

## Fearless Chiropractic

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We are, sometimes unfortunately, a profession of extremes. At the center of these extremes is the basic conflict over whether there is a somato/visceral reflex and if there is -- can the chiropractic adjustment have any effect?

On one side is the opinion that the adjustment does nothing but establish mechanical integrity and is used for the relief of pain. Those who espouse this concept usually want to specialize in athletic injuries while some even travel around the country as hired stooges for the insurance companies, testifying against their colleagues who believe in the beneficial organic effects of the adjustment. Presumably this is also done to curry the favor of organized medicine. It's one thing to believe in something strongly, but not to the point of destroying those who don't believe the same thing for your own advantage. These people are traitorous ingrates.

On the other side are those familiar folks who believe that the adjustment is the cure for every ailment. That innate intelligence is released by the adjustment to establish optimum health. They believe that the adjustment and only the adjustment should be used by the chiropractor. That the use of any other ancillary modality is a form of blasphemy and must be removed from the profession. They too run around spreading their "gospel" of intolerance. They embarrass the profession by spreading their cultish nonsense before government committees, demanding that only their brand of chiropractic be allowed to be practiced.

Then there is the middle group which I believe I generally represent. We are the majority. We believe that the adjustment is more than just a tool to move bones and that there are forms of natural health care such as physiotherapy and nutrition that enhance our therapeutic objectives.

Strange -- but it's this middle ground, where most of us dwell, that seems to have the least amount of professional courage. The pseudomedical nuts will go anywhere and do just about anything to discredit those who don't agree with them, while the pseudoreligious characters will go anywhere to preach their insanity.

Why do I believe that I represent the vast middle ground? If nothing else, my mail affirms this belief. I'm disliked (that's putting it nicely) by both extremes. To one group I'm a "chiropract" -- to the other a frustrated medic. It all depends upon which editorial they read.

While I believe very strongly in nutrition and homeopathy and in the use of physical therapy, I also believe that the single most important thing in chiropractic is the adjustment and its effect on the function of the internal organs.

With that I can see some researchers throwing up their hands in horror shouting, "It can't be proved." True -- but then virtually nothing can be proved anyway. It's been said that just about 90 percent of what medicine does can't be proven but that doesn't stop them from dispensing all those weird chemical formulas they don't understand to their patients. And, of course, beads of perspiration burst on the foreheads of the super straights for having so much as mentioned the use of physical therapy modality of which they know nothing about and refuse to learn.

Since the adjustment is the most important thing in our practice, it would be nice if this vast middle ground of chiropractic postulated, without fear, the reason we believe in the many dimensions of the chiropractic adjustment -- without going overboard.

When patients come to me with a bad low back or a sore neck, I make certain that they understand that I'm not a glorified masseur or a physical therapist. Before they leave they understand that I'm a physician who practices natural therapeutics.

After x-rays, I'll show them what I've taken on the view box, which is positioned next to a chart demonstrating quite dramatically the connection of the spinal nerves to the internal organs. "It seems it doesn't take much mechanical irritation to have an adverse effect upon the nerves as they leave the spine," I explain to the patient. "This can often be referred to the internal structures they influence and consequently may predispose these tissues and organs to a pathological process."

Not once do I declare any absolutes. Only that faulty mechanics may be the cause of faulty organic function. No fanaticism here. Only anatomy and a natural physiological assumption.

So let's have those of us in the middle not be afraid to accept the responsibility for what we believe in. What we promulgate is "safe" as long as it's not fanatically espoused as dogma. Remember -- research is based on skepticism. While we need research and must support its continued growth, at the same time we should realize that if we waited for everything to be "proven," all the health fields would stagnate in a quagmire of doubt and indecision.

Over the years, I believe my adjustments have lowered blood pressure, reduced cardiac arrhythmias, aided in proper digestion, reduced constipation, and helped eliminate respiratory problems. Call it "universal intelligence" or call it "innate," but don't call my patients and tell them that the adjustments didn't favorably affect the function of their organs -- they won't believe you.

*RHT*

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