

A Higher Standard

Mark A. King, DC

Based on our history it is clear that chiropractic is held to a different and higher standard than our medical brethren when it comes to proving scientifically what it is we do and why it works. According to an article many of you have read, written by David Eddy, MD, in the British Medical Journal in 1991, only approximately 15 percent of medical interventions are supported by solid scientific evidence. So why is it that we have to prove scientifically everything that we do? I guess it is because we are the outsiders trying to gain more widespread acceptance. A few are so desperate for medical acceptance that they have joined the so-called orthopractic movement, and the infamous chiropractic critic, Murray Katz, MD. I have to wonder if these orthopractors are chiropractors who have simply not done well in practice or perhaps they have never received a really good chiropractic adjustment or witnessed the tremendous effects a good chiropractic adjustment can have on a person's health.

There are always plenty of things in our day to day living and non-clinical events occurring in our professional lives that distract us from what should be our focus: our patients. A professor I had at Life Chiropractic College suggested that we spend one hour each day studying to improve ourselves clinically and to keep current with the newest information to help our patients more. We need to be able to communicate to our patients in a way they can understand when we describe their examination findings, but we also need to be able to communicate to insurance companies and medical doctors. The fact is, we are held to a different standard and this is not going to change any time soon. We must be able to describe and communicate what the chiropractic adjustment does and why our care is so valuable. Stating that we realign bones and unpinch nerves is simply not acceptable anymore. We must know our anatomy better, we must understand the nervous system and why we have such a tremendous affect on it, and we must be clearly the best at giving an adjustment.

What was the last clinically related textbook you read? Are you routinely reviewing the journals and supporting them. What was the last clinically/patient-oriented seminar that you attended, not counting the continuing education requirements of your state, province or country? I have always learned by doing, and one of the advantages of many chiropractic postgraduate seminars is that they are often hands-on. That is certainly the case with the Motion Palpation Institute seminars. We typically have a few hours of lecture, but the vast majority of the time is spent demonstrating, palpating, and performing the newly learned information and techniques.

The points made in this short article still come full circle back to our patients. By becoming better adjusters and better clinicians, we can help more people. By being current and well read in the literature, we can communicate with insurance companies, medical doctors, and politicians, to bring easier access to chiropractic for our patients. The confidence in our own clinical and adjusting skills is perceived by our patients. By learning more we become more confident; by becoming more confident we become more enthusiastic. With this enthusiasm, we have more energy and can treat more patients and educate more people about the benefits of chiropractic care. Study hard and we hope to see you at an MPI seminar in 1995.

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Editor's Note: Dr. King will be conducting his next Spine 2 (S2) seminars February 11-12 in Kansas City, Missouri and February 18-19 in Toronto, Canada. You may call 1-800-359-2289.

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