

# A Plea for Basic Principles

## VIEWPOINT: THE STATE OF OUR ART

Richard C. Schafer, DC, FICC

Life is war! All organisms are in battle against their environment. Thinkers never dispute this fact, but those who follow the current fad in intellectual endeavor constantly try to beguile the public that this is not so. Why? For one of two reasons: Either they feel they will gain acceptance by being "current," or they relish using anything (true or false) that will give them power to control the lives of others. This can be verified daily by following national, state, and professional politics.

This deserves explanation. Nonthinkers, for example, readily fall prey to the "health faddists" or "environmentalists" huzza to "get in harmony with nature." Only those who study nature, however, will answer, "Nuts!"

The entities of the plant kingdom survive because they devour essential nutrients from the mineral kingdom to live. Entities of the animal kingdom either gorge plants or weaker animals to survive. Both the antelope and the vegetation that gives up its life to the antelope are in harmony with nature. Both the antelope and the lion that devours it are in harmony with nature. "Harmony with nature" does not protect the weak or slow unless they are exceptionally clever.

All organisms, including mankind, are in battle against their environment. There's no escaping this fact, and there are only two ways to win or prevent a war. Either (1) weaken the attack force so it can be destroyed or is no longer a threat, or (2) enhance your defenses. Both methods have their pros and cons, and we see them debated in the newspapers and on television per diem in terms of national defense.

The same postulate is clear in health care. The allopathic approach places emphasis on weakening or destroying invading pathogens whether they be bacterial, viral, fungal, rickettsial, parasitic, or some type of "foreign" body. Here, careful identification of the enemy is necessary. Once identified, the enemy can be labeled, and an appropriate weapon (chemical, vaccine, or antitoxin) can often be developed and used. This is a logical path unless, of course, you shoot yourself in the foot -- a common occurrence in traditional medicine -- thus doing harm to the host as well as the invader. This is not "harmonizing with nature"; it is survival of the strongest or smartest -- from the viewpoint of offense.

Chiropractic, homeopathy, and Oriental medicine, however, place emphasis on enhancing body defenses and reserves, with the realization that it is impossible to find an environment that is free of pathogenic bacteria, viruses, fungi, irritants, etc. Here, meticulous classification of the enemy is not compulsory, but a thorough understanding is necessary of what it takes to maintain optimal and fortify inadequate defenses and reserves. Restoring proper innervation that, in turn, affords adequate circulatory, immunologic, metabolic, and detoxification mechanisms to defend against the forces of exogenous invasion or endogenous degeneration is the goal of this approach. This too is not "harmonizing with nature"; it is survival of the strongest or the smartest -- from the viewpoint of defense.

Because allopathic and chiropractic approaches to the same goal (health) are converse in direction

and sometimes countermand in counsel, their identification and labeling systems can never be harmonious. The chiropractic approach to pharyngitis, for example, is essentially the same whether it has a bacterial or viral origin. The innervation of the pharynx, liver, spleen, etc, remains the same. Yet, our political leaders constantly attempt to force us to use allopathic terminology via the insurance industry's "by the number" system. "Go along," they say, "go along." While this may have some interprofessional viability in diagnosis, it has no place in therapy -- yet our national organizations make no attempt to explain to the health insurance industry or the legal profession why this is incongruent to chiropractic health care. The result is that we are becoming highly hypocritical and are approaching ground that soon will be indefensible to continue as a separate profession.

Contrary to what some may sermonize, the use of medicinals or even surgery in chiropractic will not cause us to lose our distinctiveness if the why they are used remains distinctive (defensive, enhancement of biologic reserves). It is not what we use or do that separates us from allopathy but why we use or do it.

The news today was filled with a stand the "Big Medic" in Washington has taken against a cigarette company sponsoring the Virginia Slims tennis tournament. The same logic would have him boycott automobile company advertising because people get killed in automobiles, the meat-processing industry because people die of coronaries, candy companies because people die of diabetes mellitus, and mattress companies because people die in bed.

This nonthinking faddist trend of thought has even infected our chiropractic organizations who have joined the crowd in prohibiting smoking in airconditioned meeting halls -- whereafter the hypocrites enter the street to inhale exhaust fumes from hundreds of nearby vehicles and factories, and then enter a restaurant to down a few "belts of brew" and a plate full of falsely colored, synthetically preserved, artificially "fortified" junk food that retains an abundance of poisonous residues, hormones, and transmissions through animal feed grains, various microbial toxins, heavy metals, and radionuclide fallout. And they pat themselves on the back as having done well in "preserving their space." Soon dentists will demand that a television monitor be placed in every bathroom to assure that we all brush our teeth and floss properly. Because people occasionally slip in bathtubs and crack their skulls, certainly a label should warn of the danger of bathing.

Standing near a charcoal broiling steak projects carcinogens to the equivalent of over 700 packs of cigarettes, but nobody seems to want to boycott patio parties. A nonsmoker living in New York City inhales more pollutants than a person living in Denver who smokes 2-1/2 packs a day, but nobody seems to want to boycott New York City since Goldwater ran for president. Why? It's not the fad. It's easier to follow the mentality of the crowd than to think.

If federal health agencies really wanted to protect individuals' health (which is not their constitutional concern), they would condemn most professional sports rather than their sponsors. They won't, of course, because it's not popular to take such a position. Look at the shattered knees and necks of professional football players, the elbows and ankles of professional tennis players, the heads and guts of professional boxers. All suffer the scars of gladiators, and the modern day "couch potatoes" of contact sports are little removed from the Roman citizens who cheered the bloody arena of the coliseum.

Rather than passing antismoking resolutions or those in favor of forced seat-belted drivers, our professional associations would act more logically in taking a stand against the selling of poisons. Let's take food for an example. Natural foods contain a great variety of deadly poisons:

"The simple potato contains at least 150 different chemical substances such as solanin, oxalate,

arsenic, tannin, and nitrate. The average American consumes about 120 pounds of potatoes a year, which contain enough solanin (10,000 mg) to kill a horse if given in a single dose. A year's supply of lima beans (1,85lbs) contains 40 mg of cyanide. Because we consume some toxic substances each day in the typical diet, the body's detoxification mechanisms must be efficient." Basic Chiropractic Procedural Manual. Arlington, VA, American Chiropractic Association, 1984, p 436.

With these facts, I would imagine someone will stand up at the next ACA or ICA convention and move to resolve that the organization as a whole is for the prohibition of potatoes and lima beans. The motion is likely to pass unanimously.

Allow me to enhance this nonthinking position. They also can announce that broccoli contains a highly potent goitrogen, that the oxalates in spinach interfere with calcium absorption, that the phytates in wheat inhibit the absorption of zinc and calcium, that a cup of coffee is antagonistic to the utilization of iron, that the thiaminase in blackberries and Brussels sprouts destroys thiamin, that egg white (which contains a potent carcinogen) binds biotin, and that grandma's marmalade destroys vitamin A. Because the highly toxic substance in botulism is already pre-formed in food, do not eat, drink, or smoke anything -- it may be dangerous to your health.

One also could add that permanent retinal damage can be suffered by someone sensitive to the monosodium glutamate placed within the meals served at Chinese restaurants. Shellfish suck up toxins and metallic wastes like a blotter. Processed meats contain staphylococcal enterotoxins. If someone is taking a prescribed monoamine oxidase inhibitor, severe hypertension and possibly death may result from eating cheese or drinking a small glass of sherry. People with celiac disease can get sick from eating wheat, thus every loaf of wheat bread should carry a warning label. To guard against Salmonella and hepatitis, we much have a guard in every washroom (private and public) to assure that all food handlers wash their hands before leaving.

Thinkers cringe every time they hear such nonsense. If we are to survive as a profession, we must explain to the world the importance of endogenous defense and cease going with the crowd in condemning every little potentially adverse environmental irritant -- especially those whose only adverse effect can be shown statistically (n/multimillion) and not biologically. Most people do not get allergies in the spring or the fall. Some do, yet everyone in the community inhales the same pollens and molds. Why? Most people do not get hepatic cirrhosis from drinking alcoholic beverages. Some do. Why? Everybody does not get VD or AIDS by having sex with the same infected person. Why? Everybody does not get lung cancer or have a coronary, who smokes. Why? The medics always try to blame poor health on something external. This is their gospel. Years ago, it wasn't in chiropractic. We followed a different drummer. Our leaders in recent years seem to have often joined the crowd of nonthinkers. Why?

Pioneer chiropractic believed and modern science has established that the healthy body can tolerate small amounts of thousands of poisons at any one time. Total quantity of toxic substances is far less important than the quantity of each separate substance. Thus the importance of a varied diet. When inhaled, ingested, or absorbed through the skin in small quantities, the healthy individual can readily eliminate or metabolize small amounts of toxic substances through normal biologic mechanisms.

Practice should be fun -- rewarding spiritually as well as financially. Is it? Without a firm belief in basic chiropractic principles, hypocritical quasi-practice becomes frustrating, then boring, and then sinks to a "get the bucks while you can" existence. Such a shame. Our "me too-ism" is suicidal.

"Do our leaders have the guts to reverse the trend?" I asked. The room became silent.

