

Hit the Finish Line at 89

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It's funny how we look at life differently depending on our age ... what was so important at age 17 is not nearly so important even a few years later.

As this year marks my 50th, I have come to recognize all too well the brevity of life. My father died 16 years ago at only 61 years of age. A number of other great leaders in chiropractic have passed on over the past few years. They all seem to have left far too soon.

The following is an excerpt from an e-mail we received a few days before going to press with this issue. A woman contacted us to let us know that her father had passed away, and that we no longer needed to send *Dynamic Chiropractic* to him. She also provided some additional information about him:

"Dad was still caring for patients @ 89yrs old until Jan of this year & second only to his family was his love & dedication to the Chiropractic Profession. He was instrumental to introducing Chiropractic to literally hundreds over his years & bringing several wonderful young people to the profession & often bragged that he had taken care of 5 generations of some families!"

As I think about my life, I think about standing at the finish line and looking back. When I engage in such reflection, I ask myself...

- Will I be satisfied with what I've done with this precious gift called life?
- Do I understand the value of what I have, or am I chasing things I don't have simply because I don't have them?
- Am I spending my life doing what's important, or just what is most demanding?
- Will my life be reflective of quality, or just quantity?

This DC seems to have understood the answers to many of my questions.

At the ripe age of 89, he was still caring for his patients. He loved what he did and did it as long as he could, up until the last 10 months of his life.

Even so, he loved his family first. This is consistent with someone who has a genuine desire to care for people.

He introduced others to the value of chiropractic and shared his love for chiropractic with those who would make good DCs. This is something that builds up the profession for future generations of patients.

His "reward" was providing chiropractic care for as many as five generations of patients. This was what he was proud of. This was his "trophy" for all those years of care.

The e-mail never mentioned how financially successful this doctor was. That wasn't what was most important to him. My guess is that, based upon his love for his patients and for the profession, he was very successful.

Depending on when he graduated, this DC probably practiced for close to 65 years. Needless to say, he witnessed great times and hard times. And while he probably could have retired 20 years ago (or more), he didn't. He continued to see patients, through managed care and numerous other frustrations, because that's what he loved to do. That's who he was - a doctor of chiropractic.

We each have things that God created us to do.

Like this doctor, you have thousands of patients whose lives you have impacted with health, wellness and the restoration of normal function. They can walk, run, tie their shoes and pick up their children because of your dedication to their health.

Take a look back. God forbid, but if you were to die today, would you be satisfied with your life? Would there be things you would regret and wish you'd done differently?

As you begin this new year, you have another opportunity to do the things that will give you the most satisfaction when you reach your finish line. You can change what you want to change and become the person you want to be. You can dictate what your e-mail will say, right now, by the way you live your life each day.

Please re-read the e-mail excerpt again. Can you feel the sense of pride and honor in the daughter's words as she talks about her father's life?

She knew who her father was and what he loved by the way he lived his life.

He set a great example for us all to follow...

DMP Jr.

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