

Looking Forward to the Future of Chiropractic

TRANSITION AND TRANSFORMATION: OUR PAST AND FUTURE

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I began chiropractic school with the belief that all you need to succeed in life is passion, determination and vision. While these qualities are essential for a life filled with purpose, experience has also revealed that there are other qualities that are beneficial; qualities such as tenacity, compromise and humility. It has been a gift to observe my strengths and weaknesses and to ask how these will serve me moving forward in my career. This process of discovery is one that we each go through and that is undertaken collectively as a profession, as we observe strengths that can be built upon while identifying weaknesses and methods to transform them in an effort to better serve humanity.

Looking back on the past 25 years in chiropractic, there are a multitude of accomplishments and a rich history that have led us to this current moment. Chiropractic has been characterized during this time by incredible transition as we have gained new legal rights, witnessed expansion and development worldwide, and made advances in research and technology to better serve the global community. Advances in education, technique, research, technology and communication have built upon the foundation of chiropractic philosophy to enrich our scope and advocate for patients in a world often plagued by illness and disease. This time of transition has occurred within a vastly evolving climate of health care; a world in which consumers are demanding that their health care needs be met with new approaches.

During this time, our profession has sought to establish itself in the public arena and to expand in a changing world. We represent a health care approach that has more and more to offer a world in which the health, happiness and well-being of its citizens is often diminishing. The past 25 years have seen a world that has adapted to a fast-paced, accessible, global market where advances in technology and communication have altered human interaction.

How we as a profession choose to move forward among these advances has yet to be seen. The tools of technology are accessible to us and help in our endeavors. However, it is the art of the chiropractic adjustment and its profound ability to improve health, function and our patients' quality of life that must be preserved. As a student, it is awe-inspiring to think of the countless years of sacrifice by our leaders and individual practitioners who have led to our current rights. It is also imperative that we not take these rights for granted, but continue to build on the vision of those that have come before us. Equally as important is creating leadership within the new generation of chiropractors. The future of chiropractic is yet to be defined and will require clarity, purpose and determination. The world is in need of healing and we have a responsibility to share how we can contribute.

We can build upon the past 25 years that brought such incredible transition to our profession and move into a future characterized by transformation. Moving from transition to transformation can only happen if we collectively make a choice to enact meaningful change that will help to define who we are and the ways in which we are an integral part of the health of our practice members, families, communities and global community.

Clarifying the definition of chiropractic and finding ways to create a unified voice while honoring the diversity that exists between and within associations, techniques and approaches will be key to these successes. In addition, supporting innovative research and working with legislators at the local, state, national and international levels are strategies that can and do enact meaningful change. None of this will happen without the willingness of our community to ask ourselves questions, take an honest look at the direction we are headed and work together.

We ask of the public, health care community and world to be willing to identify their paradigm and to question where health, vitality, illness and disease come from. We also ask that people potentially shift this paradigm as they experience, through chiropractic, that their potential to heal comes from within. What is our current paradigm regarding who we are and what we have to offer to a public that is informed, self-aware and interested in self-directed healing? We need to look at the answers together and be willing to make positive changes in the areas where we see the possibility for improvement.

The desire and need for transformation in this world are palpable. The world is ready for transformation, but people do not necessarily know how to start the process. The experience of the chiropractic adjustment is the beginning of this transformation for our patients. For our profession, transformation begins when each practitioner asks themselves what they are willing to do to contribute to the growth and evolution of chiropractic. Transformation is achieved when bold action is taken following this question. Transformation is dependent on each of us giving our unique talents to a profession that is waiting for our contributions, insights and actions.

We are catalysts for healing through the work that we do. Are we willing to also be catalysts in the health of our future? The action that is necessary for transformation will take many forms. Whatever your methods, when the majority of people are invested in creating change and understand the need to be the leader *they* have been waiting for, then we will be at the point of shifting from transition into transformation. Once we recognize what is needed, we are responsible for being involved in its creation. Individual responsibility combined with collective vision is a recipe for future success. Our willingness to enact change in our lives, practices, associations and public persona becomes a powerful influence on the world around us. We are each responsible for preparing our own inevitable process of transformation. The process of collective transformation will be defined by our ability to work together to enact change.

I am fortunate to have worked with the WCCS (World Congress of Chiropractic Students) for the past three years, an organization that finds unity among various student perspectives worldwide and works together to create positive change on a global scale. My experience with this organization and my time at Life West have shown me that we can all be involved in moving forward into a future that is defined by transformation. If we lend our passionate voices and dedicate ourselves, others will follow our example. We have all witnessed what is possible when people are able to live a life free of interference and to experience their potential. We stand at a moment in time that also allows us to provide this healing to our profession through collective vision and purposeful action.

Congratulations to *Dynamic Chiropractic* for its years of service to the chiropractic community! I am honored to be beginning my chiropractic career standing on the shoulders of the leaders who have come before me and I look forward to a lifetime of giving, loving and serving in an effort to contribute to the transformation of the future.

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