

# Medicine Man

Ken Rosen learnt more than he wanted to about conventional medicine at an early age.

When his biggest concern should have been fretting over nothing more serious than a grazed knee or a playground scuffle, 13-year-old Ken was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease, a type of lymphatic cancer. He underwent a series of operations in his neck, had his spleen and glands in his pelvis removed and was bombarded with radiation before beating the illness.

"Ten years later I got cancer of the thyroid as a result of the treatment I received for Hodgkin's disease," recalls Ken. "That's when I said enough is enough."

In search of a more holistic approach to health and intent on regaining balance in his life, the native New Yorker became drawn to Chinese medicine. Although he was initially interested in it from a nutritional standpoint as his awareness increased he began to realize the scope of the subject. Ken decided to leave his job in the film business and went to study under renowned Chinese practitioners in Santa Cruz, California. He then attended Pacific College of Oriental Medicine for four years and graduated with a Master's degree in the Science of

Traditional Oriental Medicine.

"I decided to study Chinese medicine not simply as a career move but to empower myself and to help empower others. The challenge now is to make this branch of medicine more acceptable within popular culture," says the licensed acupuncturist and board certified herbologist.

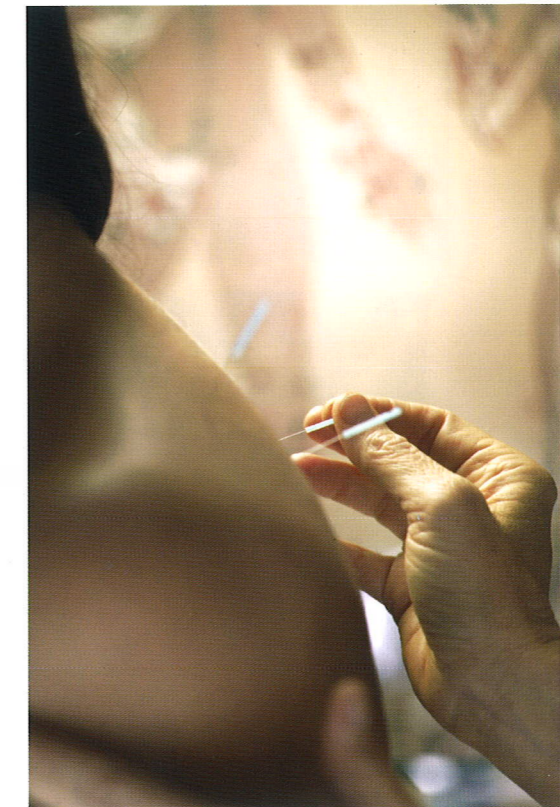
Whereas conventional medicine or 'bio-medicine' is largely reactive – throwing drugs at a problem when it occurs – traditional Chinese medicine is proactive and preventative – focusing on keeping people healthy.

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"Western medicine tends to view symptoms like boiling water. It puts a lid on the problem with antihistamines, antibiotics. Everything is anti," explains Ken. "Chinese medicine, on the other hand, takes the lid off, allowing the problem out and helping the body to come back into its natural balance."

The techniques used embrace five areas designed to maintain wellness and treat illness when it occurs; exercise, nutrition, acupuncture, herbal medicine, and structural medicine (chiropractic medicine and so on).

Acupuncture is perhaps the most well-known and currently the most



Chinese Medicine. Patients are usually referred to Ken following an initial consultation with the resort's Health and Wellness Advisor. One of the many conditions that Ken may be asked to help address is weight loss. "People will often ask, 'how can a few needles help me lose weight? Well, acupuncture helps put you into a state of balance so you are not craving the things that compensate for insecurities in life."

Although the majority of the cases Ken deals with in his current work environment are related to stress, overwork, and aches and pains, does he think Chinese medicine can play an important medical role in managing an illness as

accepted in the West. In fact the World Health Organization published an extensive report into the practice stating that its use was beneficial for a wide range of conditions including stress, drug addiction, insomnia, arthritis, infertility and much more.

"It acts as a way of rebooting the nervous system allowing people to overcome pain," asserts Ken.

With over a decade of experience, Ken is highly regarded in the profession and currently works at the Chiva-Som International Health Resort, the world's leading wellness resort as a Specialist Therapist and Trainer in Traditional

virulent as cancer?

"The evidence says yes. People who receive acupuncture and chemotherapy outlive people that don't. It certainly provides the framework to help people live with cancer, enabling them to enjoy a better quality of life without been beaten down by the debilitating effects of radiation," asserts Ken. "I have worked in a hospice in the USA and have also been so impressed at how acupuncture was able to cut through morphine and give patients back the clarity needed to reconnect with their families before they died."

Ken also found his skills put to use

during the aftermath of 9-11, working under testing conditions to ease the stress and pains of the emergency service workers in Ground Zero. "I was dealing with rescuers who were coming to me with back pain, insomnia and nightmares," recalls Ken. "I remember dealing with one guy who said he had to move 30 – 40 people out of the area in an hour but was suffering from extreme neck pain. After receiving acupuncture he rose from the treatment table transformed."

Ken's personal desire to transform the way that people view traditional medicine takes to the stage this week when he flies to Beijing to give a lecture at a prestigious seminar organized by Spa China Magazine. The three-day seminar featuring spa professionals and trainers has been designed to provide an effective communication platform for those working within the industry. For a Westerner to speak at the event, however, it's a daunting task but also affirmation of Ken's standing within the profession.

"I am sure there will be people lining up to discredit me. After all I am a New Yorker with the audacity to stand up and talk about Chinese medicine in China! That doesn't bother me anymore though. I am there to help people understand the use and benefits of Chinese medicine within the spa environment."

**Kenneth Adrian Rosen**  
Specialist Therapist & TCM Trainer Chiva-Som  
73/4 Petkasem Road Hua Hin,  
Prachuab Khirikhan 77110, Thailand  
Tel: +66 (0) 3253-6536  
E-mail: ken.rosen@chivasom.com

