

Our Divergent Reality of Health

Donald M. Petersen Jr., BS, HCD(hc), FICC(h), Publisher

You may be noticing that the two different approaches to health and health care are becoming more pronounced. There are those who are willing to do and take whatever the medical community prescribes, no matter how extreme. Then there are those self-reliant souls who are willing to do some research, ask hard questions, and think (and act) for themselves.

The second group is the most likely to understand the concepts of wellness, fitness and chiropractic. They are in tune with their bodies and can "feel it" when they haven't eaten right, exercised recently or had an adjustment in awhile. This wellness group includes your regular patients - the ones you see every month or so, even if they don't have a specific complaint of significant magnitude.

The first group is headed down the road to a life of poorer health through an increasing number of prescriptions they will probably be taking for the rest of their lives. There are slowly, but surely losing their ability to do the things they used to do and will eventually be confined to their homes and beds. Like the unfortunates highlighted in the [front-page article](#) in this issue ("Prescribing Trends: Not a Pretty Picture"), they know their health is getting worse, but are dutifully doing what their MDs tell them anyway.

Like wellness evangelists, each of us can find ourselves watching helplessly as this polypharmacy group blindly marches down the road to illness hell. We want to see them repent from their self-destructive lifestyle (smoking, junk food, no exercise, OTC / prescription drugs, etc.) and adopt wellness habits, but most don't seem to want to respond. They have been convinced by the dark (drug) side that what they are doing is health (care).

Occasionally, there is that rare moment when these individuals have had enough. They are suddenly willing to listen to a different health philosophy and consider making the changes required to improve their health. It is at that moment when we need to be ready and available to answer questions and provide direction.

As a profession, chiropractic is the lone voice of wellness in a health care system driven largely by the pharmaceutical industry. On the grand scale, our voice is too soft and our importance too underappreciated to be heard by the masses. But as individuals, there are things we can do that will translate to a greater health for the people in our community:

Be the Example - If you are not living a wellness lifestyle yourself, no one will listen to you. Live as an example to your patients and community. They are watching what you do more than hearing what you say.

Talk About It - Be the wellness consultant to those around you. Let your conversation be about the latest study that supports chiropractic, nutrition, healthy eating, etc. (There are hundreds of very short research summaries on my blog. Feel free to use one of those. These are also posted on my Facebook page (www.facebook.com/donpetersenjr) every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Please feel free to share these with your patients as well.)

Share Chiropractic in Your Community - The Foundation for Chiropractic Progress has developed the most extensive chiropractic marketing package ever (<http://www.f4cp.com/files/f4cp-member-benefits.pdf>). It includes national print ads featuring foundation spokespersons; press releases relaying positive chiropractic stories; advertorials (print-ready editorial ads) welcomed by small / medium newspapers; TV and radio public-service announcements; and white papers that validate the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of chiropractic care. All are available for you to use in your community when you become a foundation member (www.f4cp.com/pledge.php), which is very inexpensive to do.

As a chiropractic profession, we are deliberately different. We choose adjustments over drugs, fitness over inactivity and nutrition over junk food. As the population of the United States become more drug dependent, we have a duty to let people know how chiropractic can keep them well without drugs and surgery. It isn't expensive or time consuming; it just takes intent and commitment. n

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