their school. And I said, well, first you have to define what success is for you. Because different people will coach in different ways. And it kinda veered off into this conversation about what is success to someone. You know, is success the number of students? Is it the impact they've had on a core group of students? Is it money? Is it their ability to teach all day and not have a separate job? And they're all valid.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And I think it's important to find which one works for you. So, what's... When you look at your school and your role as an instructor, how do you define success?



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**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. For us, it's super easy. It's about the impact we make. You know, there's all these people who talk about well, I have 7 students but these 7 students are just amazing, outstanding martial artists. They can do 100 push-ups and they can do 5000 squats. You know, that's great. It's awesome. But what are they... What else can they do? Like, there's definitely the physical application to things, and we try to be pretty [30:27](#) technique and to things like that. But it's more so the confidence, the leadership, the self-control, the discipline, the focus, the life skills that they can get out of martial arts. That's where we feel like we win the most. And that's where we want to see all of our students achieve great heights in, is being able to walk out of here. And if you walk out of here with a blackbelt, awesome. You definitely earned that blackbelt. BUt you walk out confident, you walk out with discipline, you walk out with focus, you walk out with self-control, you can take on the world and everything that it has in it, and you can fall back on what you've learned in martial arts through the years. Let's say they get their blackbelt and they quit, which we try to avoid to have happen. But we want to see them, if they do that, be able to see them all back on their training. Let's say they quit at 10 or 11 but they are able to fall back on it when they're 22 because they remember the discipline that it took to get that blackbelt. That's what we want to see. That's our win.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And I think that that is how so many others would define it. You know, opening a martial arts school is a great way to work really hard and make a little bit of money.

**Jordan Brown:**

Exactly.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And it's not to say that there aren't financially successful schools out there, and it doesn't mean that a non-financially successful school can't become financially successful. There are plenty of great people out there to help you do that. We've had some of them on the show.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. And you know, for us, for me, I have a little of a different take on success too, I mean, for the school. I want to create a spot where we can create jobs for people too, where these 16, 17, 18-year old kids can learn about hardwork and about getting paid and what it's like to have a job. But something that you love to do, you can actually make money at. For example, we have two women who work front counter and kinda back office staff. And then we have four employees who are



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between the ages of 14 and 19, and they're learning how to have a job, how to maintain that job. But then also how to make cash and then teach amazing martial arts classes and things like that. And that's kinda my goal, is to be able to bring up these teens to learn how to really function in the society that we have today.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

You know, when you were talking about some of these non-martial arts but life skills, it kinda connected a couple of dots for me that I've never noticed before. So, I want to thank you for this and forgive me as I kinda stumble through it. Martial arts instructors tend to be really good at teaching hard martial arts skills and even personal development skills. But I've watched so many martial arts instructors when they're dealing with people outside of those skills. The family who just isn't good about paying on time, for example, and they get so upset about it. Or the family who is often late and they punish the student without digging in. I see the opportunity as an instructor to be... You know, it doesn't start when class starts and end when class ends. Would you agree?

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah, absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And I'm sure you've had, I mean, I just rattled off two specifics that first came into mind. I'm sure you've dealt with both of those and dozens, if not hundreds of others. How do you tackle that?

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. I mean, one of the biggest things that I had my staff do, especially my instructor staff, is reading *Be Our Guest* by the Disney Institute. It talks about sprinkling the pixie dust, and it's all about customer service. And with martial arts being as personal as it is, sprinkling the pixie dust goes a long way in a lot of different ways. And I remember seeing somewhere a few years back about... It was like *Martial Arts Instructor: What People Think You Do*. And it's not like one of those ones that were like six things. It was just, like, teach martial arts. And then below it, it gave like two long lists of what you actually do. And one of them was like, therapist and fitness coach and... Just a big laundry list of things that you do. And you realize that you sit back and you hear all of these people's story. I'll sit in the parents' seating area and listen to some of the parents. And the parents will tell me about the drama that they've had in their life, the deaths that they've had in their family, the bullying issues that their students have had, the challenges that they have at work and why they can't get here on time sometimes, the challenges that they have like medically and why they can't pay the way that they want to. And they just spill out all of these information, and you sit





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there and you kinda nod along thinking, I am not qualified to handle this conversation. But you know, you help them the best way that you can. And it's amazing what you can do for somebody by just sitting and listening. And that's one of the things that we try to help our staff to understand is, yeah, they may have misspoken in this instance of they may have, you know, been a little disrespectful to you. Don't give them 20 push-ups right away. Figure out if they've had a bad day. Figure out what's going on in their life before you just jump to what you think the problem is. Because if this student who's normally on it is suddenly disrespectful, something is probably up. And we need to figure out what it is that has happened in that case.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

One of my yardsticks that I fail at constantly but I still keep trying is to assume the best of people. If someone screws up, assume it's for the best possible reason, and then find out why rather than that gut reaction of, you know, they just don't value my time or they don't care about the project or they're just wasting my money, etcetera, etcetera.

**Jordan Brown:**

You know, I had an incident involving someone who was kinda taking advantage of me a little bit. And the big thing there is even after realizing that, for me, I just want to be helpful wherever I can. And in this instance, it was one of those cases where I see your character, I'm not gonna show you mine by continuing to do what what I've been doing all along and helping you through whatever it is that I can do. And it was one of those cases where they knew that I knew that they ere taking advantage of me. I'm not trying to sound [38:15](#) but what I'm trying to say is that if I can help them realize that good people can do good things and you don't always have to be good but you can learn from other people's examples, then maybe that's the best place to start.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah.

**Jordan Brown:**

I don't know if that makes sense.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It does. It does, and I think... You know, this is a conversation I'm finding I'm having more and more with people because of social media.



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**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It's so trivial to tear someone apart, to assume the worst of people. And no good ever comes from that. And that's what I find ironic, is all of these people who I see it mostly on Facebook, who will something that if you really dig into their intention, it's because they want to improve things. They want things to get better based on whatever their criteria, their experiences are. And in manifesting that into some words or pictures, they end up attacking a significant group of people. And you can use this on any issue.

**Jordan Brown:**

Uh-hum.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And the thing is, how does that help? I mean, we talk about this in martial arts. If you're trying to deescalate, you don't get in someone's face and tell them that they're stupid or ugly or they can't beat you in a fight.

**Jordan Brown:**

Right. Exactly. It's like... I remember Master Chip Townsend, [39:49](#) a couple of times because he always posts stuff that I notice. He posted one of two dogs barking at each other on the other side of a door, and they opened the door and the dogs both stopped barking at each other. And it said something along the lines of real life versus Facebook. And it was like, yup. That 100% makes absolute sense.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It does. And yeah, Master Townsend has been on the show. It's a great episode. He's a wonderful guy. And this is a great opportunity to let people, if you're new to the show, you can find the show notes and we're gonna link to that episode and the Disney book that you mentioned and anything else that comes up in our conversation at [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com). So, you're gonna find that over there. How do you know Master Townsend?

**Jordan Brown:**



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Yeah. So, I actually know him through another individual, his name's Michael Mershad. He is the president owner of the Ultimate Leadership Martial Arts Association, ULMA for short. He is the association that we are affiliated with.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Oh, okay.

**Jordan Brown:**

And he brought him out to one of their events, oh man, like five or six years ago. You know, it's funny. Master Thompson was actually one of my kind of childhood heroes in the late '90s.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah.

**Jordan Brown:**

There was a discovery documentary like XMA. It had Mike [41:11](#) and Matt [41:13](#) in it. And there was a breaking section in there, and Master Chip was actually featured in there talking, hit a lot of stuff and he had the eyepatch on and everything. And I was like, that guy is awesome. And so, I've been watching his stuff for years through high school and then it was college and then I opened my own school. I was talking to Master Mershad one day and he's like, yeah, Chip Townsend's gonna be coming. And I think I lost my mind for a second. And so, I got to meet him at the event and chatted with him. He has his Break Like a Champ website and series, which is an amazing resource. I actually was lucky enough to work with him on that.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Oh, cool.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. I built that website out for him.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Oh, nice. Yeah, I checked that out before we did the interview.



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**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. It's funny. I remember after having done that, I actually saw that Chip was on the podcast. And I that's kinda how I first heard of whistlekick.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Oh, cool.

**Jordan Brown:**

And so then I drove out to Colorado two years ago. So, I just loaded a bunch of podcasts up and listened to out, because it was a 16-hour drive from Indianapolis to Denver.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It's a long drive.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. So, I got a lot of whistlekick in on that drive.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And you still wanted to talk to me after hearing my voice for that long.

**Jordan Brown:**

Absolutely. I was like, hey, man. I could talk to this guy forever. It was perfect, and it was great. I actually had the opportunity. I wanted to go out and work with him one-on-one. So, I went out to Abilene, Texas that same year, two years ago. And got to stay with Chip who's gracious enough to let me crash to his place.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Wow.

**Jordan Brown:**

We trained every morning. That guy gets up every morning and trains at 5:30 in the morning.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah.

**Jordan Brown:**

Well, I get up the first day, it was a Monday. I trained at 5:30 in the morning, I trained at 11 a.m., and then I trained at 7 p.m. I'm assuming most people. If you haven't seen Master Townsend's breaks, the intensity he brings to that, he brings to his training as well.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I believe that.

**Jordan Brown:**

I don't... I train pretty intensely but not that much. And that night, there was a horrible storm in Abilene and he's like, yeah, I thought about coming up and getting you. And he's like, were you scared at all? And I said, Master Chip, I didn't hear anything. I was out the entire time. I slept so well that night. I had no idea there was a storm at all. So, yeah. That was a crazy weekend, and I'd love to have the opportunity to go back out and do that again because that was a lot of fun. That was a lot of training but that was a lot of fun.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Oh, I'm sure. I'm sure and I'm guessing that during that 7 p.m. training session at some point, you're looking at the clock and thinking, I have to do this again in like 9 or 8 hours.

**Jordan Brown:**

I was pumped. I was ready, man.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Really?

**Jordan Brown:**

Remember, I was talking about how I was first at the gym, last one to leave. Yeah.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah, okay.

**Jordan Brown:**

I'll go to bed. I'll get up at... I think we were getting up at 4:45 to get there on time. The only thing I just knew, I was gonna be really sore the next day. And so, that was my only hesitation. And I think that Wednesday, when I skipped one day, one early morning because I literally couldn't walk. I had to like... I slept in and had to wait until my legs would function a little bit. But yeah. No, I was pumped the whole time to be training.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Nice. Yeah. I mean, very few martial artists know what it's like to train twice in a day. And the number who would train three times in a day, that's gotta be under 5%.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

The only time I have to train that much in a day is at some kind of camp.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah, yeah. Me, too. That's probably the first and the only time that I've trained three times in one day. I won't say that because I do a lot of rock climbing outside of martial arts. And so, I'll do a martial arts class where I... Any time I teach an adult class, I do the class with my adults. And so, I'll do a morning adult class and then I'll go climb or lift or both, and then after that, come back and teach another evening class. So, there's days where I do actually three different workouts. Any time I'm training with weights or doing rock climbing, I'm also doing martial arts techniques in there too. So.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yes. Now, you mentioned that when you're teaching the adult class, you're in the mix doing it with them.





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**Jordan Brown:**

Uh-hum.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

When you look back, you said you opened your school in 2012?

**Jordan Brown:**

Uh-hum, yup.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So, certainly long enough that you're doing some things differently than you had done them when you opened. What are some of those things that are different now versus the beginning of your martial arts school ownership?

**Jordan Brown:**

Well, one of the funny things is that I'm just having a conversation with some of my higher ranks at this testing. We do a lot more breaking in our school now than when we first started. And I mean a lot more. Like, I never hit a piece of concrete until 2013. And after 2013, I probably haven't hit another one till 2015. And I had 7 people break concrete at their testing. And concrete's not required. It's completely optional. They just wanted to hit concrete. And so, we throw the concrete down and they hit two or three pieces of concrete at a time, [46:57](#) hands. I have one guy who did an ax kick on two pieces of concrete with each foot that have 4-inch board break with a downward palm strike, a 2-inch ridge strike and then a 3-inch... Just from three inches away, did a palm strike from there with his left hand in complete succession, one after the other. It was insanely quick. I don't if I could have... Let me rephrase. I don't know if I'm crazy enough to do it that fast. And it was because he wanted to do that. And I just didn't train that way whenever I was coming up to the martial arts. We didn't really train that way for the first four years that we're open, maybe even five years that we're open. And just in the last two years since we implemented new breaking requirements for our belt testing, people have opened up and wanted to do a whole lot more than just a normal board breaks. So, that's one of the things I find exciting now too.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

We've talked about a lot of different things today, different parts of your martial arts journey, your career, the things that it's that you're passionate about. But one of the things that I thought we



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were going to get into, and we kinda got sidetracked but in a great way, was movies and pop culture. You talked about The Power Rangers and you talked about watching The Karate Kid when you were younger, even though it came out before you were born which is totally fine. But that might have been a little bit of a jab at me and that's fine. That's fine.

**Jordan Brown:**

You know how many times though... We'll be talking about martial arts movies and then my adult class, we'll be bringing them up. And I'm, like, I just want to remind you that that came out before I was born. And then to watch all of their faces just suddenly sink a little bit.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Right. Because we historically think of people who are teaching us things as being older than us.

**Jordan Brown:**

Exactly.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

That could be hard to wrap your brain around. But if we look a little bit more modern, movies that came out after you learned how to walk and tie your own shoes, are there any that really resonate for you or even stuff that's far more contemporary stuff that's come out in the last couple of years?

**Jordan Brown:**

Well, there's really... If I were to really kinda boil down three movies that have come out since I have been aware of martial arts. The first one is, and it's really not that great of a movie but it's Dragon the Bruce Lee story.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah.

**Jordan Brown:**

That came out like '92 or '93. It actually introduced me to who Bruce Lee was because I had no idea who Bruce Lee was until I watched that movie. And then that opened up JKD and Wing Chun, and I actually trained in some of that in college. And that helped shape my martial arts training through



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the years. So, that was one. And then the tricking that I saw in *Romeo Must Die*, a Jet Li movie, which was like '98 or '99. And that came out about the same time as XMA or right before XMA. Again, opened my eyes to some of that stuff that I didn't train in. And so, I thought that that was really neat. And then the last one, it's been more recently. I think it's *Undisputed 2*. It's the one with Scott Adkins and Michael Jai White. And seeing somebody that's a little bit older, still be able to do a lot of the jump spins and the tricks and the 540s and throw some of that stuff, made me realize that okay, if I... As long as I stay active and really work at what I'm doing and train the proper way and have a good nutrition, then I should be able to do things much longer into life than, you know, early 30s, mid-30s. Because I think he's now in his mid-40s and still throwing in the same tricks and things of that nature.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Sure. Are you thinking of *Undisputed 2*?

**Jordan Brown:**

I think so, yeah. Because I think the first one, he was not in it. And then that launched this whole [51:24](#) series.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Right. I just did a quick Google search while we were talking of the four movies that they've shared. Well, one is not out yet. That's the one that has the most notoriety.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I think martial arts movies, you know... We're in a realm that does not do a great job of elevating people to the level of broadly admirable. It's very easy if you look at... I mean, we've talked about Master Townsend who's an amazing martial artist, an amazing breaker. But people know him for breaking. So, if someone isn't... If breaking doesn't jive for them, it's easy for them to look at him and say, that's cool but that doesn't work for me. Right? And you can say that about every single person. The people that we think about great martial artists from the past generation, they tended to be known for, say, full-contact kickboxing.

**Jordan Brown:**



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Uh-hum.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

But when we look at movies, that tends to be a little more universal for us. And I don't want anyone to think I was intending any disrespect to Master Townsend. That's not what it is. Because if you listen to the episode, you know I have the utmost respect for him and his accomplishments, both in and outside of working. He's a phenomenal martial artist and a good guy.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah. And it's funny. You can see it even in the littlest of things too. Like, I've thrown a couple of breaking pieces together on my YouTube channel and they've only got like a few hundred views where most of the point fighting tips that I give have tens of thousands of views.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Sure.

**Jordan Brown:**

And so, I'm kinda [53:10](#) to the point fighting guy. Where, you know, I'm teaching people how to break concrete.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Right. And so, when we look at those movies, they tend to be a little more universal because those are people that we want to be but we will never be. Because by definition, they're actors playing a role that is larger than life.

**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And it would be nice if we could have some larger side of life but still attainable role models. Maybe we'll get some of those soon, ones that we can kinda universally accept. Now, you mentioned your YouTube channel. So, this might be a good place to tell people about what you've got going on and how they can find it online.



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**Jordan Brown:**

Yeah, yes. So, my YouTube channel's kind of the thing that I post to the most. I've had an injury back in July to my left big toe. I actually got it crushed under my own foot on my mat, and have quite a bit of pain on it. So, I haven't really posted a lot to it recently. But we're starting back up this weekend recording. I post a lot of tips and workouts and things like that. Like I said, mainly for point fighting. There's some stuff in there for kicking, for forms, and, like I said, some breaking stuff in there too. But I'm trying to give as many Taekwondo point sparring or even some of the Karate point fighting for Karate stuff in there throughout the years and things that I've used, that have been really successful for me through my competition journey and all that fun stuff. And then I also post a lot of those things out to Instagram and Facebook and Twitter and all the fun things as well.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Nice. And of course, again, we're gonna have links to all that. So, if you're driving or on the treadmill, you don't have to worry about jotting this down and risking personal injury. I don't want to have that happen. Cool. This has been awesome. I appreciate your time. Thank you so, so much. And of course, you know how we end. One more thing for the folks listening. What parting words of wisdom would you give to the people today?

**Jordan Brown:**

My biggest thing is just to always push forward. Failure's gonna happen but that's when learn the most. So, no matter where you're at in life, just push forward.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

One of the things that I enjoyed about today's conversation is that Mr. Brown is old enough to have achieved quite a few things - training and rank and competitive success and having his own school. But he's young enough and started at an age where he seems to have a great memory of everything that's happened. And that allows him to draw some connections, to connect some dots and share stories with us that allowed us to connect dots not only in his story but, if you're anything like me, with mine. And so, I appreciated that insight and I gotta be honest, I've got some wheels turning now. And I love when they come out of an interview, and I've got wheels turning. So, Mr. Brown, thank you so much for your time today. I really appreciated it and I look forward to talking to you soon.

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