

Reflections

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In the classic movie, "It's A Wonderful Life," starring James Stewart, a man who has become despondent is given a chance to go back and see what his own life, and the lives of his family and the people around him, would be like if he did not exist. The movie and the theme cause me to reflect just what a wonderful life I have had since I became involved in chiropractic, and to an even greater extent, how the people of the world have benefitted over the past 99 years since the inception of chiropractic on September 10, 1985.

A wonderful and tumultuous 22 years in chiropractic have allowed me to see many things come to pass that have benefitted people throughout the world who have come in contact with chiropractors. Literally millions have regained their health through drugless, nonsurgical chiropractic care over the past century. It is impossible to determine the wonderful effects that their return to health have had upon their future and the lives of their families, and the people that they interact with on a daily basis. Epileptics, have been removed from the debilitating side effects and subpar life under the drugs that they needed to take, are now leading a normal existence due to the chiropractic adjustment. Just think of what their lives were like prior to their introduction to chiropractic care and how their physical and emotional well-being has changed with their body's return to health. Patients who did not live a normal life, due to the serious pain in many areas of their bodies, have now returned to a state of well-being and happiness because of chiropractic care. I'm not talking about the "miracle cures" but the miracle of normal health in everyday life as a result of the chiropractic adjustment upon professors, executives, workers at the automotive companies, farmers, teachers, children, and all the many millions of others who have had life changing experiences because of their contact with chiropractic care.

These millions of patients have been cared for and restored to wellness by doctors of chiropractic who are members of the ICA, ACA and many who are not members of any national association. These people have been restored to health by men and women of the chiropractic profession who have dedicated their lives willingly to helping others.

The profession over the last decade has changed dramatically. We no longer have people entering our profession who wish to become doctors of chiropractic because of their interactions with other DCs or their own healing experience. When I was a freshman at Logan College in 1964, the vast majority of students all were there because of a personal relationship with chiropractic or that of their families. Today it is different. Many young men and women choose our profession because they feel it is something they wish to belong to; wish to become part of a healing profession that since its inception has not used drugs or surgery. My wish is that their lives become as heart-warming and as dedicated and as wonderful as mine has been since I became a chiropractor.

There are many things happening within the profession that are bringing us to a turning point: these are the issues of whether or not we should go the way of the medical doctor and the osteopath concerning drugs and surgery. Do we need to increase the pre-professional requirements before these

young men and women can actually start into the educational requirements of a doctor of chiropractic, even though some medical colleges are reducing their pre-professional requirements?

In spite of the many obstacles confronting the profession today, I did want to state the obvious: The chiropractic profession is alive and well in its 99th year of existence; that it is moving forward with many great and strong men and women to guide it into its second century; that fear and distrust have no place in our profession today; that despite what many of the "elders" want or believe, the profession will be defined by those who come after us. And that the only way that we can continue to exist is for those of us who have been in practice to set a good example for those that follow. We need to discuss with the students of today the benefits of chiropractic:

- Love of the profession and the patients that we serve is the most important thing; these things alone bring us happiness, contentment, and purpose.
- We are not a profession divided, but a profession that is still dedicated to healing and kindness and service.
- Despite what the students of today read in the professional journals, newspapers, and magazines, it still is a wonderful world out there. Chiropractic still provides a wonderful life for them and their families.

I am ever so grateful to the profession that has allowed me to fulfill my innermost dreams. Because of my involvement in chiropractic, hundreds of others have become involved in chiropractic. Therefore, hundreds of thousands of others have regained their health. My family has a purpose and a meaning to their lives through chiropractic. I lived to see my daughter become a doctor of chiropractic and practice with her father for several years, and now she is ready to embark on her own life of helping others. My son has started on his pre-requisites courses towards a chiropractic career. Both of them, even as young children, expressed a desire to have what their father had: a purpose in life and the camaraderie that the chiropractic profession provided. I think this more than anything causes them to want to become doctors of chiropractic.

My wife's family, because of their interaction with chiropractic, chose to become doctors of chiropractic. Many of their nephews and nieces are involved in the profession today and several are leaders in our profession. Truly this is a wonderful life.

I know the dedication that it takes. And I have respect for all who choose to stand up and fight for what they believe in. When I was first appointed to the Commission on Accreditation for the Council on Chiropractic Education I felt that I would be the only ICA voice on that commission. While that turned out to be true, I found many people who are just as dedicated and just as devoted to the profession as I was. Politics caused us to disagree on many things, but dedication to the profession was never an issue. I have never seen anyone get rich serving the profession on its many political levels, but I have seen many wonderful, dedicated, and happy men and women receive the anointing of one who is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of chiropractic. Even the public members who have served in many capacities throughout the profession have been changed by their interactions with dedicated and devoted doctors of chiropractic.

For those of you who believe that this is nothing but a job, only a profession rather than an avocation, I

must say that I feel sorry for you. It must be terrible to wake up every morning saying, "Good God it's morning," rather than, "Good morning, God!" We all have the opportunity to get up each morning with a purpose, and through chiropractic care and the fact that I was the instrument that helped provide it.

An article that I read recently in one of the medical journals talked about the fact that students in medical college should receive a course in acting to teach them to become empathetic towards the patient. I have always believed that students in chiropractic college and doctors of chiropractic themselves have never needed a course in acting. We have always had the benefit of believing in what we do, and therefore no acting is ever necessary.

"The greatest amongst ye shall be your servant," or similar sentiments, have been expressed by many of the world's great religions. I feel wonderful when I help someone. I feel wonderful every day that I am alive that I have been allowed to become a doctor of chiropractic.

The profession is on the rise. Barriers have been broken, allowing us to take care of the vast majority of the people of the world. No longer are we relegated to the 10 percent that we care for now. We have broken through. I see in the years to come chiropractors caring for the billion people in China, the millions in Europe. I am, unashamedly, a patriotic American and glad that chiropractic was started here, but also remember that it was started by a Canadian.

As 1994 comes to an end, I continue to be grateful for people who are dedicated and hard working: Dr. Gerry Clum, president of Life West; Sid Williams, president of Life College; George Goodman, president of Logan College; Drs. Cleveland, presidents of Cleveland Colleges, and the new president of Palmer, Dr. Virgil Strang, plus all the other college presidents with whom I often do not agree, but am grateful that they have chosen to dedicate themselves to the colleges and to chiropractic. We all need to be grateful for what we have and for the things we have yet to accomplish. Chiropractic truly is, a wonderful life.

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