



Episode 487 — Adjusting Mindset to Training | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hello everybody, welcome this is whistlekick martial arts radio episode 487. Today, we're talking about adjusting your mindset to your training. My name is Jeremy Lesniak, show host and whistlekick founder, everything we do at whistlekick is in support of the traditional martial arts. If you want to know more about everything we have going on, check out whistlekick.com that's real fine everything we're doing, and one of the things you'll find there is our store. Make sure you use the code `PODCAST15` to save 15%. And martial arts radio, the show, gets his very own website and that is whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. You'll see new episodes of the show two times each week, the entire purpose behind everything we're doing it show is to connect, educate, and entertain traditional martial artists throughout the world. If you want to help the show in the work that we do, you can do quite a few things. You can make a purchase, you can share an episode, follow us on social media, tell a friend, pick up one of our great books on Amazon, leave us a review somewhere, or support our Patreon. If you think the new shows that were releasing or worth \$0.63 apiece, not to mention all the back episodes you get access to, consider supporting us for as little as five dollars a month. Visit patreon.com/whistlekick and sign up there. And if you do, we're going to give you access to even more stuff. The Patreon content we do original photo, video, audio, and it's the only place we tell you about upcoming guests for the show.

Today's subject comes from a listener and they wrote in with an email and I'm going to read it here. In competition team yesterday, we happen to get mostly teens and only a couple of adults so, since there were no younger kids we had some self-defense and fusion fighting, sparring. While the adult classes are



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more familiar with that sort of thing, it's not something the teens do very often for safety reasons. I noticed it was really hard to get them to switch out of point sparring mode and do stuff like grab or throw even though they know the techniques, they just defaulted to what they do most. The teen group was dominated by one girl who does rugby and just grab people and knock them over. I noticed the same thing in reverse in those that have boxing or street fighting or MMA experience, getting some of them to tone it down and not try to smash everyone, that can be a challenge too. So, in today's episode, we're going to address this. We're going to talk about the importance and the skill of adjusting your mindset to the type of training that you're doing.

So, let's look at this is a spectrum and you got a couple extremes. On the one hand you have zero contact, light, friendly sparring. On the other end of the spectrum, you might have full contact competition. And maybe even want to leave a little bit of space for self-defense were people trying to kill you. Either way there's a spectrum. And the heart of the question being posed is how he would just for being in different places on that spectrum? The more you train in one way, the more your mindsets going to adapt is that place in the continuum and if you don't get good at training in other places on the continuum, well, how are you going to not smash people in your point sparring or go to lightly when you're stepping up to something that maybe has more aggressive rules. Some of the people out there listening might say well you know Jeremy it's self-correcting. If you're a point fighter, and you get in the ring or in training with people were throwing around eventually you're going to learn. Well, maybe, but I've known people who learned that lesson so slowly that they stop training and that's unfortunate. And then the other side many of us have seen people who attend point sparring tournament with complete disregard for the rules, and instead remain in that aggressive higher intensity mindset and they get disqualified early on.

Just as a good martial artist is diverse in their techniques, a commercial artist is diverse in their ability to think and apply intensity. And that's really what we're talking about here, how intense we should be? Some of us have this innate ability to go hard when it matters and to lighten up what matters but most of us default to one position and is based on who we are as a person. How we approach life. Some of us are really intense, and really aggressive some of us are even timid or meek and martial arts attracts people from all across that spectrum. And I think that's a really good thing because we get better by training with others. I've worked with people in both ends of the of this equation. I felt aggressive people become less aggressive and less aggressive people become more so. Now let's start with toning it down making aggressive martial art is less so. I've actually found this to be the easier way, the easier direction because the instruction is pretty simple, you have to respect the people you're working with, you have to trust them, and they have to be able to trust you. And if you step in for point sparring, which has a rule set, if you don't respect those rules people get hurt and nobody here to get hurt. It doesn't mean that there are times where you go more intensely, but you have to respect those rules of engagement and everybody has to be on the same page when they agree to them.



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I can't step in and have a point sparring match with you when I'm going to go at a 9/10 and you're gonna go a 3/10, that doesn't work nobody has fun. So, understanding that you have to respect the person you're working with and be a challenge to them and help them get better. That's been my strategy for helping people tone it down. And depending on the age and the experience, the same thing can work for helping someone to become a little more aggressive. I'll be honest, I'm not someone who likes to get in and hit hard but I love training partners who do like that and I'll step it up for them. As long as I'm able to trust the people in working with, as long as I know that they're not trying to hurt me despite making some solid contact, that their goal is not to injure, but maybe to pressure test, I don't mind when we go hard. I don't want to do it all the time because I don't like walking out with bruises and injuries and being sore for 2 to 3 weeks. That's not why I train. That doesn't mean that's not why you should train, I'm not making a judgment of anybody else, I'm simply saying this is what's important to me. But if I want to help my training partners, the people I'm in class with get better, sometimes I have to bring up, sometimes have to bring it down. And that's the thing that I focus on for myself, is making sure I'm a good partner and falling within the parameters of what's given.

In the message that I read at the beginning of the episode, the question being posed really is how do you help people get better at this? And I think there's one really key thing that can happen, you can have intensity and adjust intensity and independently of that adjust speed. I can have in intense, virtually full contact match with someone and move slower. I can have a point sparring match and go slower. And one of the things I've observed when, honestly this is the thing that I tend work when I'm traveling around teaching seminars, I'm teaching drills from a slow pace. There's a magic and moving slowly. Let's imagine that I'm running a sparring class and will take the example here where you've got some more open rules, throws, and grappling as it is allowed and some people just aren't getting it. Okay, let's bring the pace down. Let's take this point sparring intensity that they're used to and let's bring the speed down and say okay, but now you can grapple. That requires some martial artists who are willing to trust their instructor and probably an instructor who's going to be right there supervising every single movement. As with just about everything else in life, before you can run, you can walk, before you can move quickly, you have to be able to move slowly. And we tend to gloss over that in martial arts with a lot of things we do.

Anyone who has spent time with jujitsu with some real grappling and spent a lot of time on the ground knows, you can grapple with intensity and you can slow down. I've been in some very intense grappling matches that moved very slowly. And I've also been in some very relaxed grappling matches, they're very quick. And by learning to manipulate those two variables independently, you arrive at some very interesting drills and give students the ability to progress without fear. When people are afraid, they default what they are most comfortable with and the question asker mentions this: it was hard to switch them out of point sparring mode. Because that's where they feel safest, that's where they spent their time, that's with her skill set has developed, and learning how to get out of that require some comfort. Now, this does not mean that simply slowing things down changes the mindset, but it gives the space to change the mindset. If we think about training for self-defense for real-world application, perhaps you



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move through some drills and some sequences, and you find that even at a slow speed students are doing very simple, safe, techniques that yeah, they might work in a street confrontation but they're more derived from friendly competition, from point sparring if you will. If you slow things down and show people hey, we've got to be aggressive here. We've got to learn how to claw out eyeballs, and squeeze throats, and stomp on groins, and start to get them to play along. How would a violent person who is afraid for their life react in the situation? Or if I'm working with the younger group, I'll often get them to think about an animal or a superhero and how they might handle these situations because sometimes that role-play can be really important.

Of course, role-play can occur for adults too, you got to handle the language a little bit differently so they don't think you're being silly. But there are a lot of tools here for getting people out of their comfort zone. And if nothing else it becomes a question of experience. So, imagine that none of this other stuff is working, I keep it slow and I bring it back one person gets one technique and then the other person gets to go becomes turn based. And if the person is really new or really struggling, I might offer some suggestions hey you're in a perfect position for this. Or maybe the person they're working with can suggest some things, hey I'm in a good position for you to hip throw me here or to choke me here and becomes a collaborative process. There's magic in the slow, don't be afraid to use it.

Now if you have suggestions on how we might do this better, did I miss some stuff? Do you have ideas that enhance or completely contradict what I said, I'd love to hear them.

Whistlekickmartialartsradio.com, episode 487, leave a comment over there. Would love to hear what you think while you're over there, sign up for the newsletter check out some of the other episodes we've got going. We've photos links, video for every episode we've ever done, each episode is a page all to itself. There's a transcript there check out. If you're down to support us in all our work, you have some options you can use the code `PODCAST15` to save 15% at whistlekick.com, you could share an episode to leave a review tell a friend or contribute to the patron patreon.com/whistlekick. And I hope that if you see someone wearing something with whistlekick on it, maybe a competition or at the grocery store, I hope you'll introduce yourself because you might just make a new friend or a training partner. And I'd love to hear you got suggestions, email me Jeremy@whistlekick.com and follow us on social media [@whistlekick](https://twitter.com/whistlekick). Thank you for joining me, until next time, train hard, smile, and have a great day.