

How Was Your Day?

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I woke up 1 minute before the alarm was set to go off. This had to be a good omen. I showered, ate my cereal and was heading out the door to the car when I dropped my keys in the grass. When I bent down to pick them up, I found a four-leaf clover! It's got to be a great day!

I drove to the office and all the traffic lights continued to stay green. I got there in record time. The first patient of the day was new - an elderly woman with persistent hip pain. "I can't walk ten feet without pain", she complained. I examined her, [adjusted the hip](#), goaded the rotary muscles and taped her hip muscles.

"Doctor I can walk again!" she exclaimed and almost skipped out of the office. Yeah! OK, next miracle please. And it happened. A young man said the headaches he had suffered with for more than 10 years had disappeared since I first treated his neck. He almost wept for joy as he explained how much better he would be at playing Texas Hold 'em poker without the distraction of a throbbing headache.

The entire morning was like this. Every patient seemed to be getting miraculously better. It was like I was hitting a home run each time I touched someone. Plus, patients were actually doing the things I'd been suggesting, like losing weight and exercising. They were even gladly paying their bills!



Alice, my office manager, showed me a big check that had come in that morning, from the settlement of a personal-injury case. "We've been waiting for this case to settle for over four years," she said. "Now you can afford to buy us that new photocopier!" That was actually the only negative time of the morning, because since the moment she'd told me of the "windfall," I had started dreaming of buying myself a tricked-out golf cart.

Then I walked into my second treatment room and was immediately hugged by a young woman with a big belly. "I can't thank you enough for saving my life", she said. "We're going to have this boy baby soon, and we're going to name it after you: John Hanks Zipsky!" How could I object?

Lunch time rolled around; I had a great-tasting smoothie and my usual Brazil nuts. Then I laid back in my "roller" chair for a nap. Life was good ... for now.

The afternoon started out differently. The first patient told me that since his last neck adjustment, he has experienced continuous pain down his arm into his hand. I examined him and decided I should send him for an MRI. Not a good thing. Then a patient who is never satisfied came in with new complaints. She's always coming up with some variation of her chronic pain, which is always

migrating and never improving.

"It's my solar plexus this time, and my entire right side has this crawling sensation," she told me. Because of this new variation of her chronic symptom theme, she told me she needs to come in three times a week. She also knows I will try to refer her somewhere else, and she knows that I know she won't go. We both know too much.

I heard a patient arguing with Alice over a billing misunderstanding. I knew better than to get involved. But because Alice was distracted, a new patient left in a huff because we weren't paying enough attention to him. He had to wait all of 10 minutes before I could see him.

My next patient was a fragile, [osteoporotic](#) elderly woman. I used my best gentle technique, with a subtle, barely perceptible pressure, and promptly broke one of her ribs.

"Dang it! I said loudly. "I broke your rib!" "I know", she said between shallow breaths. "But you are a conscientious and responsible doctor. I'm sure you have good malpractice insurance." I had Alice walk her to her car, while she was on her phone to her lawyer.

A new patient was waiting. When I shook his hand, I could somehow sense that developing a rapport might be difficult. "I don't want X-rays, I don't want a big-deal exam, and I won't come back for a bunch of visits," he said. "If you can't fix me today, just say so, and I will find another chiro who will!"

I sat for a few moments and then told myself, *This must be some kind of test*. But what?

Alice gave me the info on the next few patients. "You have that woman coming in who always brings her six kids along, plus their two Rotweillers. Then, there is the male model who talks about himself incessantly. Finally, there is Trudy the Screamer, whom you have asked to come in as the last patient of the day, since she screams so loudly when you adjust her. She just can't help it."

On the way home, I tried to call my wife, but my cell phone was dead. My car had a flat tire about a mile from my house, so I had to walk the remaining distance in the rain. Because I had forgotten my keys back in the car, I had to knock on my own front door to come in. My wife opened the door and exclaimed, "Honey, you're all wet! But how was your day?"

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