

THOUGHTS

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sclerosis. In these seniors, the greater the hyperkyphotic posture, the greater the rates of death. Hyperkyphotic posture predicts increased mortality. Interventions specifically targeted at improving hyperkyphotic posture could result in reduced mortality rates... The hyperkyphotic posture reflects an increased rate of physiological aging."⁵ The implications that chiropractic care would have on these patients is overwhelmingly obvious.

Chiropractic continues to prosper despite the paucity of original research put out by our profession.⁴ The editor of the *JVSR*, Dr. Matt McCoy, consistently admonishes and encourages us through his colorful yet adroit editorials that we need much more of what the scientific community really wants to see — valid research/ science. I'm probably not quite as optimistic as Dr. McCoy regarding the level of acceptance our research would receive from the scientific community, but that doesn't negate the fact that he speaks the truth. Are we prepared to wear ourselves out fighting for the advancement of our profession or wear ourselves down through all our incestuous squabbling?

The Art of Chiropractic

Chiropractic 'art' is probably the most subjective of the triune in defining chiropractic. Stephenson offers this from his textbook: "The Art of Chiropractic consists of skill in analysis, palpation and adjusting vertebrae, most of it requiring dexterity with the hands. It requires many hours of drill and study..."¹ There is an accumulation of chiropractic techniques and 'systems' available to the practitioner today. Each college teaches 'packages' which are usually an assortment of the majors i.e. Gonstead, Thompson, Toggle, Biophysics, Logan, Activator, S.O.T., etc. Techniques in chiropractic can be broken down into segmental (Thompson for example), tonal (Network Analysis) and postural (CBP, Pettibon).

Regardless of the technique being employed, perfecting the system of analysis, palpation and adjusting the subluxated vertebrae is of utmost importance. BJ named this the "adjustment with that extra something," having all the preparatory work and analysis in order before any physical thrustic procedure was utilized. "If the chiropractor will work to secure an Innate adjustment (the adjustment with that extra something), utilizing his forces merely as a means to an entrée to get Innate to make the adjustment, he will find that the subluxation will stay adjusted more permanently than before." That 'extra something with staying put value' is the innate judgment a chiropractor possesses and must use to know when, where, why, and how to locate and adjust vertebral subluxation, and to know when to stop. Judgment is much like tact... you have it or you don't; you develop it, or you don't; you want it, or you don't care. This is something one cannot read in books or get in classrooms."⁶ Does the system that you employ breed sheer confidence due to its attention to detail?

It is the 'art' quotient that separates us from the physiatrists, therapists and the osteopaths. The current culture,

even within our own profession, at times neglects to see the quandary with using such words as adjustment and manipulation as interchangeable vocabulary. This is professionally problematic.

Read what Yvonne Villaneuva-Russell, PhD writes in the *ICA Review* concerning the loss of distinctiveness; "Homeopathy, osteopathy, apothecaries and surgeons all lost their unique jurisdictions decades ago because their claims were too malleable to resist the pull of medicalization. Their emulation and acquiescence to medicine was all it took to lose their unique identity and become enveloped as part of the larger, more powerful profession. This is why chiropractors, like Leonard Rutherford (1989) assert that the ability to diagnose and infer must be well defined, unique, and "separate and distinct" from what other rivals have to offer."⁷

To the philosophically based chiropractor, the beauty is in the system of adjusting, not in the eye of the beholder. "To be specific, is to exhibit a knowledge of principles and art of adjusting; a comprehension of facts so systematized that they are available for the relief of disease." So said our founder DD Palmer. We must hold fast to our confessed 'art.'

Chiropractic Philosophy

Now, let's turn our attention to perhaps the most misunderstood and least appreciated branch of the triune in defining chiropractic — philosophy. In 1961, near the end of his life, BJ Palmer wrote about a 'sacred trust.' He admonished us to "guard it well." Are we as postmodern chiropractors living up to that task? Have we been guarding it well or letting every Tom, Dick and Harry

with a newfangled idea sully and bastardize our original premise to the point of it being unrecognizable?

Specific adjusting and manipulation have become interchangeable words, subluxation and spinal manipulative lesion the same. What would DD and BJ have thought of this? It's easy to reflect upon our colorful heritage and the charismatic characters that illuminated the world to their new discovery, but I shudder to think what DD or BJ would think if they were alive today. We go to the circus and pay money to see the caged oddities, but who would want those same oddities running feral in their neighborhoods, or better yet, spouting off exclusivities at our chiropractic conventions or berating us for sloppy technique (art) and low specificity in patient care. We might accuse *them* of heresy

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