



Episode 101 – Necessity of Having Different Styles | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com

Jeremy Lesniak:

What is up everybody? It's time for another episode of whistlekick martial arts radio and here we go with episode 101. Today's episode is about why having different styles of martial arts isn't just good but necessary. I'm whistlekick founder but I'm better known as your host Jeremy Lesniak. Whistlekick, if you don't know, makes the absolute best traditional martial arts sparring gear, that foam dipped sparring gear, as well some awesome apparel and accessories for practitioners and fans of traditional martial arts. I'd like to welcome the new listeners and thank everyone that's come back again. If you're not familiar with our products, you can learn more or buy over at whistlekick.com. All of our past podcast episode show notes and a lot more on another website and that's whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. From either, site you can sign up for a newsletter and I really think you should because we offer exclusive content to subscribers, discounts and it's the only place to find out about upcoming guests for our Monday shows.

So, we talk about martial arts there are a lot of different styles and some of them came before others and some of them are derived from combinations of styles or offshoots and people like to argue about those things. And you know what? It doesn't matter. None of it matters. It doesn't matter what style came first, it doesn't matter what style shut off from another style, there's some historical relevance there if you're a student of history if you enjoy that aspect of the culture around martial arts then that's great. But when it starts devolving into this style came before the style so it's better or more authentic or more realistic or more or less of anything, then that's really where becomes a problem. There's a limited number of ways that you can move your body. Just between joints and gravity and things like that, there's only so many different ways you can if you let your body. And when we talk about a combat situation something that were training for at least theoretically in the martial arts, only a small percentage of those ways that we can move make any sense. And so, at the root of it, all martial arts being that were trying to do the same thing and having a limited number of ways we can move the body, there's really not a terrible amount of difference stylistically from one style to another. And if you've trained multiple styles you've seen that while there are some dramatic differences, if you take a birds eye view, martial arts are all pretty darn similar. On episode 93, we work through a definition martial arts and I'll share it with you here. If you haven't listened that episode's should go back check it out.

A martial art is an expressive combat themed practice that incorporates personal development. So, there is that. Now, a lot of people get really caught up in the idea of which martial art or martial arts style is the best and to say that one art is better than another is just downright foolish. To say in art is better than another art for you, now that's not only find that makes a lot of sense. If there was an objectively best art the others wouldn't exist and you can say the same thing about cars, about music, about food, whenever we talk about something subjective human beings crave variety within that space and that's good. When someone talks about one art being better than another one of two things is really going on. They may mean that an art is better than another art for particular person or body type or situation, whether or not the right or wrong



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there making that judgment call. A great example that we often hear is that jujitsu is better than karate if you're on the ground and someone's on top of you and I can get behind that that makes sense to me. Jujitsu focuses on grappling, karate while it may have some ground techniques depending on the style, doesn't generally focus on that it focuses on being on your feet. Now if that's not what they mean I'm to be pretty direct here, they're being ignorant. Now why do people push this whole "my art is better than your art" mantra stuff and whatever you want to call it. And honestly I think it's around fear. Martial artists as a group are so often afraid, there's a personality profile that we've worked through on a lot of our interview episodes, with a lot of our guests and we're probably going to do an episode on that at some point coming up to really explore what that means and how so many amazing martial artist with so much skill and so much time are actually quite fearful and insecure. But the thrust of it as it relates to this episode, is that a lot of martial artists you know they find something that works well for them, they find a style and they love it and they're passionate and it's made such an impact on their life that they feel like they owe that style or the instructor or the school and they elevate that style, school, instructor so high up because of the benefits they received, that they can only wrap your brain around the idea that this person or this art is the best thing out there. Because maybe for them it was. It took them out of a dark place or it gave them something to focus on whatever it was. Now to some of these people, some of these people are a little less secure to admit that it may not be the best., that the person the style whatever is not the best, can really bring back some of the insecurities that these folks have felt. That they've done a really good job distancing themselves they haven't worked through they want to face that and so they're going to fight tooth and nail, sometimes figuratively, sometimes literally, to avoid going back to that place of insecurity. And if you want examples of that of course we talked on the show about YouTube and how it is often the bastion of negativity. You know, go look up comments on Bruce Lee videos or you know one style versus another or you know stuff on Grand Master Victor Moore were actually constantly removing horrendous comments about Grand Master Moore. Constructive criticism is fine and we get some of that but on some of those episodes we get some absolutely horrible things. And interestingly enough it's really just on YouTube. So, these people pop up in there debating no skills were so many controversial like one of those people, and it doesn't matter like we said, like we started out with, it really doesn't matter,

Here's why. Show me two people they do all of the elements of a particular style the same way. Even if there under the same instructor at the same school, if you look around the place where you train, in theory, all of you should be doing everything the same way if that was the most important part. And that's not what goes on because people are different, their bodies, their attitudes are different and that's good, that's okay. So, if there is no best art, if we've agreed that it's completely subjective why do we have this question? Why do we have an episode where we're talking about this? Because we don't just have different arts, we need them and personally, I'm frustrated at this back and forth my art is better than yours. So, I'm hoping that in this episode were putting out some good tool, some good ammunition. So, the next time you hear a conversation from someone espousing the virtues of one art over another as some kind of objective truth you can have a real conversation with them about it and maybe we can stop



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undermining each other. Different people need different things out of the martial arts and different arts practiced in different schools, taught by different instructors is critical to giving those people the different options that will keep some in the martial arts.

Here at whistlekick and on martial arts radio we operate everything on the premise that the world gets better with more people practicing martial arts. So, the more diverse the options of martial arts training the more likely someone will find what they want. Guests on the show have talked about their changing training needs in some of the episodes. And some of the guests we had didn't like their first school, I'm thinking of one particular episode where a gentleman who achieved tremendous international success was pretty much done after his first class at a particular school because it was not what he wanted or hoped for or expected. And it took someone else at another school dragging him in, I mean not physically, but there was a lot of encouragement and almost pure pressure just to get them in the watch. And they went on to find exactly what they needed in that school and it launched a very successful career. Bonus points if you can guess who I'm thinking of right now. So, when you have different people doing different things in the martial arts, martial arts continues to grow, our body of knowledge, what we understand about the physical body and how martial arts can best be trained and taught, used for artistic purposes, used for self-defense purposes, all of that grows we get better as an industry if you want to call it that.

Now, through events like the free martial arts training day that we put on last weekend, different styles, when they come together they can teach each other. And there's a lot of opportunities for this in your own area, hopefully you have the self-confidence as well as the permission of your instructor or school order to do some cross training as some call it. To go work out with people to do things differently because that's gonna make you better. when you work out with different people doing things differently, you start to ask questions, you start to look at the way you do things and say is this the best way for me to do this? Now, that doesn't mean that you change your forms or that what you do for your instructor changes because you do, most of us, have a style that were training in and were honoring that style. But the more you understand the way your body works, the way you want two practice certain movements for certain purposes, the better you get as a martial artist. No one of us is as good as all of us. The more we collaborate in life and in martial arts, the more we can accomplish. There's a big difference between honoring the artistic and the artistic side and the purity of our style as compared to the refusal to adapt. And unfortunately, there are a lot of martial artists out there that kinda hang out in the latter. One of my favorite sayings is you can't have progress without change. To refuse to change the way you do anything in your martial arts training is to say that it's perfect. Now of course, nothing that you're doing is perfect. Nothing that I am doing in any space of my life is perfect there's always opportunities for growth.

As some of you knows, we talk about on the show I get to travel a lot I get to work out with a lot of different martial artist at different schools, different styles and I absolutely love that is one of my favorite parts of my job. But at some of the schools I see people that refused to change, they



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refused to improve and they blame it on their style or their instructor. And really just being lazy or they are afraid. They don't want to put in the time to do something differently because they've put in decades doing it a particular way and they're afraid that changing it means what they were doing is wrong, was wrong. That's one way to look at it, I don't see it that way I see it as evolution. We should be constantly taking a look at what we do as individuals and improving our own personal martial arts style. There are a lot of amazing, utterly amazing martial artist out there and some of those people are fantastic instructors, it turned out incredible students, champion level competitors and overall wonderful human beings. And you've heard from a lot of them on this very show. Now, every one of them continues to find ways to get better as a person or as a martial artist or as an instructor. And it's those continued efforts that take their style forward and that allows her students to move forward and as the people practicing martial arts move forward, the martial arts overall moves forward and were not done. There's a lot more work to do in the martial arts and to pretend otherwise, to pretend that anyone style has it figured out or anyone person has it all figured out does a disservice not only to everyone that is training today, but everyone that may someday train. It's our responsibility as martial artist to keep moving the martial arts forward through our different styles comparing notes supporting each other and being willing to throw out the ego long enough to say you know what, I can do this better.

What do you think? Did you choose the style where the instructor of the school you train in or did you stumble upon it accidentally? Do you evangelize a particular style or you consider yourself someone who's more broad? As with every episode we want to know what you think. We've been hearing from a lot more of you lately that really helps us out and customize the content that we put out not just on the show, but over social media to reflect what you want. If you want to get to us on social media, we're on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram username, you guessed it whistlekick or you leave us coming on the website whistlekickmartialartsradio.com or over on YouTube. If there someone you think should hear this episode please do them, do all of us a favor, share it with them let's get some good discussion going. It's the only way we move the martial arts forward. If you want to be a guest on the show or maybe you have an idea for show topic, go ahead and shoot us a message there are forms over at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. Don't get subscribe to the newsletter while you're over there so you can stay up on everything were doing. You can learn more about the products at whistlekick.com and the sparring gear is in stock and ready to go at Amazon. That's it for now, until next time. Train hard, smile, and have a great day!