

Unity: Who Cares?

Kent Greenawalt

Unity: It is the act of bringing people together to produce harmony. It sounds simple enough, but unity can be a complicated issue when it comes to chiropractors.

Who cares if there is unity in the chiropractic profession? Apparently not as many doctors as you might think. There are so many factions of chiropractors that have differing ideas on what is best for the profession, and that confusion is obvious to the general public.

With only approximately 10 percent of the American population currently seeking chiropractic treatment, it is up to us to spread the word about its benefits and stand together to show a united front to the other 90 percent; the curious onlookers who could greatly benefit from our care. This column is dedicated to helping you get back to the root of your passion for chiropractic and turn that passion into unity.

Let's start from the beginning - at least the beginning of your career. Why did you become a chiropractor? Was it for the money? Was it for the status? Was it to help people? I bet the main reason you got into this profession is a personal one; probably an experience that changed the way you look at life, which in turn, inspired you to become a chiropractor.

Sometimes we forget what brought us into this profession because we get so bogged down with the day-to-day aspects of running a business. We see so many patients in a day and are so bombarded with paperwork that we slowly change the way we view our practice.

We need to remember that what we do as chiropractors is not just a job; it is a way of life that changes our patients' lives for the better. Not many people can say that about their daily work! If you can take a step back from your daily grind and realize what a tremendous impact you are having on the community and individual lives, I guarantee you'll feel that passion for the profession again.

Who Cares?

The best way I know how to describe the importance of passion in your profession is through the powerful words of some of today's leaders in the chiropractic community:

Mark Sanna, DC, CEO of Breakthrough Coaching

"As my colleagues, I ask you to join me in an oath - to channel your caring into ways that we will be proud of in the next 100 years. Will you make an oath to keep caring, and not to submit to the tug of contrived professionalism that medicine has embraced in its health care paradigm? Chiropractic is a great profession. We are creating a future of health care. It's hard to see it when you live it, but you are going to make a difference. Your patients love you because you help them and because you are part of a profession that is real. Your patients want to see you because you care. And because you care, your patients will care. I invite you to join me in teaching your patients how CARING can change the lives of their children and of the children of generations to

come."

Guy Riekeman, DC, President of Life University

"Unity - the word produces an immediate and automatic visceral response in every chiropractor. Although others may become excited and jump at the opportunity to offer their thoughts and plans for unity, the chiropractor's body stiffens and their eyes glaze over, because they are tired of hearing the notion, knowing that no action will be taken. They no longer believe unity will happen in this profession. And although there appears to be greater concern for this issue among the professional leaders than those DCs who work daily in the trenches of patient care, it is an issue of grave significance to the future of the profession."

Michael Flynn, DC, Board Member of the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress

"Many influential leaders have taken the responsibility to put the 'U' back in Unity. The pieces are in place except for one - you. Without the work of dedicated individual chiropractors, there would be no profession. We can't succeed without your help. It doesn't matter whether your practice is in Maine or Montana. It doesn't matter whether you have been in practice for two months or twenty years. Every chiropractor can benefit. There is no downside. Our goals are to promote the benefits of chiropractic, educate the public and gain respect for our profession. To those who say it can't be done, think again."

Bob Hoffman, DC, President and COO of The Masters Circle

"Our profession is at an important crossroads and the time is perfect for us to take back control of who we are and our significant role in society. It is time to realize once and for all that there has never been a better time to be a chiropractor. Let us stand taller, be prouder and treat each other with dignity and respect. As we stand more united and raise our standards of excellence, we will win the admiration and respect from all others. This is our profession and it is time we stop allowing outside influences and the small minority to decide what chiropractic is for us. There is so much we can rally around so that ultimately we can better serve our patients. Isn't that what it is really all about?"

Reading those strong statements, I am reminded that these leaders of the chiropractic community won't be around forever. Who will step up to take the reins when they go? What can you do to be a part of this unity revolution? It's not as simple as joining a club, paying dues and forgetting about the mission.

Tell your state association what works and what doesn't. Talk to your peers about the problems or concerns you have. Remember what inspired you in the first place and strive to inspire others. To truly bring about change, you must have the courage to speak up for what you believe and learn how you can be a part of the solution.

To have a united voice means you must find yours. Once you find your voice, let the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress help you spread the word. Let us take care of educating the public about the benefits of chiropractic. Let us take care of promoting wellness through chiropractic. Let us take care of changing the minds of 90 percent of the American population. Together, we will make this work.

Donations to the Campaign for Chiropractic can be mailed to:

The Foundation for Chiropractic Progress
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