



Episode 522 – Sayagi David Osborne | [whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com](http://whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com)



**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Welcome! You're tuned into whistlekick martial arts radio episode 522, with today's guest, Sayagi David Osborne. Who am I? Well, I'm Jeremy Lesniak. I'm your host for this show, I'm the founder here at whistlekick, where everything we do is in support of traditional martial arts. Do you wanna know what that means, go to [whistlekick.com](http://whistlekick.com)! That's where you're going to find everything that we're working on, including our store. And if you use the code `PODCAST15`, that'll save you 15% off a new shirt, a hat, one of our training programs, or anything else that we have over there. Martial arts radio gets its own website, [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com). We keep it easy. You'll see 2 new episodes each week over there. And the goal here of this show is to connect, educate, and entertain traditional martial artists, worldwide. If you wanna help guarantee future episodes of this show, there are lots of ways you can help. You could make a purchase, share an episode, follow us on social media, tell a friend, pick up a book on Amazon, maybe leave a review, or support our patreon. [Patreon.com/whistlekick](https://Patreon.com/whistlekick), it's the place to go for that. You can support us monthly with as little as \$2. And at \$5 and up, you're gonna get more content. The more you are willing contribute, the more we're going to give back. Today's guest hold a distinction. Here we are, more than 5 years into martial arts radio and we've talked to people representing just about every martial art you can imagine. Well, Sayagi Osborne not only came on and talked about his story, his journey as a martial artist, but he also talked about the martial art he trains in, which is one you may have heard of but he's the first to come on the show and talk about it. It was a fun conversation, an educational conversation, and one that I am sure you'll enjoy. Sayagi Osborne, welcome to whistlekick martial arts radio.

**David Osborne:**



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Thank you sir for having me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Hey, thanks for being on. Thanks for your willingness to do this. Now, we were talking before we got rolling here about the title and sure the listeners know, you know I, really trying to make sure I pronounce things right, titles and people's name cause I think that's important. And you said that that title is from Myanmar, it's Burmese.

**David Osborne:**

Yeah

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And, I'm...I mean I know there are martial arts that have, you know, popped up everywhere. Is that where your training comes from?

**David Osborne:**

My training comes, I'm a direct student of the gentleman that brought it here to the United States over 55 years ago. Great Grandmaster U Maung Gyi, he is the Supreme Grandmaster of Burmese Bando here in America. And so he came here...

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Burmese Bando, is that what you said?

**David Osborne:**

Yeah, Burmese Bando is the system. There are various approaches to bando but it has been interpreted or defined as the way of the disciplined warrior. Or way of the stone-faced warrior. Systems of self-defense are, how should I say, there's a derivative or a branch of bando called Thaing which is spelled T-H-A-I-N-G. There is a component called lethwei that is L-E-T-W. It's either W-H-E-I or W-E-I, depending on the spelling but it is basically Burmese kickboxing and it is cousin to the systems like Thai boxing, okay. Then you have, which is along the sport, then you have the internal systems. You know, every, all the complete systems, what I mean by that is the ancient systems have categories and you have, were broken down into what's called athletic and aesthetic and you have, basically, a sport of it, okay.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah, yeah.

**David Osborne:**

If you would like the aesthetic or more along the lines of forms, we call them ahka, spelled A-H-K-A, means form, okay. Then you have the bando lethwei, which is the kickboxing, and, as I stated before, you have Thaing which is more of a defensive system. It contains the animal systems. Bando also possesses animal systems as with, systems like Chinese Kung-fu and Indian Kalaripayattu and various systems around the world. I just am elated that I was privileged and still, I'm still a student, I'd like to let you know that we have what you call levels in our system as opposed to degree and there being, the influence that I have is more Chinese based and circular but there are other systems of bando, the 9 animal systems that are comprised of different strategies and healing methods and fighting methods. Each animal has a particular approach to combat or sport or the healing side of it, for that matter.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And I'm sure I've got the same question now that most of the listeners have which is, how did you end up in a system that is so rare here in the U.S.? I'm pretty sure you're the first bando practitioner I've spoken with, ever, and I just don't mean on the show, I mean ever in my life!



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**David Osborne:**

Well I consider that a privilege and a high honor because I have practiced, you know bando people are just very, how should I say, we're, we abide by the law, we're family oriented. There's nothing, it is a closed door systems, highly traditional, you are selected, it's nothing cliquish or cultish, it is just a way of life. And a lot of the senior brothers and sisters in the system are just like that, there are lawyers, they're doctors, they're law enforcement, they're every aspect of society. They belong in it, in various walks of life, colors, culture, you name it. And so Dr. Gyi always stressed, he always had stressed and continues to stress humility. I, as a senior instructor, have walked into places and just sat there and watch them train and not said a word, just observed the class. I enjoy watching other people train as well. You know, it's not about me as an individual but it's to serve the greater good. But yeah, it is a, what was called an underground art for many sys-, for many many many generations it was considered underground. I don't know if you're familiar with the country of Myanmar but there's been a lot going on over there.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

A little bit. It's a tough place to be, I think that's probably a good summary.

**David Osborne:**

It is. It really is. That's to summarize. That is exactly what it is. But, you know, we were gifted with Dr. Gyi being able to come to America. He was a college professor emeritus at Ohio University. So he taught over there, he taught linguistics, psycholinguistics and I believe there's a couple other degree, he has a degree in law. And so, my point to you is that he just did not come to the States to live off Bando. He came and pursued his education. I love hearing the stories about how he had to, you know, ride his bike from working all night to go to school during the day and then, you know, he put his time in. And so he's not one-dimensional, he's not, you know. He's really a wellspring of information to draw from and everytime I'm around him, I still, still like I do when I first met him, you know. So he's passed on this information and continues to pass on, he's in his 90's, he's 09:10 in his 90's. He's well, well, versed in this stuff and so I consider it a privilege to have been selected and I continue to try to move the system on. There are various approaches to it, some of us go off into teaching science of kickboxing, some of us go into a more combative approach dealing with military and law enforcement. And then there's some that deal with the aesthetic aspect of it, you know the forms, teaching forms, and different things like that.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And what did you do?

**David Osborne:**

I basically cover all 3 aspects but my strength lie in the more military and the combative aspect of it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Has that always been your interest within martial arts? It's something that...okay, I'll, go ahead.

**David Osborne:**

Functionality is everything but you know, you have to do what's called deconstruct in order to reconstruct it. What I mean by that is 10:15 once you take a basic form, what is in that form. The Japanese call it bunkai, we call it deconstructing or deconstruction of a form to figure out what's in it to apply combatively within the boundaries of combative 10:31 . You know, the thing about, you have fitness, form, and fantasy is what Dr. Gyi always talks about, the 3 F's. And you have the fantasy aspect of a form has to be removed, I mean it is truly part of the form but you have to understand that under the stress of combat, it may not go as planned. So you have to make the necessary adjustments in order



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to pull it off, if that's what's necessary. Like you have the sport aspect of it with the grappling. Everybody is into the MMA movement. I greatly respect and appreciate someone that will get in an octagon and fight for 5 minutes a round throwing just about every known tool from the human body. I respect that, however, I think that in combatives it's about getting the job done or self-defense, you know, which is another piece that I focus on because, especially now, for some reason, it seems like things will just kinda getting to the point where you have to protect yourself from all, in all aspects of your training, not just the empty hand.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

How has your approach to your training changed over time?

**David Osborne:**

Okay, well, are you talking about besides age?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Well, one of my favorite one-liner jokes is here's a picture of me when I was younger. Every picture's of you when you were younger. Show me a picture of you older.

**David Osborne:**

Well

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

We're all gonna get older but beyond that, I've found that, you know, once someone's been training for 10-20 years, they tend to, not only do their skills evolve but their approach to their training evolves. How they train, sometimes why they train, when, where, who they're training with. There tends to be some shifts in there and I've gotta feeling that that's been the case for you.

**David Osborne:**

Yeah, it changed. And here's the thing, when you're a student and you're hungry, you have to, you're hungry, you're training everyday, or you just see yourself as a second coming of whoever. Whoever's out there that's popular in the movies. Oh, you know. So when you get older, and I'm a, just to give you, I'm a grandfather, so, I've been around a little bit, according to my grandchildren and my children, I came over here on the first 3 ships to this country to establish America, okay. So they calling me old is what I'm saying. So, I just chuckle, I take it on the chin, and I keep it going. Nothing like old age and treachery, I tell em, I say you youth and inexperience versus old age and treachery, let's do a coin toss and see how that works. And so we, you know...

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I know where my money would be.

**David Osborne:**

Yeah. And anything of it is, is they would be naïve enough to watch the coin flip and then it'll be over for em by the time the coin hits the floor, if you follow me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I do.

**David Osborne:**

That's experience. So, how it has changed over the years, are more refined, the movements that, or say gross, large movement have become more refined, you know exactly what you're doing. It's more of a, you become almost like a doctor so to speak because you know if you use this particular strike, a basic reverse punch, or we have what's called a vertical fist punch. We affectionately call it a midget punch



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because it's a short range punch, no pun intended. I hope I'm not offending anybody. You know we live in a world now where certain words will get you in trouble. However, we, that is one of the close, medium to close range strikes that we use and it's basically vertical as opposed to a horizontal turn-fist punch or reverse punch, as most systems have. We have it as well but we call it an arrow punch. Now, the difference between, say, when I was in, you know, when I was learning this thing as a teenager versus now, you know, you know exactly what's going on behind that punch. You know how to set that punch up. You realize that time is of the essence, you're not gonna stand around jumping around and wasting time, you're very efficient, you become more efficient as you age is what I'm saying, okay. And it goes from, say, a fist, as a young man, a closed fist to an open hand or a fingertip, if necessary, as you age, to something even that's above those two particular approaches, your mind and your spirit, how you control the outcome of a given situation, you know. Thinking is above all of the weapon systems, in bando. I mean you can have, you can be one of the most devastating fighters out there but if you can't think yourself out of a given situation, then what's the point, to me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Hmm, it makes sense.

**David Osborne:**

If you can avoid it altogether, that's what's preferred, Dr. Gyi stresses that, you know, you walk into a place and it's not to your liking, why stay around and have to possibly tear up, injure, or kill somebody? That's not necessary, okay. And so you say, okay, this place isn't for me, let's go find someplace else and we move on. That's what it's about, philosophically you change just like you do physically. Yeah, you begin to, as you age, you begin to lose certain skills. You know, you do what you can to maintain them but let's face it, age and Father Time gets the best of all of us, I don't care who you are. And we've seen examples of that but the idea is to, as you age, is to age gracefully. So I work more on the breathing systems of meditation and concentration exercises. Slow movement, we have an internal system that very, almost cousin to systems like xingyi or taichi where the idea is to move real slowly and generate positive energy flow in the body in the form of blood. We call it gha or G-H-A, which is internal energy, which is the same as prana from India and chi in Chinese systems and the Japanese systems, you know, have their internal systems as well. So it's all comparable, is what I'm saying. So that's how my personal training has changed a lot. Here's what I'm thinking. Japanese have what's called ki, it's all relative, okay.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Sure.

**David Osborne:**

So as you get older, you know, like, my grandmaster is, you could see it in his eyes when he speaks, you know, this guy is nothing to play with. You know how you are as a kid, I was a bit of a mischief maker and my mom seems to still think I am even in where I am now in life. I beg to differ. But, you know...

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I think moms always think that.

**David Osborne:**

Hey, you know, I'm, you can't win that.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

No you can't. No you cannot.

**David Osborne:**



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Your mom, wife, sisters, all that. They gang up on me. So, I say all that to say to you that as one gets older, the refinement of their systems, you begin to specialize because in your youth you want to master everything. Well, I think that's impossible. Because of the way things are configured. You can specialize in a given area and you branch out from there, which is what happens. But the fact of the matter is, I went from working on hard shinbone kicks, similar to the muay thai kicks, elbows, and knee strikes. You know, throws to holds. Blows to throws to holds, different things like that, which is a more external system. Now, I work on things like stepping and body angling to avoid injuries, pain and/or death. So, where it took 3 moves to get something done, I strive to do it in one, if that makes any sense to you.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It does. It does. I'm familiar with it. I've trained with some folks who are also working on that, that efficiency of motion and I find it really really interesting.

**David Osborne:**

Absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Let's rewind the tape. Normally we start these conversations by finding out how you got started. And we skipped over that. And that's okay. That's okay. But I do want to go back and I wanna pose it as, you know, now that we've heard a bit about the art that you're training in now, it's very clear that you've been training in this art for a while, I don't know that you said how long. But it clicks for you, right, it resonates and not everyone's first martial art resonates for them but what you're doing now, you're clearly very passionate about. So let's go back. What was your first experience with martial arts?

**David Osborne:**

Well, here we go. Back in the days when TV, you could look at TV or, you know, and not have to worry about paying for it every month, obviously Bruce Lee was a big influence. I was a young man and I watched the whole Green Hornet series and so, as I begin to, guess about 1973, like '73-'74, I had the privilege of running in to some neighborhood guys that were training in this art called bando. So, my older brother in the system, I'll put his name out there, his name is William Cain and him and I were in the same general area of the neighborhood, that kind of thing. So, I had had a little bit of training by just basically looking at books and doing just some of the standard stuff that everybody that was enamored with martial arts would do. You got your books, "Inside Kung Fu" was one of my favorite magazines and it would feature various systems. It was basically, was a paper version of what you're doing as a podcast, if that makes any sense.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It does, yeah.

**David Osborne:**

So, I happened to look at this particular article on the art of bando that Dr. Gyi had put out and so I basically looked at it and I found out that this gentleman, who is a student down at, who was a student down at Ohio University studied under Dr. Gyi, both as a teacher communicate...like I said, Mr Cain and I formed a friendship. He took me under his wing and showed me how to train. He'd seen potential. So, you know, we would meet at backyards, basements, anywhere else we could train, we trained, okay. And it was this little small group of us, some neighborhood guys and as you know, like with anything else, lot of us started, some of em fell by the wayside. Well, the years have been good to me and I begin to specialize and seriously train and I achieve my black belt, okay. And so, around, I guess around late



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80's, early 90's, specifically the early 90's. The reason I'm doing a recall is because it's been quite some time. I didn't realize how far back that went until you started asking me to dig up some things so I had a...After I got my degree, I went on and opened up a school down in Cincinnati, Ohio. I taught at a, actually I taught at the rec center. I was given a privilege and blessings to teach from there. I taught there for about 6 years. And ran a self-defense program and all that went along with that. I enjoyed going. We got together, I think, Tuesdays and Saturdays. And I taught there for many years and then I had a school there for about, I guess about 4 years running. And then I went on and retired from that and now I'm just, how should I say, living life. I'm still training but I'm working on some more loftier projects, I'll put it that way, involving self-defense and self-preservation.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Hmm. Sure.

**David Osborne:**

You know, martial arts is a journey and to me, you never stop learning. I mean there's something I can learn, something from you. I've learned some things just by talking to you about how to do this podcast. I am very, how should I say, selective, because we live in a time when you have to be, you know, you just never know. I enjoy what I do, I'm basically taking you have, what's called, traditional martial arts or martial systems. And then you're taking it and pairing it down to, in such a way that the average citizen can...you know, everybody doesn't wanna learn or study martial arts to that degree. So you have to accommodate them. Self-preservation and protection, of a common person, should be something that, you know, everyone should be able to enjoy. So, you have people that have physical challenges, you have people that just simply, maybe just want a few things, a few techniques they feel that will help them get out of a given situation. I always like to say that you want these techniques but I think more importantly, is situational awareness, being aware of where you're going into, what's going on around you. Before you go in, during, and even after you leave, I think that's a big part of it. You know you, there has been countless times that you've probably read where persons of so-called whatever and then they go to a particular bar and end up having to prove who they are, on some level. You know, they're just people out there like that, let's just be matter of fact about it.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yup

**David Osborne:**

But I enjoyed what I'm doing. There's a healing aspect of it, in the sense that you take healing stones and you work these basic postures and they strengthen the body. You can go from that extreme to, you know, again, learning how to protect yourself to the full combatives, as they're called, in order to protect yourself. You know, so that's...I offer to say that I function somewhere between the self-defense and the healing side of it. The form or the ahkas, I have them, I enjoy them. Some of the younger practitioners of the system, they often get together and work on what's called deconstruction, what's in this particular form or what's in this particular set and you comprise, once you figure out what it is that you're, what's in the construct of that form, then you work on the application on a real individual. And then you have what's called time sequencing where you gotta figure out, okay, we'll start out with this slow and then we'll move up to combat speed, see. For me, you know, posing and...I just don't have the temperament for all that, I'll be upfront with you. You see a lot out here and it teaches you to be mindful, if that makes any sense to you.



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**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Of course. Of course.

**David Osborne:**

You know, you leave from...you're given a job and go to your car, anything can happen between that point A and point B is what I call em, you know. So you have to be vigilant. It's not paranoia, it's just being aware. Situational awareness should apply to every place that you go, you know. If you have your family with you, you don't want to go into a place where you got to worry about, not only protecting yourself but your family, that's an extra issue, if you follow me.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I do. As martial artists, we spend a lot of time talking about the fight, you know, the actual exchange of technique. But you've brought up awareness and such a few times, over the last couple of minutes. Do you train, do you teach that aspect, the pre-fight stuff, if you will?

**David Osborne:**

Yes. Absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Could you talk about that a little bit?

**David Osborne:**

Yes. I think that that is above technique. I think that you're mental and spiritual awareness of your environment, all that in addition to what's called the topical...the terrain of where you are. Okay, for example, I often use a bar as an example because most bars are closed in and tight. The groupings are, in terms of tables, chairs, machines. You get what I'm saying. So your system has to tailor itself to that environment. That is not to say that every, you know have systems that kick above the waist, their specialization is kicking above the waist. Well those kicks are just as devastating, you know. However, you have to figure what's more feasible in this type of environment, can I get this off, in this closed environment. Let's modify it a little bit, maybe some knees and elbows and some throws and holds could work best in this type of environment. Are you following me so far?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I am.

**David Osborne:**

Okay. So I think that has a lot to do with it, you're awareness of your surroundings. Okay, and then there's what's called improvised weapon system, okay. There's a chair, there's ashtrays, there's pool sticks, there's everything else within that environment. And so therefore, it's the awareness of what's there that adds to or can take away from your technique, in my humble opinion.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah. [31:13](#)

**David Osborne:**

Something to think about.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah. One of the things I'm thinking of right now is that...I'm wondering if you would be willing to do, I guess describe bando. You know, statistically, I'm sure you can agree with me, most of the people listening have probably never practiced bando.

**David Osborne:**





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Yes.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

And I'm gonna guess that most of them, if they've seen it, are unaware that they've seen it.

**David Osborne:**

Okay.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

So if you were to relate it to other martial arts, you explained some of the commonalities, you know, in energy and certainly in structure, the forms, the combat, the application and that sorta thing that bando has, as do other martial arts. What about the style of moving? You compared it a little bit to thai boxing, to muay thai, but how similar is it, what makes it different, what might give the listeners the ability to envision, I guess, what bando looks like.

**David Osborne:**

Well, I mean you...the age old saying of you have 2 arms and 2 legs [32:21](#) 2 feet. Okay, so, there's just a uniqueness in the sense that I would venture to say that there are 9 animal systems within the construct of bando, okay. Just like in kung-fu, these systems are fully functional. The difference between, say lethwei and muay thai, is more along the lines of...in the thai boxing systems, they say that they're masters of the 8 limbs, okay. The fists, the elbows, the knees, the feet, correct?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yes

**David Osborne:**

Now, we have a, we, in addition to that, we have 9 weapons. There's headbutting involved in that lethwei. There's some versions of lethwei, you know depending on the rules, that you use a lot of headbutts, in addition to the elbows, knees, and the other stuff that's indigenous to that particular system. I'm not saying that the Thai people do not do it, I'm saying that the translation is that we have 9 weapons. That's not to say one system is better than the other, it's just that headbutting is included. There are a lot of similarities with both systems because they did battle with each other. Now, there's a story going on, I hope I get this correct, where the Burmese have captured a Thai king. And the Thai king was told that if he could defeat, I think the number is either 12 or 13 of these, all 13 of these Burmese masters, that he could be set free. He killed all of them, using the Thai boxing system, okay. So, the motivation obviously was for him to survive and go back home so that, I think that had a lot to do with it as well but what was going on, I believe, is that it was synthesized within bando at some point as a result of the matches between Thailand and Burma, okay. And basically, as you know, each culture learned from another. And sometimes through warfare [34:51](#). So, there are a lot of things that are unique to the bando system that, that are like indigenous to that as a result of the terrain, the philosophy, you know, like with the Thai system. They do the same types of techniques. However it may, maybe give an inch or two difference in the torqueing of the body or something along that line, it just depends and then you go from that level. The lethwei is basically how it's done [35:31](#) traditionally it was supposed to be anywhere from 3 to 5 years, you'd do the hard bando boxing. Then you promote up and then you begin to specialize in a given animal system. The animal systems are, you have what's called the eagle, the panther, tiger, scorpion, viper, python systems, let's see, what did I leave out. Bull and boar systems, okay, and each one of those systems are known for particular weapons, human weapons, developing human weapons [36:15](#) the body. Each animal system or animal master has a specialty. And they refined



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those things, okay. For instance, let's take an animal system like the king or the cobra system. The cobra system is used to, you know, there are knuckle strikes that are used to hit vital points on the body. Quick, efficient system. Distance, stepping, body angling, parries, foot checks, hand checks, different things like that. It's a high science. Okay, that's one extreme. Then you have a system dealing with the python system. Python system uses medium to close range grappling, the end result being strangulation of a limb or a body or the neck in that regard. That's not say that they don't have kicking techniques and punching techniques within the construct of the python system. It's the end result. One seeks to strangle and suffocate and the other one is basically you're shortchanging or short circuiting the nervous system in the body. Am I making sense to you now? I mean, so far.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

You are, yeah.

**David Osborne:**

Okay, so, it's very refined. And you do strive to become, get to the level of being a doctor or a phd within your given system. So then, okay, we went from lethwei to the animal systems. You also specialize in weapons. Our given, our chosen weapon, our national or weapon that represents the, or shall I say, not weapon, but tool. I prefer to use that word. The kukri, which is a medium sword indigenous to, I don't know if you're familiar with the Gurkha mercenaries out of Nepal. They carry a kukri, it's a sidearm in addition to their given firearms. And the kukri is our, is considered a symbol of our system. So you learn the kukri, you learn the edge weapons long sword, which we call a dha, spelled D-H-A. There are different types of dha, there's double dha, there's the king and princess dha. There is monk or shall I say, the dha is used in such a way where the blade is not even drawn. It's just, they use, their skillsets are so high that they just use the dha while it's still in the sheathe. The goal is to teach you a lesson. Those are the 3 extremes in blade work, okay. Then you have the same thing with the stick, okay, long, medium, and short stick, which is standard in all systems, okay. So we've ascended to that portion. So now we're going from those areas in which I've described up to the highest level, which is either the monk or weiza, which means wizard system. And what that is is you really are practicing the mental and spiritual aspects of this system, okay. Say, for instance, the difference between you as a person versus 20 years ago, you know. I'm only speculating. I don't know your actual age but you get what I'm saying.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I do.

**David Osborne:**

It's an evolution of sorts because you have these tools and the ability to use them, should you? You know, depending on the situation, you can get 20 to life if you make a mistake with this stuff. See, so it's a, trust is everything. You can't just go around arbitrarily wanting to beat up people because you studied something, as rare as something like this. And it's been entrusted in guys and ladies like myself to make sure that you screen a person. You don't wanna have somebody run around here roughshod, just being totally disrespectful to people in society and then now following the laws of the land. You know, we don't operate that way. So, the highest level, which is more along the lines of the monk or the wizard systems, deal with meditation, lot of yoga, internal healings of self, you know, massage in such a way the joints and the muscles and everything are realigned, breathing technique, there's rope yoga, there is yoga where you take and you work on positioning the body since you don't have a partner. Those 3 aspects of yoga are called lethya yoga, dhanda yoga, and lonji yoga. Lonji yoga is rope yoga, dhanda yoga



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is yoga with a staff or a long stick, so to speak, and letha yoga is 2-person yoga, where you have a partner that can push you past your particular limb range of motion in terms of your limitations on your joints, in other words. They can help you push past that. Gently of course. You understand me?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Yeah

**David Osborne:**

The idea is to build the flexibility that we lose as we age. Such things as sitting down on the floor and getting up off the floor, we lose that because we sit in chairs everyday. Well, heck, you know, I found myself, you know, I sat in a chair for many years and then I started to lose that ability so I had to reconnect with Mother Earth, so to speak. And, reconnect and, you can, you know, you can feel, when you sat. By my 3rd day, I was able to tell, I was very comfortable. Initially, when I started sitting on the floor, it just, every ache and pain that there was was like "hey! remember us?" And so, by the 3rd day, I began to, [42:59](#) in yoga they call it "Sitting bone", where the bones of the pelvis and all that, you begin to line all that up. And everything becomes more pliable and flexible for you, you know. It's a journey, it's something that I enjoy. It's a constant learning piece. I said, you know, "Sayagi" means senior instructor and all that goes along with that. But to me, I am a master-student. Some people say you're a master instructor, I'll take that, but I'm also a master student because, without being a student, you cannot learn to become a master. And that, all the years that I've studied since 1973 and up to this present, I'm planning on going to see my Grandmaster here soon within the next month or so. It never stops. And one must always be willing to learn new things. I can learn from my grandkids. My grandkids teach me things. You see where I'm going with that?

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I do. I like to call it the white belt mentality. I don't know if bando uses belts in the same colorway. Okay.

**David Osborne:**

We use a Japanese and a Chinese system of promotion. Meaning that there's a sash involved. You know, the standard white belt up to black belt is, how should I say, that promotion process is there. We traditionally have four belts which are white, green, brown, and black. I still adhere to that grading system or that promotion system and it takes from 3-5 years to get your first level. That's through the traditional approach. That's with training all the time. There are people that have gotten their black belts in 3 years but they've earned it, trust me. Sometimes they come in with previous experience out of a other systems. You know, all the guys that I got promoted under me, a lot of them studied different martial arts systems and I welcomed them with open arms and just told them, you know, just add this to your toolbox. And they decided they wanted to pursue more knowledge and information and a lot of 'em, several of them have ascended to black belts and above. They're doing very well.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

You mentioned you were going to get together with your Grandmaster soon to train. At this stage in your martial arts career. At his stage and his martial arts career at, you said 90, what do you guys work on?

**David Osborne:**

We work on a lot of the philosophies and practices. Like I said, it's a mental and spiritual thing, meditation. The yoga aspect of it, where we would...here's the difference. Years ago, we get together, warm-up just a little bit, jumping jacks, push-ups, squat thrusts, different things like that. Now, when we



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get together, it is more along the lines of passing on information about ancient history of bando, the masters, were these systems, are indigenous...what part of Myanmar, you know, so it has like 150 different groupings or ethnic groups or tribes, so to speak. And so, he touches on a lot of that or history, historical purpose, okay. And a higher level breathing technique, those types of things that are indigenous to wellness and development, how to maintain yourself, you know you get up in the morning, you got aches and pains, there are certain things you have to do in order to manage the pain. So, you know, you have a permanent contemporary pain, aspects of living. So, you know, you take something like a short stick and then you work on external limb massage where you're taking the short stick and maybe working on your calf muscles. You know, they nod up on you and so you have to understand their trigger points within these muscles. If you do these things and you do them continuously, you'll reap the benefit. Well, there are some times when, you know, you have an ache or pain in one of your legs and you sit down on the floor and you take this stick and you start pressing these, similar to acupuncture, if I may make a comparison. You have these energy points that are blocked in the body and what these things do when you push down on it, it releases that energy. And basically it makes you a lot more fluid in your movement after you get to finish with a session like that. Your feet, as you may know, carry a lot of weight, they carry the basic structure of the body but however, they're also connected to the other aspects of your body and a lot of people wear shoes all the time. And I say to everybody, make sure that you take your shoes off and just rub your feet for a few minutes, to line them back up, to find out how you feel after that. It's amazing. So he teaches a lot of anatomy, a lot of psychology, a lot of philosophy. You know, it's not just about taking a fist or learning how to reverse-punch and all the things that go along with that. To show you what I'm talking about, a reverse punch, as you may know, is the standard technique in most systems, if not all. However, if you take and add a step and maybe a pivot, it becomes a throw or a limb break, okay, on another level. So the idea is to take these basics, these basic techniques, deconstruct them and then reconstruct them on an advanced level and then go on back down to the basics, if that makes any sense to you.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Sure does. Let's talk about the future. Let's pretend we get together, you know, 10 years from now or so and we're recapping what's happened over the last 10 years, what would you hope that you would be telling me?

**David Osborne:**

Well, I would hope, first of all, beyond me, that you would want to take the system forward and teach others. Because it's not about me, I'm just a, what they call a steward of the knowledge. I am, my job is to pass it on. And to see that it's passed on to a persons, person or persons of sound judgement because, as with any system out there, you want to have people in place that will be responsible and make sure that it's given, in a way, that's respectful, that's uplifting. If I saw you in 10 years, I would ask you about your personal progress and then are you, what are you doing to move the system forward. I think a lot of masters, and Dr. Gyi always stressed this. I can recall one time, he said to me, you know, we were talking over the phone. Actually, I was present with him and he says "You know, you have enough information and knowledge that you can go step off and create your own system." And I personally took that as him wanting to kick me out of the system. But reality, he gave me a high compliment, but at the same time, it may have been a test. I wasn't seeking to be, to go out and create this, the second coming of anything. This system is very old. It goes back, you know, several hundred



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years. It's a privilege to be a part of this thing. But I'm, it's not about me, it's about moving the system as taught by him, forward, to the next generation, you know. I have grandsons and granddaughters that are running around practicing a little bit of it. You know, you just give 'em a little bit of a taste of it, what they do as they get older, you know, they see me practicing and they mimic stuff and then they all ask about it and I'll share it with. That's the job of a saya. Saya means instructor but sayagi means senior teacher. And my job as a senior teacher is to make sure that it's passed on, you know, correctly and respectfully and, you know. I ran a full service school for 4 years in Cincinnati, Ohio. And I enjoyed every bit of it. I didn't have a bunch of students because we work hard. The yoga sessions are strenuous but they're designed to build you and help you grow in a lot of other ways. And, so I have black belts that came in that I got promoted under me and stuff and I'm always asking 'em, okay, what are you doing with it, who are you teaching. I like to see that type of thing and like I said, this past Saturday, we gathered and I was able to see all that unfold because they, you know, there was always a reference back to the teacher and then I referenced it back to my teacher. In other words, this is not about me, it's about moving it on and just acknowledging, hey this came from this master here, you know. I don't have it all to do to be caught up with me me me, if that makes any sense.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

It does. If people want to reach you, if they want to find you online, websites, social media, anything like that, where would they go?

**David Osborne:**

Well, we have a, I have a couple of things out there but I have a, what's called Professional Self-Defense and Training systems and the number 9 behind it, okay. That is usually, I have a little bit of stuff on youtube but I'm working on a project now involving a group of...I teach in the school system, dealing with kindergarten to 8th grade. And I'm working on a project with them, a character building...you know, I teach things like an abridged version of what it is I was talking about earlier, the yoga, the meditate. We call it reflection, not meditation within the school system. The idea is to [54:48](#) build character through some fitness, through the martial arts, and then the reflection is where you're sitting down, you're working on breathing techniques, calming down, just listening to absolutely nothing or some soft music to calm and help them calm and focus. These things are important for the future. So, those two vehicles by which I just mentioned, the Professional Self-Defense Training Systems 9 is on Facebook. And you can look it up. I got some video up there and then I'm working on some other stuff, like I said, dealing with the school system. And I just, you know, this is what I do. It's nothing fancy, I don't jump up in the air, you know I'm a pretty good sized fellow. But, I mean, combatics was always...the healing side and the combatics made sense to me. I'm an ex-soldier, you know I did all that and it carried over. You know, I was able to go overseas, you know. Dr. Gyi stayed in touch with me [56:09](#). You know, he would advise me on certain things and, like I said, I learned a lot. And I'm still learning.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Good.

**David Osborne:**

I just got off the phone with a bando brother who I've been called to task to do a particular, he gave me a particular project because, what's going on is that we're archiving all the footage of the traditional forms and different things like that. So I've been tasked as of, maybe, [2:30](#), quarter to 3, to go out and



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dig up some stuff that I've had dormant for several years. I was taught the system but it wasn't on the top shelf, so to speak. So as of today, I was notified that I have to make sure that I do follow up and I got to teach this thing and I've got to put together a curriculum to teach it, dealing with the dha or long sword system. So, it never stops, is what I'm getting at.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

I can respect that. I feel exactly the same way.

**David Osborne:**

It never stops.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Never stops. Good! It shouldn't.

**David Osborne:**

No, absolutely.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

This has been great. This has been a lot of fun. And I would love for you to choose how you send us out. Different guest offer some words of wisdom or sometimes it's little bit humorous or whatnot. But what, you know, what final thoughts would you have for the people listening today?

**David Osborne:**

Okay. Go back and, actually, constantly seek to refine yourself as it applies to your system. How your system applies to everyday living. 58:05 innermost, I hate to say it this way but, the innermost mysteries of what it is you're studying. On those 3 platforms, the platforms of aesthetics, combatics, then the sport, somewhere in between or between the 3, you know, you have to have asked yourself, how would this apply? Okay, if I have a suit and tie on versus a robe and slippers, how does my system or art, how's it utilized, is it useful. And just keep being a student. I don't care how much rank you attain. It's not the rank, it's the work you put in that really matters, if that makes any sense.

**Jeremy Lesniak:**

Like I said in the intro, this one was fun. Got to learn about Sayagyi Osborne, got to learn about bando, got to learn, got to smile, laugh. This is the goal of this show, it's to connect the educational piece and the entertainment piece and hopefully, in the end, inspire you. As you might imagine, I'm walking away from this one inspired, as always. So thank you sir, I appreciate your time and hope to talk to you again very soon. Check out [whistlekickmartialartsradio.com](http://whistlekickmartialartsradio.com) for all the show notes for this and all the other episodes we've ever done. And if you want to support that work, you've got a number of options. Make a purchase at [whistlekick.com](http://whistlekick.com) and if you do, don't forget the code PODCAST15. You can also share an episode, leave a review, tell a friend, or contribute to our patreon, [patreon.com/whistlekick](http://patreon.com/whistlekick). Don't forget if you see somebody out there in the world wearing something with whistlekick on it, make sure you say hello. And if you got guest suggestions or other feedback, email me: [jeremy@whistlekick.com](mailto:jeremy@whistlekick.com). Until next time, train hard, smile, and have a great day.