

Look Again

Jonathan Sevy, DC

Author's note: This article was written almost entirely by James Parker, BS, DC, founder of the Parker Seminars and Parker College of Chiropractic. Dr. Jim asked me a couple of times to read it over and make suggestions, which I did. My contributions, however, were minor in nature. He passed away in 1997. I worked closely with "Dr. Jim" during and after his presidency at Parker College. During the closing years of his life, he focused more and more of his research and teaching on subtle healing energies. He continued to receive manual chiropractic adjustments up to the day of his death.

Professor Louis Agassiz was a renowned zoologist, geologist and paleontologist in the 19th century. His contemporaries acknowledged him as a scientist and teacher far ahead of his time. He would always tell his students, "Look! Look again - and again!" I took this to mean there must always be more.

I recently read that bit of philosophy, and wondered about us - day in and day out - adjusting vertebral subluxation complexes (VSC). Our adjustments have resulted in untold millions of happy human beings whose pain has been relieved, health restored and lives saved. Still, I wonder if we should "look again?"

Is the VSC the End-all of Chiropractic?

There is a story about Agassiz worthy of repeating. A young college student aspired to become his assistant. While waiting for an interview, he kept studying the various fish in Agassiz's laboratory. When the famed professor arrived, the student remarked how he was studying the unusual array of fish, and Agassiz asked, "What did you notice?"

The student proudly reeled off an encyclopedic knowledge of the taxonomy of the various fish, and Agassiz replied, "Yes, but look again," and left.

The student continued to examine the fish until dark and returned the next day hoping to have his interview. The professor was late getting in and asked again, "What did you notice?" The student quickly gave him a list of new observations to which the scientist nodded his head and replied, "Yes. Look again - and again," before promptly leaving.

"This is hard!" thought the student, discouraged. He drove himself to reexamine specimens that he thought he fully understood. To his surprise, his determination was rewarded with new insights. When Agassiz returned, the student eagerly reported that he had noticed that fish were symmetrical, and that this symmetry was the key to their successful survival as aquatic beings.

The professor was pleased, and awarded the student the job he craved. Then, as Agassiz was leaving, he gave the new assistant his first official assignment: "Look some more. Look again, and again."

We Need to "Look Again" at the Reasons for Our Results

I feel in my senior years in chiropractic that we too need to "look again" at the reasons for our results. Even though our practices based on the VSC have produced literal miracles, how much thought have we given to the patients we didn't help? What unchanging principles are we missing?

Perhaps there are questions we should ask ourselves.

Are we doing the right thing for the right reason?

Are we perhaps doing the right thing for the wrong reason?

Are we even doing the wrong thing for the wrong reason, but still getting great results? Are we inadvertently cooperating with some related, near-miraculous health principles, perhaps dealing with subtle energies so advanced that all science is unaware of them?

Are we too close to the trees to see the forest? In other words, have our tremendous results been incidental, anecdotal or even accidental?

I successfully ran a referral practice and another practice using advertising. I ran 18 clinics for nearly six years, with 112 DC clinic directors and over 300 CAs. I took care of some 13,000 patients myself during the early part of these 51 years, and directed the clinical operation for another 44,000 patients. During this time, I found that 80 percent of our patients got results they called anything from "outstanding" to "great." Ten percent got some results, and yet we failed to help 10 percent - possibly even hurting some patients.

Many well-respected organizations in chiropractic, including the ACA and ICA, have also performed such surveys. I've noticed with glee that these surveys came up with about the same percentages: 80-10-10.

But if our principle is right, what has kept us from attracting the multitude of patients outside of the musculoskeletal arena? With a record of 80-10-10, shouldn't patients stampede our offices? Have patients suffering with visceral and other such problems simply "never given chiropractic a chance?" Could our exclusion be due to the ignorance or obstinacy of the public? If we were allowed to "adjust the VSC" of every ambulatory patient in a given hospital, would the results send a third of them home in good health, as many of us have postulated? I think so, but is it really so?

Surely, we have had enough opportunity over the years with all sorts of health problems to prove our worth beyond low back pain. So why don't we advertise the healing or relief of serious organic diseases? Why don't enthusiastic referrals with such conditions fill our offices? Have we lost sight, or never caught sight, of *what really happens* when we adjust the VSC?

There is little reason to question the existence of the VSC or its detrimental impact on human health, but should we "look again?" Could it be that there is a psychic element in every adjustment, as my old friend Nip Quickly used to say? If so, is it merely psychological, or a more subtle form of energy? If a subtle energy component is predominant in our results, shall we embrace it, research it, and master it to more directly correct the cause of all disease?

I am not questioning the VSC. I am questioning us. Am I a heretic to ask, "Is the VSC the end-all of chiropractic?" Can our profession improve on our current explanations of the mechanism of action in

our healing interactions? That we have relied on the VSC as the end-all of chiropractic philosophy for over 100 years does not prove it. Misconceptions can persist. Look again.

Jonathan Sevy,DC
Oroville, Washington

MAY 2002

©2024 Dynamic Chiropractic™ All Rights Reserved