



Episode 387 – Benefits of Weapons Training | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hello everyone, welcome! This is [whistlekickmartialartsradio](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com) episode 387. Today, we're going to talk about martial arts weapons, not so much the history but the benefits and why you should consider some martial arts weapons training. My name is Jeremy Lesniak, I'm your host for the show, I'm a martial artist, I'm the founder here at Whistlekick and I'm a guy, I'm a guy whose life has been changed by this show. The wonderful people that I've had the opportunity to meet and train with and become friends with, man, I am blessed and I owe it to all of you. So thank you so much for your support now and as we move forward. One of the ways a lot of you show support is by heading on over to whistlekick.com and making a purchase. What I've seen on the sales come through the last couple of days so, thank you, thank you, thank you. And if you make a purchase, don't forget you can use a code `podcast15` to save 15%. Show notes, photos, and all the other episodes are available online for free at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com.

And I'd like to challenge you a little bit. Make a suggestion, maybe it's a better way to put it, we've got a lot of different stuff that goes on our social media channels, but they don't all have the same content. We have things up on YouTube that you're not gonna see anywhere else. There are things that go up on Instagram and some of the conversation that happens as a response to those posts. You won't find that on Facebook even though we might use the same post there a few days or a few weeks later. Sometimes there are posts at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com in the show notes, people respond to the episode. If you're not bouncing around at least once while, checking out all the different things we do



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you're probably missing out. We do all the different things we do because well you're a martial artist, I'm a martial artist and martial artists love stuff about martial arts alright. Let's get into the show.

Now this past weekend I was at Master Terry Dow who's been on show, his martial arts symposium which is a fancy and yet well-deserved name for a weekend of training with a bunch of different instructors, literally dozens of different instructors, hundreds of people six sessions going on at any one time, really cool, really crazy, and this is my third year and it's an absolute blast. Now the reason this is relevant is because one of the sessions that I attended was on sword [00:02:35.27] came in used a bokken, a wooden sword and spend an hour swinging it around and having absolute blast. During the session the instructor was reminding me of some of the things I had learned in earlier weapons training with completely different weapons and it made me realize hey, weapons training isn't something I do a lot anymore and I'd like to and then just an hour ago, I had a conversation with someone on the phone they don't do any weapons training in their school and made me say aha! I need to talk about why weapons training is so important. I'm not to talk about specific weapons why you should train one over the other, that's not the point. The point is were talking about something in your hands versus empty hand training. The first maybe, not the best reason that you should consider weapons training, is that it's fun. It's enjoyable, it's something different .and if you spent much time training in martial arts you know that having some variety can be really impactful and it's not just that it's enjoyable to do things that are different, but as you start to look at what you do with empty hand techniques and you consider how that impacts your weapons techniques, there are similarity's but there are also differences. And as you analyze both the similarities and differences, you actually improve both. My original instructors had a saying that a weapon a martial arts weapon, was just an extension of your body if you were using it properly, it should come across as if that sword or that staff are that pair of Sai we'll say had always been attached to your hands. When you start to consider the modern martial arts landscape, a lot of us are talking about "reality martial arts" or the application martial arts, self-defense, thing things of that nature. Well unfortunately a lot of times fights the real stuff that would call on us to use our martial arts involves weapons. Whether or not you're going to be the one picks up the pool cue and swings it or you're the one with the knife, understanding how these weapons work gives you a leg up on defending against them.

It's important to understand your enemy your opponent in any exchange and if they might be using weapon the better you can be with that weapon, the more you understand its strengths and limitations and thus you'll have a better chance of surviving. When you think about a weapon the more difficult it is to use, the more skill, the more time it's going to take to get proficient with it and that builds neural pathways that makes you, I don't want to say smarter, but it it forces your brain to work you may have seen research that says learning another language is one of the best ways to stave off Alzheimer's, this is kind of the same thing. Learning a martial arts weapon is very similar to learning another language because when we perform our open hand techniques, when we're punching, when we're kicking, we are attached to our hands and her feet all the time we can't be without that. Not it's not in any kind of healthy way but I can pick up a pair of nunchuck who and use them for 15 minutes and put them down



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and go on my merry way. The ability to understand how things change, how the physics change in my body, how my balance has to adapt because I'm holding something and swinging it with force, that's something that forces me to use my body differently and forces me to think about what I am doing. One of my favorite things to do with a weapon is to take an existing empty hand form and adapt it. How do I take any form and make it work with a bow or a sword or a pair of knives. The better I understand the empty hand form and its application, the better I can adapt it. And sometimes you have to make things really different, sometimes you don't. I'm a big fan of understanding your martial arts training, not just the application of the movements, but how it feels to do something and feel like it would work. To feel that connection with your movements and in this case the connection with the weapons. Most martial arts weapons, let's face it, aren't super light they are not light weight. Swinging a bow around for an hour going to get sore. This past weekend just swinging around a wooden sword my back was sore, my traps were sore, I was using muscles that I don't normally and when I think about when I started to learn Sai, oh man, my forearms got really strong. In fact my early days of competition training with Sai, I would have to train Sai at the end and then I would have to go home, because I can only handle about five or 10 minutes when I first started it was pretty young and those things are heavy. Don't even talk to me about Eku the or that I see more and more people using in competition these days. Man is that things big. So yeah weapons get you stronger and as you become better able to swing a heavy weapon faster, your empty hand techniques are that much faster.

And then the last one I'll leave you with, to find your own place in the martial arts. Most schools offer some sort of weapons training but it's not every weapon and all the schools I've ever trained at that offer weapons it's secondary to the empty hand training. But by working with weapons, by understanding them you can find a way to do your own thing in an acceptable traditional way. Here's what I mean. In my original school, we formally trained only two weapons. Bo and Tonfa and for those of you that aren't used to the Japanese names for some of these weapons, tonfa for looks like a nightstick, that's honestly it's where nightsticks were adapted from. I was fine with Bo I enjoyed it found tonfa to be boring, honestly I still find tonfa for to be boring sorry guys. But at one point for my birthday my instructors gave me a pair of Sai I went oh these are kinda cool. And I started working with after a couple years I became the guy in the dojo who trained with Sai and I started competing and I became the guy in competition who was using Sai no one else was using Sai at the tournaments as I was attending. And that felt really nice to do something different and it gave me an identity in a space that I didn't always feel like I had one. Now of course that requires some understanding instructors and resources to be able to find people to train you but let's be honest, if you're a high level practitioner if you have a black belt you probably have the skill to pick up a weapon and figure out some things about it and that plus YouTube, I'm not suggesting you take a form from YouTube and is going to competition with it, but I bet you can scratch that itch to train something new to figure something out and to enjoy that practice. There are tons of different martial arts weapons I haven't even begun to train with all of them but I'd like to.



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So what's your favorite martial arts weapon? I'd love for you to tell me. Let us know initial notes at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com find this episode, and leave a comment. Tell me why you enjoy weapons training or if you don't, tell me why you don't if you never had the opportunity to, well I bet you can figure out how to do it. My first Bo was a 4 foot closet rod because I was five years old and no one was making bows that short at that time. Where there's a will there's a way. Give us a follow on social media YouTube, twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. If you want to email me directly jeremy@whistlekick.com. If you haven't checked out 1st cup, 1st cup is live every weekday morning at 6:30 AM Eastern on YouTube. Go over our YouTube page sign-up, subscribe, turn on notifications, and you'll get to see me talk about martial arts related things while I have my 1st cup of coffee. If nothing else you can laugh at me as I very publicly struggle to wake up. Head on over to whistlekick.com check out everything we got going there, tons of stuff, podcast15 gets 15% of gear and uniforms and tons of other things so check that out. And if nothing else I appreciate your time today, your support means the world to me more than you truly will ever understand. Until next time. Train hard, smile, and have a great day.