

A New Era of Mutual Respect

Donald M. Petersen Jr., BS, HCD(hc), FICC(h), Publisher

Question: What do Fred Barge, D.C., Ph.C.; Joseph H. Donohue, D.C.; Thomas Gilardi, D.C.; and James F. Winterstein, D.C. (among others) have in common?

Answer: They are part of a new wave of mutual respect that appears to be sweeping across the chiropractic profession worldwide.

At the 1990 International Conference on Spinal Manipulation (ICSM), the four leaders of the profession mentioned above took part in a debate on "Alternative Philosophical Perspectives in Chiropractic." (Please see "ICSM Marks Chiropractic's Progress in the 90s" in the May 10, 1991 issue). Anyone who knows the four personalities in question probably expected a cross between an Arnold Schwarzenegger movie and World War III.

But that is not what happened.

In an atmosphere where disagreement is expected and scrutiny is accepted, the four very distinct views of chiropractic philosophy were presented. While there was definite disagreement, the attitude was not antagonistic. One could easily tell that these four knew the points they differed on and those they agreed on.

Yet despite their disagreements, an air of acceptance filled the room. No one was suggesting that anyone else was "not a true chiropractor" if they didn't believe this way. There wasn't an attempt to humiliate anyone based on their chiropractic philosophy.

How many times had these and other leaders of the chiropractic profession argued this issue both publicly and privately? Didn't they hold grudges? Wouldn't their self-respect diminish if they didn't attack the other personally?

The answer, apparently, was "no."

These leaders were making a statement that is being echoed by most of this profession's leadership:

"We can disagree, but we must respect each other. We are all part of the same profession."

This new attitude is not only coming from above down, but also from within. Many of the letters and phone calls that we receive at Dynamic Chiropractic are urging the profession and its leadership to seek harmony for the betterment of chiropractic. It is as if the leadership and the membership are all moving with the same intent.

Yes, sadly enough, there are a few that would rather attack than discuss. There are some who for one reason or another feel a need to bestow upon themselves titles and take positions in an effort to divide. But these few are beginning to fade away. They are losing credibility with the true leaders of this profession and those DCs who are paying attention.

Ultimately, this new era of mutual respect is what will move our profession through the maze of pits and traps that await us as we struggle to bring healing to the world. This attitude of cooperation and camaraderie will allow us to face each new challenge as a team, not a mob. While we may not experience total unity for many years, we can enjoy the benefits of unity of purpose now.

Mutual respect is more than a topic for an editorial. It is a way of thinking, talking, and acting. It is a code of conduct that is being seen and experienced with increasing regularity throughout the chiropractic profession: at the World Federation of Chiropractic meeting in Toronto with the co-sponsorship of the Quality Assurance Conference by almost every major chiropractic organization in the United States and Canada (please see "Chiropractic Quality Assurance Consensus Conference To Be Held In Fall of 1991" in the February 1, 1991 issue); and as chiropractic organizations around the world work together for the common good.

Mutual respect is fortunately quite contagious. If you treat someone with respect, they almost always adopt the same attitude. This works for national associations as well as individuals.

Perhaps mutual respect will become the standard that all chiropractors and chiropractic organizations are measured by.

DMP, Jr., HCD(hc)

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