



Episode 455 – It's OK to Not be OK | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hello everyone, welcome! This is whistlekick martial arts radio episode 455 today's episode is titled it's okay to not be okay and in this episode, I'm going to share with you some personal things, some feelings, some challenges in the hope that there helpful to some of you. But first, who am I? My name is Jeremy Lesniak, I'm your host for this show, I'm the founder here whistlekick, sometimes go by the title whistleprez because we use the word whistle with everything we do and I love the martial arts. I've been training my entire life and that is manifesting now via whistlekick and what we do here whistlekick? Well, we do this show but we also make products and we've got a whole bunch of projects that were involved in and the best place to go to find out about all of them is whistlekick.com. And if you check out the store while you're over there, you'll see bunch of things that you can purchase and support this show and if you use the code `PODCAST15`, that gets you 15% off and it lets us know that you're listening to the show and the show leads to sales and justifies the kind of crazy expense that we have put into all of these episodes. If you want to see all the episodes, go to whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. Show notes including transcripts, photos, videos, links, you name it they're there for every single episode. We've ever done we do not hide any of our episodes behind a pay wall, we're not gonna do anything silly like that. We throw the show at you twice a week and the goal here at whistlekick and by extension martial arts radio is to connect educate and inspire martial artists. Martial arts is a wonderful thing it has the power to change the world and I want to see it reach that standing.



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I've been debating whether or not you an episode like this pretty much since the beginning which, let's see, the beginning is 4 1/2 years ago now. I think it's time. I've been getting better at being public about when things are going okay and when they're not going okay. And I'm seeing a shift in the world and the world around me people being accepting of hearing these things and I've taken a lot of inspiration from the stories I've heard from others and I think it's time to share a bit of my own. Today's episode is not gonna have a lot to do with martial arts other than if it were not for martial arts and the connections and my practice at talking to all of you, I would not be able to do this episode. Right off the bat, I'm not looking for anything, I don't need anybody's support, I don't need sympathy. In fact, I don't I don't want anybody sympathy for these things that I'm going to share. I just hope that in sharing the story it helps others over the last two years a lot of the things that I've shared have garnered some feedback people have written and said: you know was really helpful that you are able to say these things. And so that's the goal today I'm willing to be vulnerable in a slightly uncomfortable way with the goal of helping and supporting some of you so fingers crossed that it comes across that way.

I've dealt with chronic anxiety pretty much my entire life. I've never been medicated for it, I'm not on anything for now. I have some coping mechanisms that range from healthy to less than. And I didn't realize until recently how far back it went. I remembered it in college and had always kind of assume that it started then but I was having a conversation with my acupuncturist recently, we were talking about anxiety and I remember that the first nervous tick anyone had noticed, I did some funny things in my eyes, went back to like each 10. And as I've gotten older, I've noticed that some of these these ticks come and go, if you know me personally you may have noticed some things I've learned recently that far more people and notice things that I ever realized and everyone's just been understanding and accommodating and chalk it up to me being me and odd and having some some things about me. But what would people don't see what's below the surface is I've had this knot in my stomach this tension that has been there as long as I remember. I don't remember a time where I didn't have it. And this is a point we are very helpful people will start say, oh try this and think about this and do this and all you have to do and I'm gonna and ask out of respect for my willingness to be vulnerable here, please don't send me those emails. I want you to recognize that I am an intelligent person and have spent a lot of time researching and working on myself and that's not the point, I'm not opening up to everyone in the hopes that someone comes up with some solution and we don't need to talk more about that. Because it's not the point, the point is not, hey there's there's a solution out there somewhere, maybe there is. The point is there are days where I'm not okay. For example yesterday, I was not okay I was having really bad day. And not a bad day because no there were professional things going on and I was in an argument with friend or a family member but there are just days that aren't okay. Ironically enough, many of them are Mondays. Yesterday was not a Monday but...

I'm sharing this because I'm sure there are other people out there who have days whether or not okay and I spent a lot of time thinking that some of the things that I felt were unique but uncommon. And here in the United States in what we can call the modern or the Western world, we've become more accepting of some of these challenges and we still like to throw a lot of on pills at it. And if people aren't



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throwing pills at it I see, I guess we'll call them martyrs people who are are trying to get the world to accommodate their own self view in that because you know, they have a challenge. You know because something is difficult and let's be honest I probably have some you know, biochemical imbalance and we are not to get my family history. There's some stuff in my family history that we could point out and say yeah, that make sense. But because I don't want pills and I don't want sympathy and I am not on you know, multi week retreats trying to handle this, there are people who might look at it and say well you know you're you're not trying to to get help you're not trying to make a change then that's not true. But more so when I'm not trying to do is have anybody else live their lives differently because of mine. I'll relate later back to when I made some dietary changes.

Years ago I stopped eating meat when I was a full-blown vegetarian and honestly the main reason I waited most of my life to do that is because I didn't want other people to do things differently. I am fully supportive of people eating in different ways but just as I'm not going to expect someone else or rather, just as I am not going to eat meat because a group of people around me is. I'm not expecting others to stop eating meat because I'm there. Most my friends eat meat, we have meals together. I do what works for me, they do what works for them and it's okay. And I take the same approach to the way I feel to these bad days. I've learned to handle them, sometimes that means I get out of the house, sometimes it means that I don't. Sometimes it means I'm professionally productive, sometimes I'm really not. Sometimes it's really bad, most of the time it's not. I know there are a lot of people out there and maybe even some of you listening who have a harder time with some things than I do. I'm not trying to compare, it does it really matter in that way. I just want you to know that you're not alone. Because I know how impactful it was when I realized that I wasn't alone. There was a moment for me not to long ago when Robin Williams took his life and let me just say because there maybe some people out there who are concerned, no. That's not on my radar. I have no intentions, no desires, have not had intentions or desires to take my life. If I was going to do that would've happened a long time ago but I've lost a lot of people. And some of those people I knew really well, some of them I didn't. But when Robin Williams took his life it let the world know that sometimes the people who are on the outside the happiest, the funniest, they're coping. They're dealing with things on the inside. And it started a conversation and I started to realize that the pain that a lot of professional comedians feel, it's not the minority, it might even be the majority and I've heard other professional comedians talk about this that most of them found your way in the comedy because it was helping them handle whatever was going on inside. And for me, martial arts is that thing that helps me deal with what's going on inside.

I don't know what my life would've looked like without martial arts. I suspect I would've found something else to help me cope, to help me find my place in the world. But when I talk about martial arts and how powerful it can be and how can help, I suspect everyone in some way. This is part of why it's so important to me and I've I've touched on this in the past, because of martial arts I have some tools. I have physical tools, if I need to express what I'm feeling you know, I can punch a heavy bag. I can put my all into doing a form and I have a whole network of people that I've met because of my training that I can lean on, people who are supportive. And I suspect if we go back to the title of this episode



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there are likely two types of people hearing this for I have no idea how many of you have listened this far in, but there are those of you who likely don't fully understand and you want to fix it and I applaud that. I thank you for that. I think you for that empathy and there are those of you listening who relate and know that it's not that simple. It's not like if you break a finger because you punched wrong, oh ok, we have to let this heal and just make sure we don't do it that way again.

I really hope this episode doesn't backfire. So I guess we'll do this: to those of you out there listening who needed to hear someone say this, you're not alone. It's okay to not be okay every day is not okay but tomorrow might be. And one of the things that I do, one of the healthier things that I do when things are overwhelming when it's not okay, is I just break it down. I break it down in the same way break down a form or teaching a kick, take the smallest part that you can handle. If looking at what you need to do over the next month is too big, about the next week, day, hour, minute. Sometimes all I can handle is what is the next task in front of me. That is most important that I can actually wrap my brain around. It might not be the most important thing on my list, it might not be the thing that I "should be doing" because maybe I can't handle that thing right now and that's okay. Because we do what we can with what we have, where we are and if we are we are is not okay and we can't just get to okay, what's the best thing you can do? If you're exhausted after two hours of training and you can't do, you know, this particular form at the top level, what can you do? If you're sparring or competing or heaven forbid, a real fight and you're exhausted, what can you do? I don't want to keep beating this to the ground so I'm gonna start to wind down here. I just want you to know that this show and this company and the connections I've made, the people I talked to have been huge. It means that, on the days where I'm not okay I have far more available to me that I used to, that I would otherwise and I thank you for that. I posted publicly yesterday on my Facebook page that I wasn't okay. I didn't want to talk about why, I just I was just asking for people to keep me in their thoughts and there was a lot of support that came through texts and messages and emails and posts and it helped and today was better. So I let everyone know thank you I am better today and in part because of the way I was treated yesterday.

Compassion goes a long way and one of the things that I aim to do in my life and I've talked about this, I fail at it every single day but I try is to treat the people around me with the same compassion I would if I knew that they were contemplating a suicide. Because statistically someone you deal with day-to-day is contemplated suicide. And I want to underscore because I've developed a lot of relationships with people listen who this show, I am not contemplating suicide. Even on the days were not okay I know I'm going to be okay. So for those of you out there who might be, who aren't okay today and you aren't sure when it's going to be okay again, break it down. Break it down the same way you would anything in your training. If all you can handle standing up and throwing a couple punches, do that. Channel what you have into hitting a bag or doing your forms or shadowboxing or something and if that doesn't help you, that's okay but I might help. We're better together and I appreciate you listening.

I'm not can ask for anything else today not ask you to share this or codes or social media. I just appreciate you supporting whistlekick but more so me, Jeremy, in listening to what I really needed to



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say today. There have been plenty of episodes where I need to get something off my chest but none of them have been like this. So thank you for doing that. And even though I have a hard time feeling it when I say it closing out every show, I do try to wrap my heart around it. When I say "train hard smile and have a great day" I do mean it. I don't always feel it, but I want to and if I don't today there's a really good chance I will tomorrow. And that's how I'm going to leave you today. But if there's something you need if you need to vent, if you need a safe place, if you need somebody to read an email from you because you're not okay, you damn well better email me because I've lost far too many people and I want to lose any of you, jeremy@whistlekick.com. So until next time train hard, whether you want to or not, smile and if you can't that's okay, and even if today sucks, make the best possible day you can because that's your version, today right now, of having a great day.