

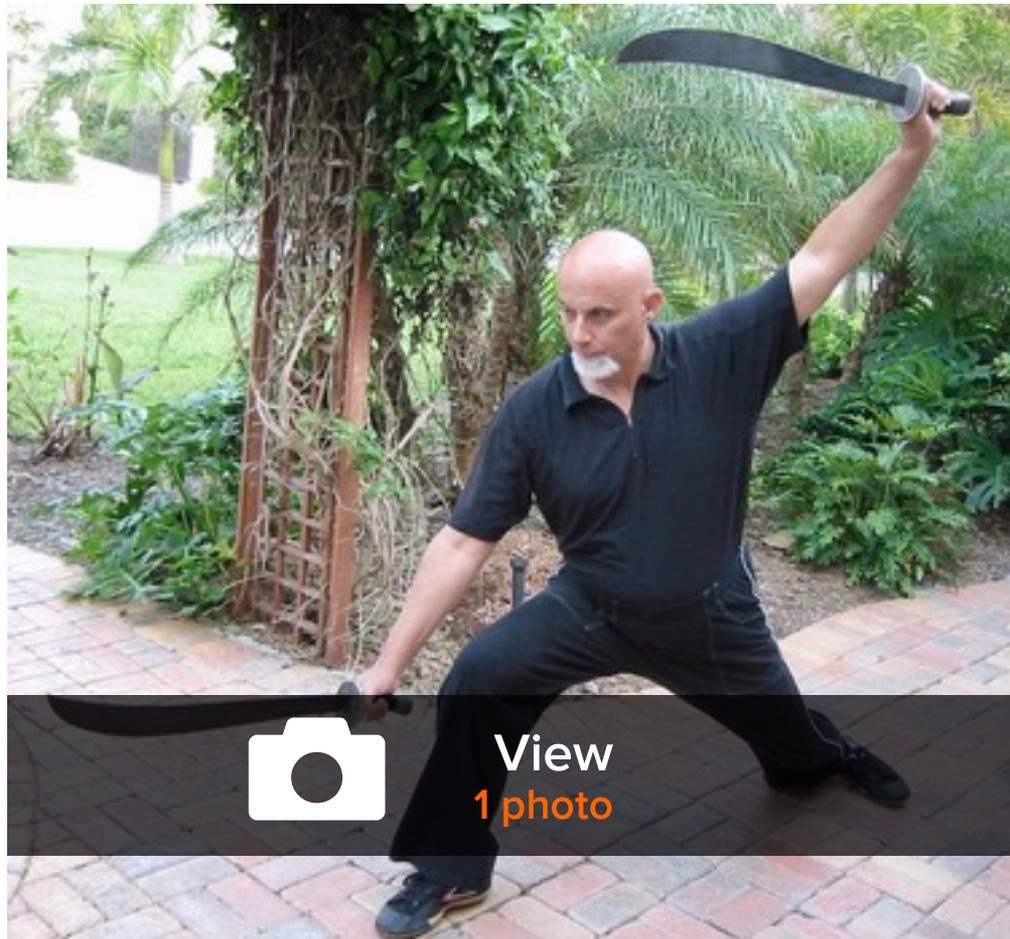
SPORTS / RECREATION / COMBAT SPORTS

An inspiring chat with Arthur Rosenfeld on Tai Chi

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[Arthur Rosenfeld](#) is an awarding winning author, spiritual speaker, and a [Tai Chi](#) master. He has sold scripts to Hollywood and has published nine novels, two non-fiction books, and several screenplays. In April, he was honored with “Tai Chi Media Excellence of the Year” award by [the 13th World Congress on Qigong and Traditional Chinese Medicine](#). Recently I interviewed him and below is the excerpt (not verbatim) of our conversation.



Arthur Rosenfeld and Tai Chi sword

Arthur Rosenfeld



Arthur Rosenfeld

“ Violet: First of all, congratulations on your award. You have accomplished so much in life so far. *The Truth about Chronic Pain* was a finalist for the *Books for A Better Life Award* and is used in medical, pharmacy and nursing schools. You attended Yale, Cornell, UC-Santa Barbara, and UC-San Diego, which are among the finest academic institutes in this country. I wonder what your IQ is.

Arthur [chuckling a little bit and cleared his throat]: There are a few things which are more interesting than IQ to me. People’s wisdom is more important than IQ. The ancient Chinese philosopher **Laozi**’s (about 600 B.C.E) teachings on intuition and subconscious are very important. IQ measures some of the logical mind or the Yang side of the mind while intuition or subconscious is the Yin side of the mind. Tai Chi is not just about “kicking butts”, but also bringing the two kinds of thinking together.

“ Violet: You are a contributor to national magazines and papers including Vogue, Vanity Fair, Ebony, New York Daily News, Parade, have been seen on Fox News, PBS and other major networks, heard on numerous national radio programs, and blog on The Huffington Post. It seems that you appear on the entire media spectrum from the far right to the far left and everything in the middle. How come?

Arthur: Politically, I am fiscally conservative and socially liberal, but tai chi and Eastern philosophies are apolitical. They are important topics for health and harmony. Fox, PBS, and The Huffington Post all have large audiences and are great channels for me to reach millions to spread the words about Tai Chi. Sadly, the new generation in China is more interested in material things, everything bigger is better, none of which lead to happiness, longevity, or health. By contrast, the Western world has recently been discovering the wisdom of ancient philosophy, i.e. Laozi's Daoism (or Taoism).

“ Violet: But in the U.S., we tend to dumb things down both culturally and intellectually.

Arthur: Speaking of dumbing down, I have to say some of the tai chi forms have been diluted too much. This is not just in the U.S., but also happening in China, even in the Chen Village. I have travelled a few times to China and very fortunately studied with few revered Chen Style Tai Chi grandmasters, i.e. [Chen Quan-Zhong](#), [Max \(Gaofei\) Yan](#), [Chen Zhenglei](#), Zhu Tian Cai, Li Enjiu and others. They shared me with some of the secrets of tai chi. Every tai chi movement has its meaning and function. Authentic Tai Chi is extremely profound. We lose so much by simplifying it.

Violet: You are the creator and host of a documentary series on Integrative Medicine and are the host of PBS's Longevity

“ **Tai Chi with Arthur Rosenfeld. Can you talk about these?**

Arthur: The documentary series covers three integrative medicine topics: tai chi, [meditation](#), and acupuncture. It was funded by the pharmaceutical company Purdue Pharma as a contribution to the healthcare community. The *PBS's* show is based off the work I did for the documentaries.

“ **Violet: You founded Pen and Sword Tai Chi in 1997, under which you have taught tai chi in South Florida and nationally. Why did you pick this name?**

Arthur: I am a writer. In the Western world we say that the pen is mightier than the sword, but I have chosen to work with both. I use the pen to share information, philosophy and stories, and I use the sword to help others cut the ties that bind them to ideas and emotions that hold them back and cause them to suffer.

“ **Violet: Just curious. What is your favorite tai chi weapon?**

Arthur: The Guan Dao (a long staff with a broad sword at one end and a spear at the other) is the most under-appreciated-yet-critically-important weapon in foundational tai chi training. It is unfortunate that few tai chi teachers know it or teach it and even fewer stress it, because it teaches footwork, hand-foot coordination, and tai chi's vertical circle as no other weapon does. In my own practice I also very much enjoy double broad swords, and that most subtle and sublime of all tai chi weapons, the straight sword.

“ **Violet: You interviewed scientists about their studies on tai chi benefits. As a practitioner, what do you find in Tai Chi that is beneficial to you?**

Arthur: My benefits of practicing tai chi are two-fold: first, tai chi teaches me to see the world in Laozi's terms—it shows me how to keep my emotional equilibrium, my wuji, and thereby to be free of grasping, worrying, wanting, and other negative desires and emotions. Second, genetically, I was born with illnesses and physical weaknesses. Tai chi has made me physically stronger and allowed me to overcome those problems. Overall, I am a much happier person.

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Violet Li

Tai Chi Examiner