

## Power of One, Force of Many

Kent Greenawalt

What if chiropractic could unite? What if chiropractic could spend the same amount of money on marketing and advertising as the drug companies do? What if previous generations of chiropractors had not kept practicing in spite of medical doctors' opposition? What if the American public saw a chiropractor as often as it sees a dentist? What if the media provided more positive coverage of chiropractic? What if enrollment at chiropractic colleges was going up? What if chiropractic could work together as a team?

The power of one, the force of many. Chiropractic has already experienced the result of this concept. D.D. Palmer had a powerful idea: to heal the body by treating the spine and nervous system. It has taken the force of many - all of the past and present chiropractors - to turn his idea into the reality of chiropractic today. Chiropractic has come a long way in 109 years, and now we are poised to go even further.

"The power of one, the force of many" is the perfect way to describe the chiropractic public relations campaign. The power of one message: to get the public to go see a chiropractor. The force of all of chiropractic: the associations, the colleges, the vendors, and every individual DC. We need to send one powerful message to the public, instead of numerous confusing messages. If the national PR campaign is going to succeed, the force of many is critical. We will accomplish more when we unite and work together as a team.

Andrew Carnegie once said, "Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." We all share the common vision of a better future for chiropractic. The uncommon results we want to achieve are more patients at chiropractic offices, a greater understanding of the profession by the public and the health care community, and more positive coverage in the media. The accomplishments of individual chiropractors will add up to a stronger, more united profession.

The constant infighting within chiropractic has damaged the profession - with the government, with the health care community, and worst of all, with potential patients. Our lack of teamwork is killing us slowly. We would benefit so much more if we worked together. The Olympics are being held this summer, and many people have taken time out of their busy lives to cheer for our nation's athletes. We can look to the Olympics for examples of how teamwork can benefit individuals. Athletes in any team sport are only as good as their team. Even Michael Jordan could not win an NBA championship by himself.

Anyone who has ever played a team sport, whether football, baseball, soccer, hockey, or volleyball, knows that the whole of the team can only be as great as the sum of its players. Every player on the team contributes to its success. Each player benefits from the skills of his or her teammates, but there is still room for outstanding performances by individuals. Wouldn't chiropractic be stronger if the profession functioned more like a team? If, instead of arguing about our differences, we worked with each other to achieve greater success? When great athletes work together, they can bring home gold medals and championship trophies. When chiropractic starts to work together, we will

change the future of the profession.

Many people are doubtful that chiropractic unity can work. They say that there are too many differences in philosophies; too many years of conflict; too much pride at stake. Chiropractic has everything to gain with unity: busier, more profitable practices; increased enrollment at chiropractic colleges; a respected place in the American health care system; and more patients helped. There is absolutely nothing to be gained by continuing to fight with each other.

When the founding fathers of the United States came together to sign the *Declaration of Independence* and draft the *Constitution*, they did not agree with each other on every issue. But they still came together for the good of the nation. American independence and American democracy were once just great ideas that many people thought were impossible. The founding fathers, who put aside their differences because their common goal was more important, made them possible. Teamwork made them possible. Right now, chiropractic unity is just a great idea. It will take teamwork, effort and sacrifice to make it a reality.

Chiropractic cannot wait forever for us to start taking action. Only one in 10 Americans is a chiropractic patient. Ninety percent of Americans are not chiropractic patients. Enrollment in chiropractic colleges has declined 34 percent since 1996. Our lack of unity is costing us opportunities: the opportunity to grow, the opportunity to help the people who need it, and the opportunity to gain the respect that we deserve. There is no better time to unite than right now.

We already know that chiropractic can accomplish great things when we unite. After the September 11 tragedies, chiropractic united to raise donations for the Red Cross relief effort; we raised over \$500,000 within a few short days. We raised more than \$600,000 to support the legal teams defending chiropractic in the HCFA lawsuits in a matter of hours at the Parker Seminar in Las Vegas. We can achieve greater things as a team than we ever could alone. We have used the force of our many for the good of the nation and the profession before, and I know we can do it again.

Chiropractic has survived 109 years filled with turmoil and disagreements. We have had success, but we have yet to have the success we deserve. Chiropractic care can change lives. The public deserves to know how great chiropractic is. It is long past time for us to come together for the greater good of the profession. We can work as a team to promote the profession, to get our message to patients, and to build a better image. We can use the force of our many to publicize the power of our one message: to get the public to see a chiropractor.

Famed football coach Vince Lombardi said, "Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work." It is also what will make the chiropractic national public relations campaign work.

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SEPTEMBER 2004