

## It's Not the MONEY!

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Where are the dreams that we once had? This is the time to bring them back. -- Kenny Loggins, from the song, "Conviction of the Heart"

Approximately 75% of the chiropractic profession doesn't belong to either of our national associations. Be honest, it's not just the money, is it? You CAN afford \$40 or \$50 per month to be a member of the American Chiropractic Association (ACA) or the International Chiropractors Association (ICA), but only if your membership fees are being put to good use.

You may have reached this point of noninvolvement through a series of disappointing circumstances. Here's a small sample of the comments I have heard from DCs around the country:

"I was a member, but didn't get any respect."

"I got into a disagreement with one of the officers."

"I got tired of the same people making the same decisions that seemed not to accomplish much."

Somewhere amidst these feelings is a general discontent that has kept over 35,000 DCs from joining the ACA or ICA. This attitude, not surprisingly, has driven a handful of DCs to seek to create their own national organization.

Chiropractic is splintered into pieces so small, that our isolated voices are virtually inaudible. But we're living in a world where monolithic corporations are merging for greater leverage. Take the merger of the two largest physician-management companies. On October 30, PhyCor and MedPartners joined forces in a deal worth almost \$7 BILLION. The merger puts 36,000 physicians under the roof of one mega-corporation. Even so, they'll only command five percent of the market.

But imagine what they can do now with 36,000 MDs organized into the most successful management company in the world. Imagine the marketing and advertising effort, and the clout when it comes to buying products, negotiating contracts, and speaking before Congress. They have become the Microsoft of health care.

Make you nervous? It should.

As managed care and medicine unite and grow, chiropractic is left to argue with itself. Sure, there are still some very successful DCs, but how many do you know?

The leadership of the ACA and the ICA have been working together over the past year to establish a basis for launching the most effective advertising campaign this profession has ever seen. And as they have, everyone (including me) has doubted that they could even agree on lunch, let alone a well-developed marketing campaign. With some glimmer of hope, I've attended every open meeting of the Alliance for Chiropractic Progress, talking with the respective representatives between meetings. And with each step in the establishment of the Alliance, my hope has begun to build.

They have finally unveiled the first part of their PR campaign, which you'll want to read about on the front page of this issue. Together, they have committed \$1.8 million, and are letting marketing experts help them decide the best way to spend it.

Chiropractic's hour is finally here. The research is beginning to echo our story. The public is searching for an effective high-contact, high-caring approach. The media is treating us as legitimate providers. All we need to do is tell our own story.

Your experiences may cause you to doubt the ICA and the ACA. You may have deep personal reasons why you "will never be a member again as long as I live."

I'm asking you to set aside any negative judgments you may have about the national associations for one year. This Alliance is our only hope. There is no chiropractic white knight waiting to lead us. The ACA and the ICA have committed themselves to being leaders in the marketing of chiropractic to the people of the United States.

This issue of Dynamic Chiropractic is dedicated to the Alliance's marketing campaign and to you, so that you will see why you need to join one or both of the national associations. Inside is their membership applications. The applications were inserted free of charge to the ACA/ICA because I believe this is the most important action you can take for chiropractic right now.

Read the front page articles in this issue from Drs. Braile and Pedigo. You will see that while the ACA and ICA have slightly different approaches, each organization has committed a significant portion of your 1998 membership dues directly to the Alliance advertising campaign, in addition to the \$1.8 million already committed.

Review their membership applications. Decide which organization best represents you and your interests. Fill out one or both of the applications and send in your dues. You can spread out the payments over the course of the year if you need to.

Give the national associations one year to prove themselves through the Alliance and their marketing campaign. Give them your dues money because they are committed to giving a large portion of it back to you in the form of advertising and public relations that will help build your practice.

For one year, let's set aside our differences and see what we can become as a profession when we all work together.

Every person on the planet should be utilizing chiropractic as part of their commitment to wellness. This dream is still attainable.

Please, help make this dream come true.

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