



Episode 401 – Should Martial Arts Be Taught for Money | [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com)



**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Hello, everyone. Thanks for tuning in! This is whistlekick martial arts radio episode 401. Today, we're talking about whether or not martial arts should be taught for money and I even brought a guest on to talk about it. My name is Jeremy Lesniak, I'm your host on this show. I'm the founder of whistlekick and you can see everything that I've been putting my heart and soul into along with the wonderful team for the last, quite a few years now, at [whistlekick.com](http://whistlekick.com). There's a store there. We sell some stuff and you can save 15% on every single thing we do by using the code `PODCAST15`. There's a newsletter. You should sign up for that and we've also got [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com) where we do show notes and everything else related to this episode. We put out 2 episodes a week and you can find them all for free, all the way back to episode 1. Whether or not martial arts should be taught for money, it's a controversial question and I saw that question so controversially addressed in an amazing way on Facebook. I saw some ads offering to teach people how to secure high-paying martial arts students and the commentary, in the comments of those ads, was amazing. So, what did I do? I dug in. I found the source of the ads and that's what we're going to do today. We're going to talk to Professor Chris Pizzo and see what he has to say about this subject. Professor Chris, welcome to whistlekick martial arts radio.

**Chris Pizzo:**

Hey, Jeremy, how are you, man?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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I'm doing great. How are you?

**Chris Pizzo:**

Good!

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Listeners may be a little surprised because we don't have interviews that air too often on Thursdays. We generally bring someone on, we talk to them on a Monday. I mean, it's not always recorded on a Monday but we air it on a Monday. We talk about them, their story, their journey and, no disrespect to you but, we're not here to talk about you today. So, it's a little bit different. We're here to talk about something that is important to you. I guess, in a sense, we're talking about you but indirectly. So, I'll give a listeners a little bit of context. I saw some Facebook ads talking about martial arts instructors charging what they're worth and even seeking out high-paying clientele and, as I am often to do when I see a Facebook ad pop up that's mildly relevant to me, I'll look at the comments because the comments on Facebook ads are second only to the comments on YouTube for entertainment value, and if anyone spend that much time on YouTube, you know what I'm talking about

**Chris Pizzo:**

I love how you said that. That's probably true

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And what I saw was about, in that first ad that I saw which goes back, probably a couple months now, probably 10 comments, one or two saying, oh, I'm interested in learning more or maybe tagging someone else and then the rest of them were people that were so outright hateful and questioning why anyone would ever charge to teach martial arts and so, this is probably a good opportunity for you to tell us why you're putting those ads out there. Let's start the conversation there.

**Chris Pizzo:**

Sure. Again, my name is Professor Chris Pizzo. I have been training martial arts since I was 5 years old. I have several different traditional black belts but over the last decade or so, I've primarily been training and teaching as a second degree black belt in both Judo and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, owned a number of schools including the biggest Brazilian Jiu Jitsu school in the world, owned the largest martial arts publishing company in the world for decades; sold that off in pieces; and for the last several years, and really, my mission and my company's mission is to help other professional-level martial arts instructors to make the money that they should be making. Not so, and this is important, for us to kind of frame this up, Jeremy, you and I talked about this earlier, but it's interesting is that martial arts instructors, all they want to do is what they've been called to do which is to help, to mentor, to guide other people through teaching martial arts. Not so that they can buy Ferraris and yachts and crap they don't need. They just



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need the freedom to focus because teaching martial arts professionally is one of the artists' most difficult jobs in the planet so advertising for it, this is what's kind of interesting is there are not an overwhelming number of professional martial arts instructors and so, when we advertise, we have to be...I'm not really trying...I am kind of famous for being polarizing in my ad in previous lives in this industry but we're not really trying to repel anybody with our ads. It just sort of happened and in the vice versa to that now is that we're really trying to do is attract the people, in martial art structures, that need our help the most because that's what we do: we help professional martial arts instructors, whether they're school owners or former school owners, whether they're head instructors or just an instructor at somebody else's school or they're already doing private lessons or seminars. We help them make ten to twenty-five thousand dollars or more per month added to their business by attracting, enrolling and serving, and that's the key word here, high-end affluent clients in both private lessons, small group lessons and then, school lessons and yeah, I was just as surprised as you at the, you said it best, like the two exact opposites. You have guys saying wow, this is...it's about time somebody really helped this industry because they realized martial arts structures realized how influential they are to the kids and adults that they teach and then, you have the whole other bunch of crazies, not to really disrespect them, but just flew off the handle on this. The good thing is you and I connected which is what was important to have this discussion.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Now, listeners, before you think that this is going to be a survey of what Professor Chris and his company offer, that's absolutely not what we're doing. The reason that we're offering this introduction here is so we can give way to a conversation on should martial arts be taught for money. Why wouldn't someone teach for money? Why should they? That whole discussion. It's a discussion that we have alluded to in previous episodes. It never a discussion that we've had directly and as we get to the end, of course, anytime we have a guest on, I will give him the space to talk about what he does, how he does it and where you can find out more so this conversation should be of interest to everyone regardless of whether or not you're a school owner. Let's start with that pretty fundamental question: why are so many people opposed, even angry, about the idea of martial arts being taught for money?

**Chris Pizzo:**

So...you know...we...it always starts from the top down. What we found with working with professional martial artists for so long now is that the number one thing we have to get them over is that they need to make more money. They all know it inherently. They'll want to do it, again, not so they can buy things and junk they don't need but so, they have the freedom to focus on their students to get them the best outcome, value, whatever it is. When we looked at the actual audiences and interest levels and, I guess, affinity to martial arts especially online, it's so funny, and even on those ads, we started commenting and questioning people of hey, listen, sorry that this made you so angry, where do you train now? And the most hateful comments, either ghosted, never replied, which means they don't have an answer for it or, the most common this is oh, I trained back when I was...2 decades ago or something. What's



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interesting to me is that active martial artists know that they're getting a bargain. Martial arts professionals, teachers, whether school owners, or head instructors or work for somebody else, they know that they're giving a bargain and it's almost like this unspoken, that you brought up before, Jeremy; this unspoken elephant in the room is that the people getting the value, the students, are like oh my god, I would pay much more for this and the instructors are like oh my god, I'm struggling financially, I should be charging more. There's almost like a misunderstanding in the value transfer between students and teacher and that's a big problem and why I was so excited to talk to you about today is because it is. It's just rampant through the industry of instructors and their own students having this is understanding.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

When I think about group fitness classes, which is the closest parallel we have to martial arts instruction because it's typically performed in a group. You have an instructor, maybe a few assistant instructors and they're working with a group of people. One on one, we have some corollaries there with fitness training things, when I think of yoga or some kind of boot camp class or CrossFit; when I think about what people are paying monthly there, even in my area in Vermont, which our economy, things tend to be less expensive here across the board, martial arts is a quarter, sometimes a sixth of what people are paying for these other pursuits.

**Chris Pizzo:**

And that's the crime. Not only that, I mean, if you want to look at it from a pure financial kind of aspect, what's really crazy to me is that how most martial arts instructors and, Jeremy, I'm glad you brought up the fitness, I'll definitely circle back around to that, but how most martial arts instructors' still charging what their teachers charged back in the '70s and '80s. Even the inflation shows that martial arts instructors should be at least charging, at the minimum, 200 a month, right? And if real inflation's calculated, should be charging around 300 per month then on the fitness side, it's crazy. It's maybe a little bit different because there are secondary benefits to practicing that but if you want to just weigh martial arts versus fitness, they are literally 2 completely different animals. Fitness is very, very low value. It just is. You go and somebody leads you through to get you to lose weight or to become fit, right? That does happen to martial arts but think of everything else that happens with martial arts as well, right? All the things we're always talking about. Self-confidence, the actual self-defense aspect of it, community, everything. Even going into what we're talking about with yoga, the spiritual connectedness to self and the higher consciousness and what else? There's all these benefits that the martial arts instructor, the fitness instructor just have to show up and if they are somewhat capable, run people through movements. Martial arts instructor has to deal with all sorts of, everything from personal problems, professional problems, they wind up being their students' therapist, their big brother, their father figure. When there's a problem at home, whether they're an adult or child, people do not tell their fitness instructor, they don't tell their CrossFit instructor, they don't even tell their yoga instructor but every single time, they tell their martial arts instructor and that's a big responsibility and



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the difference between a, I don't even sometimes like to use martial arts instructor because it almost always devalues that. I like to use the word martial arts teacher because you are, literally, teaching somebody something as opposed to a fitness instructor which is just showing them how to do something. There's a big value difference in that and there should be a big pricing different on that and yeah, it drives me crazy when you look at...CrossFit is just a good example. Do people get an outcome and result from CrossFit? Yeah, if they don't hurt themselves then yeah, they get pretty buff but that's just one aspect. That's just the body. What about the mind? What about the spirit? Every single martial arts, doesn't matter what style that we're talking about, offers those three things so martial arts, actually has 3 times the value of fitness because it's helping their students connect their body, their mind and their spirit.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Absolutely. Long time listeners of the show knows that I train, I coach CrossFit. That's the closest thing I found to martial arts so that's the first place I go when I'm trying to draw a correlation but you're absolutely right. There is a substantial difference in the way people come up to me, they approach me, speak with me, as their CrossFit coach versus when I am travelling around teaching martial arts even if it's people that I know very well through CrossFit. People that I don't know well that I've just met through martial arts, they are far more likely to dump what's going on in their lives tell me all of their problems, physical, mental, personal and otherwise.

**Chris Pizzo:**

It's just the nature of the beast. Think about even for children, right? There's all sorts of stuff and beliefs, and everybody has different things about different styles of martial arts which is all ego, crap. Which one's better? Which one's worse? Kids are getting black belts in a couple years, is that right? Is that wrong? But what people don't see, especially for, like we're saying, with kids is that, again, those kids look up to their martial arts instructor as a big brother, as that father figure and many, many, many martial arts instructors that teach kids are actually the ones that find out what's really going on in that kid's life if there's something wrong at home, if there's something wrong at school, socially if they're being led down the wrong path by a group of friends and that's what parents value is that kind of connection. That secondary parenting figure who is, I have 4 boys and I'm close with them but they don't tell me anything, but they tell their Jiu Jitsu teachers everything and then, they tell me and as a parent, I'm like oh, what the heck is going on? I'm even on the mat at the same time as those guys and they're telling them other things so it's a really...a martial arts teacher is such a high caliber professional. It takes so much time. It takes so much dedication. It takes so much, not only blood, sweat and tears and the actual physical training but there's a difference between somebody who is just a martial arts practitioner, right? Even if they are a lifelong practitioner and the martial arts instructor. It's a whole added-on, separate group of skills. Almost like soft skills that you would see in corporate America.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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So, I think we've done a reasonable job of talking about why most martial arts classes are undervalued, the students are underpaying for what they're receiving. Let's talk about the other side of the equation. Why are some people so hellbent on fighting for martial arts being taught for free? I'm not aware of anything else that has this dichotomy.

**Chris Pizzo:**

When I owned and took over the big school, because it was going bankrupt because it's the exact same problem. It's the biggest Brazilian Jiu Jitsu school in the world, head of the biggest franchise and whatever else and the CFO begged me to come on and really fix this things for him and I have, obviously, had schools before that and what not but this was the biggest of the biggest so I had the opportunity to talk to people. People who were currently training there people who had been training there who had left and with the pricing models, really test and track, not only the what but also the why that we're talking about and what's amazing is that, if you look back in history, the 1980s and late 1970s really screwed everything up. That's when most of us started training. A lot of us had really great instructors, really great teachers, really great martial arts mentors but, because they weren't the best businessmen, it kind of followed what was popular at the time and because in the '70s, '80s between kind of Bruce Lee and Chuck Norris and going into Ninja Turtles and The Karate Kid in 1984, and then, Steven Seagal and Van Damme, it was a good solid 15 years, all the way up into the UFC, of martial arts of being a dominant media draw and the instructors at the time kind of threw the old business model out which was work hard, not to disrespect anybody, but it used to be work hard and take responsibility of showing people who trusted you, showing them a way of life into transforming that into a wham-bam-thank you ma'am-here is a cool thing to do based on current media-let's get you in the door for \$99 and a free uniform and we'll spit you out a blackbelt in 2 years and because, most people today, in 2019, have either been through that model at least once, Those of us that aren't instructors, again, like I said, are teachers, might have followed that business model because they weren't savvy businessmen but we were lucky enough to find the guys that took the care and consideration to make sure that we weren't McDojo-ed out, so to speak. Therefore, martial arts has left, honestly, a really bad taste in a large segment of the population. Meaning that they know there is something inherently valuable about it. they are still drawn to that mind, body, spiritual connection but because they had, either a bad experience or have not had no experience, that they have nothing to weight it against and, of course, they assume that the reality that they've witnessed is the reality all over which, obviously, is not true just like anything else.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

How do you get someone who...they've been paying 25 bucks a month as, I'm sure, there are plenty. I know several schools that charge for under \$50 a month. How do you move that school up to a hundred, lets even, to say which is a hundred dollars a month which, I think we're both agreeing, is undervalued but it's [00:21:58].



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**Chris Pizzo:**

Yeah, that's a really good question and the reason why it's a good question, I'm sure the reason you asked, is because once somebody has a perceived value of something and now, they are going to be charged more for the same thing, if that perception of value is not changed, then they're out the door, right? This is why school, gym consultants who just walk in there and are like, just raise your prices. You lose 10% but you also gain 50% whatever else. That's not really the way it works because the perceived value has not been changed and so, it works also, Jeremy, if, what if somebody trained when they were a kid for \$99 a month and now, they walk into a school that's charging \$200 or \$300 a month, right? How do you bring them up that and their answer is you have to show them the value. You have to be able to articulate and frame the value of what they're going to learn and how they're going to learn it and, of course, connect that to an outcome that they're really looking for. You talked about you're a CrossFit coach, right? Most people who come into CrossFit know that the outcome that they're going to get is they're going to get in great shape so, they're willing to put up with very rigorous and difficult curriculum of instruction to sacrifice blood, bleed and sweat to get through that. Martial artists because, like I was talking about before, everybody kind of grew up around that '80s McDojo model is that's like a lost art of being to frame and articulate what you do to somebody to bring their value perception up. Does that make sense?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It sure does and it's something that I've witnessed for, again, longtime listeners know, prior to whistlekick, I was in IT and we had an IT consultancy and over the 11 years, I brought my hourly rate from 25 to about 125 and every time we did it, every time we moved up, it was challenging. It was painful. There were conversations that needed to happen but what we found...because we're delivering topnotch service that blew everybody else out of the water, people saw the value. They saw that they were getting a bargain and we lost very few clients and, I'm only able to put this in perspective now, in hindsight, and part of it is from what you're saying. I'm able to digest this in a way that I haven't been able to before but how do you attack that value? That value proposition that people have already decided is at the neutral point that they're paying now?

**Chris Pizzo:**

So, lets go back to CrossFit, again, right? Is that somebody who is in mediocre or not great shape wants to get in shape very, very fast. So they go to CrossFit because they know, they're going to get their ass kicked and in 3 months, they're going to be in much better shape than they are so, the outcome of that is visible. If I do A, I will get B. In martial arts, that is not the case. It is the case if you're able to disseminate and, then again, articulate and frame of what you're doing but, if you go into a martial arts school, and they get...somebody walks into the martial arts school and they're pitched on hey, listen at the end of, you sign up every month, you'll be able to, you'll eventually get in shape. You'll eventually be able to defend yourself. You'll eventually whatever the benefits are, eventually is not good enough. For



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eventually, they are willing to pay fifty, a hundred dollars, right? To give it a try and then after 2 or 3 months when they're not getting the eventually fast enough, they leave. So the way to change that is to actually ask them. Number one, why do they want to learn this? Find out their outcome and the customize it, the curriculum, or your service to that person's outcome and give it to them and that's very hard to do, when you're charging twenty-five, fifty dollars a month because the timeframe that is required to bring somebody to a transformational outcome is significant and if the money does not match the training of time to really focus on them, then you're being pulled in every different direction and that's the biggest issue that's going on is that even, I'm bringing this up all the time, but anybody, any professional martial artists, if you haven't read Jiguro Kano's Mind over Muscle, that's like required reading and the reason why, it doesn't matter whether you're a Judo guy, grappler or striker, it doesn't really matter what style. But in it, he talks about the three levels of martial arts and the reason being, just written back in the 1880s, right? And the reason being is because that is literally the beginning of the death for the warrior caste and for martial arts to evolve and to survive and for people to continue to get the benefits, he had to divide him and his colleagues and contemporaries at the time really divided martial arts into three different value levels and the first most least valuable is the actual tactical movements as it relates to combat because, unlike getting in shape, where there's that vanity, they know that hey, listen, I do A, B, C and then I'm eventually going to get to Z and that Z is going to look like I'm in good shape. Somebody who's selling just self-defense, and listen because I am technically the most popular, I've sold more self-defense videos than anybody in the planet so it's crazy for me to even be saying this now, that the tactics of self-defense has little to no value. It's not that we live in a society where that's much different than it was than the centuries past. Yes, law enforcement is better now and you can't get away with attacking people but FBI statistics show that crime rates and violent attacks get worse and worse every year but those same statistics also show that if you are in good physical shape, if you are walking with a purpose, if you have some sort of situational awareness and please, if you have any sort of self-confidence, then criminals or somebody else will not attack you so if you learn to martial arts, then you are not going to be attacked. It's just the statistics. Therefore, the inherent value of what everybody is promoting: come to my school, learn self-defense, learn how to defend yourself in the street. Well, they're not really worried about that because it doesn't really happen anymore to those type of people. Is that making sense?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It is. Absolutely.

**Chris Pizzo:**

The second level is really where martial arts instructors kind of live and that's experiential whether they're school owners or they're running seminars and doing private lesson is they're teaching those level 1 tactical movements and listen, you have to do it, right? You have to teach those. They're teaching that in a completely removed experience and environment. Most people are normal. Most people have to go to work and they're not happy with their job or it's okay. It's just that they accept that they have to





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do this and then afterwards, they get to go somewhere where they step through and they're whether it's in a, they step into a cage or they step into feudal Japan or they step into Chinese monastery, right? And I'm not even talking about the décor of the school. I'm talking about the experience delivered. That literally removes them out of their humdrum kind of boring life and into something that feels really, really good and now that they are practicing something that was meaningful in that experience: that brings a lot of value and that's why school owners can and should be charging, at least, a hundred and fifty to two hundred fifty to three hundred dollars a month because you are doing a great service of helping people refocus on something that they enjoy, that's purposeful and that they feel is moving them forward in life and that, obviously, transfers over to everything else. The third level, and where what we do as a company and to bring professional martial artists, is that transformation where you actually take absolute responsibility for somebody's transformation into the highest level of self they want to get. It's almost like, somebody, one of my private lesson programs that was out here in California, Warrior Fit, is I specifically help overstressed, overworked, anxiety-ridden executives and small business owners to get off of that anti-anxiety medicine. I am not a doctor so I cannot tell them to get off of it but there is an actual protocol, using martial arts, to help them reduce everything from the surrounding symptoms, weight loss, obviously, blood pressure, emotional control, which is really, as martial arts instructors, what we teach and then, obviously, that refocus of that experience but when you take responsibility and put it into an actual curriculum, what happens, for most martial arts instructors and every martial arts instructor right now that's listening and nodding their head because they know they have transformed people's lives. Whether it's that kids who have trained at their schools, have gotten into better colleges or have gotten better grades, whether it's adults on the verge of everything from having a heart attack, committing suicide or depression, are now emotionally stable, physically healthy and happy individuals so all of us, as martial arts teachers have done this before, but when you take that responsibility and you partition out the actual transformation that somebody wants, now you're talking about that's how you charge maximum dollars and make maximum impact in your student's lives and that's that third level of martial arts.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I think you're right. I think most people listening right now are nodding along saying yeah. Whether they are a student or are a teacher, they're seeing that exchange, that change in people's lives. Maybe it hasn't happened for them personally yet, but I suspecting some point, it will because I can't say that I've ever talked to someone who's trained for a while, however you choose to define that, 5 years, 10 years, 20 years, that hasn't been impacted and if you listened to the episodes of martial arts radio, you'd hear that. Every single episode, people talking about how their lives were transformed whether it's something as simple as I got off drugs or I didn't hang with the wrong crowd. Something not easy but something simple to comprehend to the interview that one that I did earlier today with someone who was in a car accident of the caliber that they should have died and the doctors credited their health and their mental and emotional strength from their training was saving their lives.



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**Chris Pizzo:**

It's so funny that you brought that up. One of my current clients that is what we're working with is a school owner and he...we're trying to...the first thing we do with professional martial artists is try to find where this value transformation has taken place in their own life so they can start on that path to helping other people do that and so, I was asking this one [00:35:14] okay, cool, based on looking at the assignments that he's done for me and I have all this information, I said, alright, let's talk about your value as an instructor, what can you really do? And he's like, well, I can help people defend themselves against any attack and I said, alright, cool, man. Do you live in a high crime area where that's important? And he started laughing and he's like no, actually, I live in one of the safest towns in the entire United States. I was like okay, now you can see why you're having so much trouble getting students. there's no valuation of what you say you do and it turns out, though, he was on a head-on car collision and what should have killed him, in fact, wound up with 6 weeks of physical therapy and, like a crutch or two, and because of his martial arts training, he actually created his own better physical therapy regimen that even the physical therapist was like oh my god, what did you do? And he's like well, I went and trained whatever else and that's the type of transformation that we're helping him put into a high-value program for other people that are having mobility issues, whether it's true accident or sickness or whatever else or even lifelong handicap of how to bring mobility back to their lives in an enjoyable manner, right? Because physical therapy is sometimes not enjoyable, sometimes take a long time. Martial arts has the power to do this. It, literally, I joke all the time with this as well, between all the people on antidepressants, to all the people on opioids and all the people between all the weight gain and sedentary lifestyle and video game addiction and social media addiction and whatever else, martial arts instructors and teachers know how to solve every major problem in modern society. It's just that modern society has forgot that martial arts is the way to do that and so, when you flip the script on a martial arts instructor and showed them that hey, listen, you really do have the power to help people, even more than you are now, right? It's like a big A-Ha moment to them and then, match the transformation with the money of what that transformation is worth, now, literally, magic happens. The martial arts instructor gets paid, the student shows up highly committed and to transform, and because the martial arts instructor has been paid such high rates and high value, is that they can commit as much as needed to that student to bring them and that's the way it works and it's so fun that this happens just normally for martial arts instructors and school owners. They're just not...they just haven't isolated it or broken it apart to really, again, frame and articulate it so people understand the value that they're getting and that's really what's most important.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

There's an element of a normalcy bias if you've been training for a long time, if you've seen dozens or hundreds of life transformations for martial arts, you can forget how powerful that is and how valuable that is.

**Chris Pizzo:**



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I'm 45 now and it's not like, yeah, I've been training since I was 5, like I mentioned, but I was not...let me put it this way, my kids, my 2 older guys at 13 and 15 are better athletes than I ever was and the reason being that my 15-year old is the starting linebacker on the football team and the coaches are like oh my god, because of his Jiu Jitsu and his martial arts training. He has no hesitation when he crashes through the line. He's a straight A student because that discipline and focus and it's like every parent ask me, like, man, your kid is so nice, he's such a good athlete, [00:39:16] school, what's your secret? The secret is martial arts. There is no secret. The secret is something that you've known about but you thought it was something that it wasn't because your poor, struggling martial arts instructor, teacher was never instructed on how to articulate and frame the value he was really giving you and when I tell that to parents are like oh my god, I wish I paid that guy more or stuck with it and that's really the connection that martial artists need to make.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Awesome. Before we give everybody websites and social media and all that stuff, there's something that when we have an episode like this, I think it's important to remind people that is that this is not a pay to play podcast. You have not paid me. There is no exchange going on here other than I reached out to you because I saw what you were doing, I thought it was valuable and I thought there was an interesting conversation in it. There are podcasts these days where the guest pay for the access to the audience. We have never done that. we will never do that. It's not the way I want to run this business. The things that make us money is secondary to the information we give away the information for free and my plan is that we will always do that and I want you to confirm that. That you have not, right? You didn't cut me a check!

**Chris Pizzo:**

It's interesting that you bring that up is because, and one of the reasons that I really was excited to come on and talk to you, is because we talked about doing this. The format is...I did not want to come on and pimp my business and anything like that because, honestly, anybody can find us now. Everybody in the world knows that our martial arts instructors are doing 6 and 7 figures, right? It's not hard to find us but the bigger conversation of this money issue that instructors and the general public have, that you brought up, Jeremy, which was your idea to talk about, was really meaningful to me because that is the mission of our company so I think it's highly valuable that you are doing these honest types of podcasts and even your attitude towards this industry is, I found, well-received and I couldn't wait to talk to you as well, so thanks for bringing that up.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Thank you, thank you. I believe this strongly, and I've said this many times in this show, there is nothing that will change a person's life with 6 months like martial arts will. No kid reflects back on 6 months of after-school soccer or basketball or boy scouts in their 30s, 40s, 60s and says, that was really impactful. I



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want to make sure my kids, grandkids do that. martial arts does that and that's why, the mission here at whistlekick is really to spread, to grow, to retain people in the martial arts because I believe martial arts makes better people and it's the best chance I have of having a strong impact on the world so that's why I do what I do.

**Chris Pizzo:**

Jeremy, can I bring up one topic about the giving back with martial arts, if you don't mind? One of the things, and even going back to the comments of why people believe it can be or should be freer or whatever that...a lot of martial artists, again, like I said, no martial artist that we talk to is looking for Ferraris and yachts. They're looking for freedom. They're looking to, and they're not looking for freedom to get out of something. Trust me, what we do is hard work. They're looking for the freedom to get into something, the freedom to totally commit to their students as long as their students commit back to them. That's really what they're looking for and so, but there is always the argument, what about the people who cannot afford it? Who cannot afford \$500 an hour for private lessons that we hope guys get? Cannot afford 300 to 500, one of our guys charging \$897 for monthly lessons for small groups. What about people that can't afford it? Listen, number one, is you can never, as a martial arts instructor, specifically for them, professionals, as a martial arts professional, you can never ever get poor enough to help the poor. It just doesn't work like that. If you want to make it matter, you first have to make it and so, what happens is with a lot of our guys that we work with, they really are looking for impact first, income second and so, because they know that listen, if they can have the impact and make the income, then they can have a wider impact. So, we have guys who have restructured their schools, who have restructured the way that they transformed people's lives and transformed their own income and then open up basically free community center Karate, Taekwondo and even Judo to give back to the community in areas that they're not attracting the high-end and even though they give more attention maybe to the most committed, to the people that are paying a little more, they are still providing a valuable service and, on that note actually that I brought it up, it's amazing. People complain about paying martial arts instructors but yet, they have money to go to the bar on Thursday night and Friday night, yet they have money to drive cars that are beyond their earning ability, they get rims on the car, they go to Starbucks every single day, people have money for what they want and so, most people that are blaming the industry or specific instructors for charging too much, really just don't want to take responsibility for their own life and I feel kind of bad on ending this on such a hard note like that but people...success in life is about extreme ownership. You either take responsibility for your success, whether it's financially or personally or socially or whatever else, or you don't and, like Jeremy, like you just said, martial arts is that path. That is the path towards, not only extreme ownership, but success personally, socially, spiritually and you apply those skills in the business world, also financial. So, it's just such an important topic and I'm really happy that you brought me on this to talk to you about this today.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**



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Awesome and thank you for being here. I appreciate you coming on and sharing so openly and being willing to have a conversation about the bigger subject and not simply, as you said, pimp your business but if people want to find you, social media, websites, et cetera, where would they go?

**Chris Pizzo:**

Guys, listen, if you are a professional martial arts teacher.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Can you define that? You've used that term, I should have asked you earlier.

**Chris Pizzo:**

So, if you are a school owner, if you were a school owner and you just couldn't make things work or something happened, right? If you were head instructor, an assistant instructor, if you're doing seminars, professional in anything defined is somebody who gets paid for something. We can't help the 26-year old fighter. We can't help the martial artist but if you have already been paid or have made a go at being paid as a martial arts teacher? That's a whole other ball of wax and therefore, because you have attempted to become compensated for your guidance, for your mentorship, for your instruction, that's what defines you as a professional. So, if you are a professional martial artist, martial arts instructor, martial arts teacher and you want to learn how to add 5 to 10 high-paying students, high-paying group students or even high-value large group students for a school to your martial arts business every month, you can just go to [wayofthewarrior.org](http://wayofthewarrior.org). We actually have a free master class that is totally free, just register for it. I actually go through a lot of what we're talking about today but I take it one step farther because we have the time to do it and I actually show you how to frame, how to articulate it. I go through the 3 levels of martial arts again so you understand, give you examples of 5 different case studies in there so you really become educated on the difference between the three different levels and how you're handicapping yourself, you're still at level 1 and 2 and there's even a, again, how to frame and articulate your marketing. There's an advertising workshop in there. There's a sales workshop in there and that same free masters class where I show you how to talk about transformational outcomes as opposed to just tactical knowledge and even an experience and what's the value in that so if you're interested in that, you're a professional martial artist, just go on over to [wayofthewarrior.org](http://wayofthewarrior.org) and register for the free master class and if that resonates with you at the end of the master class, you want to talk to us about, literally, planning this out for your business, we are happy to help. We are here to serve the industry and there's a link at the end there but [wayofthewarrior.org](http://wayofthewarrior.org) gets the ball rolling.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Awesome. What a great discussion. I want to thank Professor Pizzo for coming on the show and yes, don't worry folks, we are already in conversation about bringing him back for a full interview because I want to know more how he got to where he is today. Of course, if you want to find everything that



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we've talked about today, show notes [whistlekickmartialartradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartradio.com). We've got links, we've got a bunch of stuff so check that out and I'd love to hear what you think? Did you agree? Did you disagree? Leave some commentary. Episode 401, [whistlekickmartialartradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartradio.com). If you want to right to me privately, [jeremy@whistlekick.com](mailto:jeremy@whistlekick.com). Our social media @whistlekick on twitter, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. I want to thank you for tuning in. Thank you for all that you do to help and support this company, this show and the martial arts in general. Until next time, train hard, smile and have a great day!