

Interview with Dr. Weibin Yang - By Andy Han

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Interview with Dr. Weibin Yang

ANACP Lifetime Member, Physical Medicine Rehabilitation, Dallas, Tx

Youth Columnists

by Andy Han, Feb, 2024

ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF ANACP. PASSION. AMBITION. PERSEVERANCE. COMPASSION. ENERGETIC AND HUMOROUS....

- This is the Dr. Yang I have learned.

Dr. Weibin Yang was born in Linhai, Zhejiang (“a nice rich place and small city, and I like it”, he said), attended Zhejiang Medical University, and graduated in 1988. Dr. Yang moved to Chicago, IL in 1989 where he stayed for 15 years. After moving to New York for one year to complete his internship, he returned to Chicago to finish his PMR residency program and also picked up a job at University of Illinois in Chicago after his training



Then, in 2004, he moved to Dallas, TX to work at the VA (Veteran Affairs) North Texas Healthcare System where he's been ever since.

- I was curious why he wanted to become a doctor and picked PMR for his specialty.

Dr. Yang was influenced by his father who directed him to medicine, which turned out to be an excellent choice. Dr. Yang's father recommended medicine when he was ready to pick up a college after the college entrance exam, but he told his father he didn't like it. Dr. Yang said, “my father asked me what I wanted, and I said I don't really know. So he said you become a doctor then. Even during the war time you would still have a job. So he feels it's a kind of job security for a person to be a doctor. And then I started medical school and have liked it since then.”

Dr. Yang liked rehabilitation because he likes exercise, such as Tai Chi, and acupuncture. He thinks that PMR fits him really well. He also does acupuncture treating different conditions.

“We want to have a professional organization, not only to promote medical knowledge, but also to have a human side of it, a close community....”



“~2001年在UIC 当 attending. 旁边是汪策. 他在当 neurology fellow”

- I'm always interested in sports medicine, and really enjoyed this class in my high school, but I know very little about PMR. So I asked him about PMR.

Dr. Yang explained that PMR started after World War I. It is a small field, dealing with patients who had painful conditions and functional loss. They treat patients from head to toe, ranging from headaches, all the way to foot pain. **“At outpatient clinic, we are almost like Orthopedics and Sports Medicine doctors, but we do not do surgery.”**

“On the other hand, for inpatients, PMR helps the patient to gain functions, to get them back to their normal life as much as possible. We treat patients with physical limitations, such as after stroke, brain injury or surgery, amputation, and medical debilities...” After they see a patient, they refer the patient to a therapist for rehab.

I learned that if you want to do interventional pain management, you may need a fellowship training.

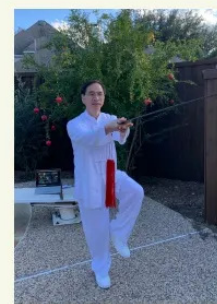
- Thinking about my own interest in medical career, I asked Dr. Yang if he would recommend it to others who are deciding to pick a specialty for their medical career.

Dr. Yang mentioned the freedom of time, a good lifestyle and the compensation as a PMR physician. **But the key is somebody has to love what he does, not just for anything else.**

- I have heard that Dr. Yang is a Tai Chi Master. so I asked him to tell me more about Tai Chi.

Dr. Yang was modest and said “I'm not a master, I am a Tai Chi lover.

“The more you know what you do, the more you feel you're not good enough. You will feel there's so much more you need to learn.”



I do love Tai Chi, and practice everyday. We have a group here where people do Tai Chi together. When the weather is not good, we use zoom meetings”.

- His answer really got me interested in finding more about the connection between Tai Chi and PMR, so I asked him about it.

To explain the connection, Dr. Yang told me a story about his patients. “I had a patient, a veteran who has had physical therapy many many times after his knee surgery. Every time he came to his surgeon, he complained of

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a lot of pain. The surgeon did not know what to do, just kept sending him to me and asked for more and more visits to the therapists. After so many rounds of therapy, it got to a point that I had to tell the surgeon that this would not work. I asked the patient if he would do Tai Chi with me in the park. He came and learned with me how to do Tai Chi. He never went back to see the therapist. And the last time I heard that he found a job in a movie theater. So you can see the big difference.”

Dr. Yang got excited talking about Tai Chi and went on.

“Some studies show the benefit of Tai Chi, to improve balance, strength, and overall health. It is a recommended conservative intervention for treating osteoarthritis and osteoporosis. We also use Tai Chi to improve mental health in patients with depression, anxiety or other mental disorders.”

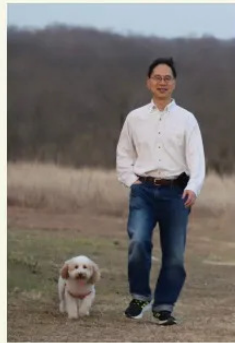
Dr. Yang himself also benefits from doing Tai Chi. **“I have only seen my primary care physician face-to-face once and a virtual visit once in the past 19 years”**

Dr. Yang's passion and experience in Tai Chi really touched me. We have made the plan to meet at the ANACP conference in Chicago this year so I can learn some Tai Chi from him.

- **I switched gears to ask about Dr. Yang's life goals.**

Dr. Yang told me when he gets older, he will be more focused on being healthy, and a possibility of pursuing another degree, maybe a PhD degree in English since he thinks his English is not good enough, although I think his English was very fluent during my interview.

I learned that Dr. Yang has two master degrees in the United States, one in MBA and one in computer science.



It is really impressive to me that Dr. Yang still pursues more in his academic career even though he's so successful. He would also like to have a Tai Chi school to teach classes.

- **I asked Dr. Yang about his life challenges.**

Dr. Yang mentioned two challenges he's facing right now. “I'm doing a lot of management at my job, building a good work relationship is still a big challenge for me.”

“I'm doing all right, but I think I can do better. I feel there is so much more to learn. I'm still not happy with the skills that I have right now.”

“Secondly, is communication and language. I almost gave up on my Chinese since I have an accent, but I'd like to try to learn more English because I'm still using it for my job to deal with people.”

- **Knowing Dr. Yang is the founder of ANACP, in my last section of my interview, I asked him why he wanted to create this organization.**

“We have a group of people working together, not just me. The reason we wanted to have an ANACP is to create a community, so all the doctors coming from China can help each other, learn from each other, and grow both professionally and personally”



“October 2021 钓鱼装备。(给联盟年会小品“德州渔民”的着装)”

“One thing for us who come from another country is feeling lonely, so it is important to have support and a community. We want to have a professional organization, not only to promote medical knowledge, but also to have a human side of it, a close community, like in our WeChat groups”



“2018年联盟休士顿年会，at the check in desk. 旁边是当时财长张勤医生及休士顿医生潘文彤。”

When I asked him about future plans for ANACP, he thanked all the members, officers and board members. “They're all working very hard. **We need to include more Chinese Physicians to expand our organization. We need to attract the younger generation and young doctors who came from China.**”

In the end, Dr. Yang encouraged me to find my passion in my career path, and offered to give me more information about PMR if I needed to learn.

About the author: Andy Han

High school senior at Hinsdale Central High School, IL.

Like to volunteer, play badminton, and bake.

Interested in pursuing medicine for future career.

