



Survival Values of the Profession

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One of the most interesting papers on chiropractic philosophy that I have read is Dr. Brad Poock's Legion of Chiropractic Philosophy thesis on Survival Values. The implications of survival values are everywhere and it applies to all aspects of Chiropractic.

Stephenson's 1927 "Chiropractic Textbook" defined survival values as, "that positive value gained with every successful adaptation"¹. Quite simply, every time the chiropractic profession is met with a challenge and successfully overcomes it, a positive or constructive survival value is achieved. Those things that are good for the profession allows for the perpetuation of Chiropractic. Unfortunately, there are also negative or destructive survival values that occur within chiropractic when obstacles are not overcome or the profession compromises itself. Simply, those things that are bad for chiropractic.

Accumulative constructive survival values

The accumulative constructive survival values are the positive net values

of all of the constructive (positive) survival values minus the destructive (negative). Let us look at some of the positive constructive values of our profession. However, it must be noted that the opposite effect of the items listed below will actually cause a destructive survival value.

1. Proper lexicon. It has been reported that nearly 6,000 different languages face extinction. It is not only the loss of words that is a concern, but it is the loss of knowledge of the culture that can never be replaced. This is a predicament that has manifestations in both legislation and chiropractic research. If proper terms such as vertebral subluxation, chiropractic adjustment are used, then some of our problems (physical therapists expanding into our scope of practice) would simply not exist. Are you using the term analysis or examination? Spinograph or x-ray? Proper use of our own chiropractic lexicon creates a separate and distinct culture for chiropractic.

2. Increased awareness of Chiropractic philosophy. This can only lead to constructive survival values. Chiropractic philosophy is the "why" of

chiropractic. A stronger understanding of our unique philosophy will enable our profession to get a better sense of self. Why should chiropractic be a chameleon of the medical profession? What separates chiropractic from osteopathy? There are many chiropractors who are ready and willing to prescribe medication and do some minor surgery in the name of what is in the best interest of the patient. Have you ever thought about what is in the best interest of the profession? Many chiropractors who do not get "the idea" will face burn-out and venture into other careers. There is nothing worse than being a 9-5 chiropractor, continually making withdrawals from chiropractic until it is bankrupt and has nothing left to offer. It is time to start making some deposits. Pull out your green books and ignite that fire in your belly.

3. Membership in a national and a state association. By supporting your national and state association, you can collectively contribute to a group that is dedicated to promoting and protecting chiropractic. This action will help chiropractic to adapt and overcome any challenge that faces our profession. Your membership and dues add to the collective resources at the disposal of your association. Even like-minded organizations can come together and further add bang for the buck. The coalition between the ICA, WCA, and FSCO is a great example.

Accumulative destructive survival values

Conversely, accumulative destructive survival values are defined by

Stephenson as, "a negative value (algebraically) indicating the accumulation of the destructive or depletive effects of universal forces. The remainder of destruction or "losses" after "gains" and "assets" have been deducted; "net loss."² It must also be noted that a correction of these destructive survival values would result in a constructive situation. The higher the net result, the more momentum present.

1. Merger talks. We need to get over it and move on. Any merger talk that does not involve a 50/50 split of the new Board of Directors is a hostile takeover, not a merger. A systematic attempt to control another organization is a violation of freedom of choice. We have wasted a lot of energy trying to bring together organizations of completely different philosophies. The resources could have been better spent on the advancement of chiropractic. Is the vertebral subluxation a household word? How about a national chiropractic museum? Are the B.J. Chiropractic Clinic records entered into a database so we have that useful information of specific care for thousands of patients? Let's put our energy into chiropractic instead.

2. Losing our culture. Chiropractic is a separate and distinct profession with our own culture and lexicon. We should be proud of our heritage and accomplishments and hold our heads up high. In war, if one culture wants to control another, the first thing they do is take away the language and replace it with another (spinal manipulative therapy, diagnosis, etc. is an example of this) and also all symbols of culture. Then as an end result you assimilate the members into the dominant culture by taking away their uniqueness. Chiropractors should be proud of their heritage and history. So many chiropractors were jailed and brought up on charges by allopathic practitioners or want-to-be allopathic providers. Why would a chiropractor want to be like them and forsake the sacrifice of their forefathers? Learn your chiropractic history and look to the future by preserving our past.

3. Compromise. Often within the chiropractic profession, individuals or groups come together to make new definitions of our terms or to redefine our core values and beliefs. The problem with this is whenever you reach a compromise, you must give up part of the truth. A lion and a zebra will never reach a compromise when they come face to face in the savannah. The compromises we make in chiropractic come at a cost. Often times in the private office setting or by an organization, someone will endorse a product outside of their values. Once you expand your compromise, it is extremely hard to contract it back. Endorsements will increase your revenue, but at what cost? There should never be any compromise on the principles of chiropractic. Ask yourself, are you doing everything possible to ensure chiropractic will be here for your children and your children's children? If not, it is time to start checking where you are slipping, reevaluate your mission and take action before it is too late.

Chiropractic principles will stand the test of time. They encompass all as-

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