

We Get Letters

Editor's Note:

Due to space constraints, we are unable to print all of the overwhelming amount of letters we have received in response to RHT's column. We have chosen, instead, a representative sample of the responses from the profession and are sharing them with you here.

Dear Editor:

Richard H. Tyler, D.C.'s effort ("B.J. -- a Love/Hate Relationship," Dynamic Chiropractic, July 18, 1990, p.45) to put the legacy of the "developer" in perspective is much appreciated. I essentially agree with his view that B.J.'s drive helped to save the profession from extinction, and that the cult that has grown up around chiropractic's "maximum leader" is unhealthy for the profession. Indeed, I sometimes wonder if rumors of B.J.'s demise may not be premature.

I am less sure that Dr. Tyler's solutions to the cult problem are viable or desirable. Certainly, placing B.J. photos and souvenirs on one's walls does not a cultist make. For myself, I disagree strongly with much of the "B.J. philosophy" which has so stifled scientific growth in chiropractic, but am nonetheless pleased with my collection of B.J. artifacts, and proud to display them in my office. And why not? For better or worse, B.J. Palmer is probably the single most influential person in the history of the profession.

What a pity it would be if Dr. Tyler's legitimate effort to present a balanced picture of B.J. were to lead to destruction of the historical record B.J. left. This has happened in the past; for example, "little bit of heaven" was torn down after B.J.'s death, apparently because it was thought to be an embarrassment. Shall we repeat such mistakes by requesting Life College to destroy the fine museum it has created of B.J.'s winter home in Sarasota, Florida? In my opinion, that would be foolish. We cannot solve the problem of cultism in chiropractic by pretending B.J. never lived. Please, let's not say "bye, bye" to B.J.; he is an important part of our past. Rather, let's get to know his story better so that B.J. cultists can be confronted with their own gobbledygook, and perhaps thereby grow into a more mature appreciation of B.J.'s (two-sided) contribution to the profession.

*Joseph C. Keating, Jr., Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Palmer College of Chiropractic
Sunnyvale, California*

Dear Editor:

I can readily understand the amused disappointment that RHT experienced when he missed meeting BJ during World War Twice ("B.J. -- A Love/Hate Relationship," "DC," 7/18/90) but we can only imagine the complete devastation BJ must have felt when he learned that while traveling around the world, he missed meeting RHT!

Bert Clayton, D.C.

Harrison, Arkansas

Dear Editor:

Dynamic Chiropractic has evolved into one of the most interesting pieces of professional literature I receive. Of greatest interest and most poignant in effect is RHT's column. It is just great!! Every student of chiropractic should read his article, "A Fly on the Wall" in the June 20, 1990 issue. It says it all!!

Chiropractic students and chiropractors all over the world -- read that article and reflect on your own ideas of practice building. RHT has the right idea. Keep up the good work RHT!! This profession needs a lot more of your realistic philosophy to take it out of the basement it seems to be in.

*Allen Goldberg, D.C.
Santa Rosa, California*

Dear Dr. Tyler:

"Embarrassed By B.J.???"

Dr. Tyler, you should be proud, not embarrassed by B.J. Palmer!! You pose the question, "Who do you think you are (RHT)? And then you answer your own question by saying, "While B.J. Palmer certainly helped develop the profession, he didn't develop my (RHT) thinking." Truer words were never spoken! No, most certainly my friend, he did not develop your thinking.

This profession should never say "bye bye to B.J. Palmer. Like any profession, we should remember our great leaders, hang their pictures on our walls, and quote their sage sayings. Medicine does this with the Mayo's, with Dr. Schweitzer. Psychiatry quotes and holds in high esteem its great thinkers. Society preserves the homes of presidents -- builds highways, monuments, shrines, and gardens to honor leaders and poets. Should we be any different? Palmer College preserves B.J.'s home in Davenport, Iowa. Dr. Sid Williams does the same with B.J.'s home in Florida. The city of Davenport's museum has a whole wing devoted to B.J. palmer; quite an honor.

No RHT, this time you are totally wrong. Me thinks a little jealousy motivates you. You see I knew B.J., I knew him when I was a little boy; he was a friend of my family. I knew him as a teacher, I was, as you say, "exposed" to him, I understood his personality. And please, he did not "wear costumes depicting Napoleon and Ceasar;" the pictures you saw were B.J. in his "Kentucky colonel" outfit! He enjoyed the honor and had fun playing the role of Colonel Palmer to the hilt.

No RHT, your mind most certainly was not "developed" by the teachings of B.J. Palmer, had it been you would not have written your article; but we do understand you much better now.

"Hail to B.J. Palmer!!!"

*Fred H. Barge, D.C., Ph.C.
President, International Chiropractors Association*

Dear Editor:

In comment to the "B.J. Love/Hate" article, Dr. Palmer seems to have been one of the first to really develop ideas and also evolve chiropractic knowledge. He did a lot of his own research trying to document the things which chiropractic could do. If other members of our profession would

actually read some of his books and try to understand the importance of the adjustment to remove subluxations, especially the upper cervical spine, to let the inherent healing ability in their patients function, they would be amazed at the dramatic improvements. Philosophy is not a toy; it is common sense and is a part of modern chiropractic research.

I do not worship B.J. Palmer, but I think that he made the most important findings in chiropractic today and to progress without them is not progression. If this is considered being cultish, then what about the motion palpation cult or other cults?

Keith Fliedner, D.C.
Englewood, Colorado

Dear Dr. Tyler:

Consider this "fan mail." I should have written sooner, but you know how that goes.

Thank you for each and every one of your articles; they are so funny I laugh out loud.

Your daring honesty is what sets you apart. Stay there, you're doing a great job.

The latest about B.J.; I'm still laughing.

JoAnn Mandato
Spotswood, New Jersey

Dear Dr. Tyler:

I read with interest your article in Dynamic Chiropractic of July 18 titled "B.J. -- A Love/Hate Relationship." Surely the article was written in the anticipation of stirring up response from those who appreciate what B.J. did for our profession, and who would want to take issue with you regarding your remarks. If that was the intent, I imagine your article is getting positive results.

On the other hand, if you were serious and really feel the way you indicated, then I feel very sorry for you. If we cannot be proud and appreciative of those who have been responsible for our profession being here, we might as well go to Washington, tear down the Washington Monument and the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials and destroy all the currency with the presidents' pictures on it. I am sure if we checked our history we would find good and bad in all these people, but we still honor those who have meant so much to our country. Surely we would not want to do any less for those who have meant so much to our profession.

In retrospect, Richard, maybe you are subluxated and need a good atlas adjustment.

D.D. Humber, D.C.
Senior vice president for development
Life Chiropractic College
Marietta, Georgia

Editor's Note:

In the May 23, 1990 issue of "DC," we published an article entitled "Visual Recovery." This article was reprinted with permission from the Journal of Behavioral Optometry 1990, Volume 1, No. 3 for the purpose of establishing some dialogue and stimulating the interrelationship between the two professions. The following are excerpts from letters that Irwin B. Suchoff, O.D., editor-in-chief of the

Journal of Behavioral Optometry received and forwarded to us here at "DC."

Dear Editor:

I have heard reports from patients about improved eyesight following chiropractic spinal adjustments. Off the top of my head, I made a list of nine patients who reported positive changes visually over my nine years of practice in this town. The following is a list of patient comments:

- The optometrist said the glaucoma pressure reading dropped back to normal without drugs.
- I noticed I was reading a magazine in the kitchen and then realized I didn't have my glasses on.
- I was able to read "shampoo vs. conditioner" in the shower without having to distinguish different shape and color bottles.
- My vision has been helped. I don't need to wear my glasses as often.
- My vision was blurry, so I knew I needed an adjustment.

Each of these patients came in with other primary complaints but were pleased to enjoy improved vision. Had vision been a primary complaint, I would have specifically employed the following other approaches in addition: nutrition, eye exercises, cranial adjusting, reflexology, and meridian therapy. I too am happy to see the increased sharing between the professions, let's keep it up!

Keith L. Hediger, D.C.
Kodiak, Alaska

Dear Editor:

I must inform you that my vision has been extremely bad since the age of seven. Uncorrected, my vision is worse than 20/200. After each chiropractic adjustment my vision is noticeably sharper sharper and clearer; although no measurement has been taken to determine if there is a change in visual acuity, I still wear the same prescription lenses.

Another point to interest is the use of extended-wear contact lenses. In my case, I have been able to retain the extended-wear lenses for periods of up to six weeks prior to removing for cleansing. Periodic eye examinations did not reveal any intrusion of microvasculature into the cornea. I attribute this tolerance to extended-wear lenses to regular chiropractic adjustments. Interesting, isn't it?

Constantine Pandazis
Astoria, New York

Dear Editor:

Doctors Gilman and Bergstrand have provided an important increment to the data base through their quantification of visual changes before and after adjustive interventions, and one can only encourage the collaborative efforts they propose.

It is unfortunate, however, that these authors dismiss the possibility of spontaneous remission. Given the typically idiosyncratic sequelae of head trauma, "spontaneous remission" (a rather vague term which underscores our ignorance of cause and effect in this case) should be more seriously considered. The stable, pre-adjustive baseline they established is suggestive, but hardly a rebuttal

to their third rival hypothesis. The opinion of the authors and their patient, that adjustive care was a causal factor in the visual return, carries no special epistemological weight. Greater caution in interpreting their results is indicated.

Joseph C. Keating, Jr., Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Palmer College of Chiropractic West

Dear Editor:

In my practice, there are numerous cases of improved vision following the adjustment of the axis vertebra. I welcome the positive bilateral dialogue between optometry and chiropractic for the betterment of the two professions and the patient. Two miracles have been performed: restoration of hearing in 1985, and the restoration of sight in 1990 through chiropractic. This is simply marvelous.

John W.C. Loh, D.C.

Port Coquitlam, British Columbia

Dear Editor:

I have many, many case histories of people who stated that their vision improved after a chiropractic adjustment. Seldom, however, does anyone come to me specifically because they have a vision problem. The following case, which I just treated a few months ago, is an exception.

History: A 61 year old woman came to me on 3-8-90 with the chief complaint of "double vision." On 1-12-90 she turned her head to the right, and when she suddenly turned it back, she developed double vision. She had been to three different eye specialists, all who diagnosed her as having a palsy in the fourth cranial nerve. She told me they felt it was related to her diabetes.

Observing her extraocular movements confirmed a total loss of medial inferior movement in the left eye. After examining her, my diagnosis from a chiropractic viewpoint was an upper cervical subluxation complex. On that day, I x-rayed, analyzed, and adjusted the atlanto-occipital joint using an upper cervical adjusting instrument.

Eight days later she began to notice that she was not seeing double all the time. Observation of her extraocular movements on that day showed them to be normal.

Approximately five weeks later, her vision had completely returned to normal.

There were eight office visits over the course of six weeks. I adjusted the atlas the first two visits using the upper cervical instrument, and the subsequent visits I adjusted the C2-C3 articulation using manipulation. I might note to you that I personally feel that the first two atlas adjustments were all that were really necessary to correct the vision. The subsequent C2-C3 adjustments were given only after I felt the atlanto-occipital subluxation had been corrected, and were done only to correct fixations motion palpated at that level.

One of the very common complaints I hear from patients who have suffered spinal trauma due to a "whiplash" type of injury is blurred vision. I quite honestly cannot recall anyone who has not reported to me that their blurred vision had cleared up or improved after the atlanto-occipital subluxation was corrected. Usually it clears up within a day, but on a number of occasions, I have had people get off the adjusting table and the first thing they comment is that their vision has cleared up.

Stuart F. Pardee, D.C.
Gardnerville, Nevada

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