

Don't treat it as a sword, treat it as an extension of your hand. Just like Tai-chi Ch'uan with a longer arm.

In the old days in China the sword was not looked upon as an instrument for killing; rather, the man is looked upon as a bearer or carrier of the Tao. But if there is an evil spirit the sword is used to bring you back into harmony again. (??)

Of all the instruments a person uses to practice Tao, the sword is the highest. It is also convenient and can be carried by your side. Before guns were invented, a good swordsman could travel anywhere without fear.

Each Chinese weapon belongs to a particular element. Sword belongs to water. It is practiced softly, so that it goes with the current of the force.

You ask, "Why do we learn sword in the Atomic Age?" You have to go all the way back to the beginning, to the ancients.

Ch'i that is inside your body is the tip of the sword. When the sword is there the body is there; so, you're not really practicing the sword but practicing your ch'i. The ch'i goes all the way to the tip of the sword.

We're all learning sword. Prof. Cheng says his sword ability is very small, and ours is minute. In terms of skill, we have, all of us, a long way to go. So let's not think of what the function is, just use it to practice ch'i -- then when someone comes along we will be up to it, When the basin is full it will overflow.

You can even use a feather duster -- it's not the weapon but how you use it. A person who can use a fan well has the advantage over the one who has a dagger but doesn't know how to use it.

Never look at the usefulness of the sword itself. Use the sword as part of yourself. Gradually, as you become one with the sword the ch'i will travel to the end of the sword.

It's like putting money in the bank. Health, for the person, is like money in the bank; use is like interest on the money -- don't be concerned with it, it will take care of itself.

Tai-chi Ch'uan is for your health and so is the sword.

Sword is to practice the quickness of your step. This isn't in the Ch'uan form. The use of the quickness of the feet will find its use in other ways in due time. Sword is quick. The Ta Lu is even sluggish compared to the sword. Sword is more like water, much more than the Ch'uan can ever be. So if you practice sword you will become as fast as water.

When we practice sword it's in the swiftness of the body, not the arm. The body turns and the sword is there, not by the moving of the sword itself.

The discipline of quickness of step has a standard -- namely, in keeping the ch'i down. If you can run and not let the ch'i rise then you won't pant or run out of breath.

Lance is for practicing strength. The knife and the staff are fake, and are not part of Yang's style of Tai-chi Ch'uan. Sword is the closest to your health. It's directly related to your ch'i. The lance is for your internal, basic force. The lance should be practiced with a light, resilient pole, but we don't have the proper wood in America.

When practicing sword, never treat it as a weapon. It should be like an extension of the hand, and soft enough to be able to feel with it just as if it were a real hand. End.