

The Importance of Intent

John Amaro, LAc, DC, Dipl. Ac.(NCCAOM), Dipl.Med.Ac.(IAMA)

Since this is my first article of 1995, and as everyone in the chiropractic profession is aware of our 100th Anniversary, it would probably be improper if I did not make some mention of our founder D.D. Palmer.

While D.D. is not associated with Asian healing, was there a clinical parallel between D.D. and Asian healing? D.D. Palmer was born in 1845 and learned "magnetic healing" in 1885 and established the Palmer Cure and Infirmary in Davenport, Iowa in 1887. Palmer practiced magnetic healing for a full decade prior to his encounter with Harvey Lillard in 1895.

Magnetic healing, taught and practiced in America from 1870 through 1900, very closely parallels what is commonly known as Chi Kung. It is estimated by the Shanghai Chi Gong Research Institute that there are approximately 3,500 forms of Chi Gong being practiced worldwide today.

Palmer as a 10-year practitioner of magnetic healing was obviously extremely aware of the principles of Chi King even though it was not necessarily known to the Western mind by that particular name, the techniques and principles were the same. It's important to remember that during this time there was an explosive growth of Asians immigrating to America, many of whom helped build the railroads across the US.

I find it quite interesting that in some of Palmer's early writings and photographic records he identifies and treats an Asian patient. Did he have some connection to the Asian community or was it just coincidental? Given the fact that Palmer was an established practitioner of a healing art closely aligned, if not identical, to Asian Chi King, it is important to analyze Palmer's recollection of the "first chiropractic adjustment." D.D. Palmer wrote:

"Harvey Lillard ... deaf for 17 years that he could not hear the racket of a wagon on the street or the ticking of a watch. I made inquiry as to the cause of his deafness and was informed that when he was exerting himself in a cramped, stooping position, he felt something give way in his back and immediately became deaf."

"An examination showed a vertebra racked from its normal position. I reasoned that if that vertebra was replaced, the man's hearing should be restored. With this object in view, (emphasis added) a half hour's talk persuaded Mr. Lillard to allow me to replace it. I racked it into position by using the spinous process as a lever, and soon the man could hear as before."

"There was nothing accidental about this as it was accomplished with an object in view and the result expected was obtained. There was nothing crude about this adjustment, it was specific, so much that no other Chiropractor has equaled it."

By analyzing Palmer's own words of what happened on September 18, 1895 it's apparent he proceeded to treat Harvey Lillard with positive expectation and intent of purpose. There was "an object in view and the result expected was obtained."

I suppose it is up to research and scientific scrutiny to prove that what Palmer did that fateful day had true neurological connections and can be repeatedly duplicated by anyone who "racks a spinous process into position." However keep in mind it just so happens that Palmer's adjustment was so specific that "no other chiropractor has equaled it."

The intent of this article is not to create a question mark about Palmer practicing magnetic healing and Chi Kung when he gave that "first" chiropractic adjustment with an object in view and the expectation of results, it is only to remind us of the power of intent and expectation.

In 1995, let's focus our attention on positive expectations for our patients, families and profession with an object in view and expect results. It's an amazing fact of life, significant things happen when this focus is charged with enthusiasm.

The best to all of you in 1995 ("Year of the Pig").

*John A. Amaro, DC, FIACA, Dipl.Ac.
Carefree, Arizona, USA*

JANUARY 1995