

Viewpoints from Involvement

Fred Barge, DC, PhC

As a new columnist in Dynamic Chiropractic, Dr. Fredrick H. E. Barge, a second generation chiropractor (number nine in his family to pursue the profession), brings a lifetime of chiropractic experience to our pages. He is truly a chiropractic renaissance man: a clinician; researcher; developer of technics and clinics; holder of chiropractic patents; writer; author; lecturer; educator; professor; past president of the ICA; and most recently, acting president of Life Chiropractic College-West during the sabbatical of Dr. Gerard Clum.

Dr. Barge characterizes himself as a subluxation-based chiropractor; an outspoken advocate of traditional chiropractic concepts, keeping chiropractic totally drug and surgery free. Dr. Barge however notes that his viewpoints on ancillary procedures, rehabilitation, hospitalization, diagnosis, and ergonomics would place him in what most would consider a moderate chiropractic category.

We're proud to include Dr. Barge as one of our featured writers.

Why Do I Write?

When first asked by Don Petersen Jr., if I would like to write a regular column for Dynamic Chiropractic, I said, "I'm not sure, Don, I'm so involved now, I don't know if I'll have the time." Then I pondered a moment and said, "Give me 10 days and I'll give you an answer." Having recently stepped down from the ICA presidency, where some of you have read my column, "THOTS." Having just returned from six months in California as acting president of Life Chiropractic College-West, I needed some time to catch up on things in Lacrosse, Wisconsin and at Barge Chiropractic Clinic.

In my study I had two new books in various stages of writing; my devoted patients waiting for my return; and a house, yard, and family grossly neglected after a six-month absence. This certainly needed just a little bit of time on my part. Or did it? My patients were happy to be under my hands again, the grandchildren thrilled with a couple of fishing trips, the yard? Oh well, the Wisconsin winter will handle the weeds, but a writer must wield the pen. Involved? E-gads, yes!

As soon as I was able to understand, as a little boy, chiropractic has been my way of life. Plus the fact that as a practitioner of 38 years, involved not only in practice but writing, research, lecturing, and politics, I have been well-steeped in the battle ground of chiropractic, inter- and intraprofessionally. So, my friends, and most chiropractors are my friends, I find myself writing a new column -- "Viewpoints from Involvement," as my viewpoints are just that.

I will feature my "Thots" on chiropractic's past, present, and future. Some will say, "Why do you write for "DC," Fred, after all it's just a newspaper?" Yes, it is and that is exactly where the profession goes to get the news. No, we may not like some of the viewpoints, its editorials, its writers, but, I ask you,

where do you read the chiropractic news so rapidly, so currently, so thoroughly? The answer is, of course, "DC." An author unread finds little need to publish; writers face the dilemma as to where to print their efforts. Why do I write? To be read, of course, and thus help to carve out the direction of this profession. I have chosen to write a column in "DC" for a period of one year.

Our profession is clearly at the crossroads. One faction of our dichotomy seeks full medical acceptance. Those of this fraternity will roll over and purr every time a medical physician ingratiates them. To them I would say remember the words of Don King, the famous fight promoter. He essentially said this about heavy weight champion, Evander Holyfield (paraphrased): "Evander Holyfield is black, the sooner he realizes this and accepts the fact, the better off he will be."

Chiropractors are not medical doctors, they never will be part of the medical fraternity. Even as far as the osteopaths have melded themselves into medicine, an osteopath cannot be a member of the AMA. Chiropractic theory is antithetical to most medical dogma. We were not meant to be part of the medical team. Our license is an exception to the medical practice act. No, we are not a form of medical practitioner, we are not part of the medical team, and "the sooner we realize this and accept the fact the better off we will be."

To the faction of chiropractors with their feet firmly planted in antiquity, I say this: To step back into B.J.'s time and his shoes is equally ludicrous. B.J. was progressive throughout his life. If he was still with us as our leader today, chiropractic would be far, far advanced from the glory days of his research clinic. Any science must progress to survive. It must ameliorate its principles and its services to better serve its constituents. To think otherwise is to assume the ostrich posture. The only beneficial part of this posture is that one does not see the ax coming, so prepared is he for the inevitable demise.

Now that I have infuriated both radical sides of our dichotomy, allow me to speak to the majority. Come with me into "Viewpoints from Involvement." I do not expect agreement; think with me, and collective "Thots" will help us solve our problems.

"Enuf" said.

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