

Time for a Little Soul Searching

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As the publisher of *Dynamic Chiropractic*, I am blessed to be able to talk to and hear directly from chiropractors across the country on various issues. While I don't personally agree with every comment made (particularly as it relates to DCs prescribing drugs), the fact that we can discuss these issues is important and provides me with continued appreciation for the challenges you face as a practicing doctor of chiropractic. In fact, much of what I write about stems from your comments and our conversations.

The chiropractic profession continues to experience many challenges and changes. As a doctor, you face these every day, but may not notice their progression because they often take place over time. Health care providers are being squeezed by a system whose priorities are far out of line. Patients are constantly being provided with care that attempts to address short-term issues at the expense of long-term health. The only industries thriving possess the billions of dollars required to impact health care policy and consumer choice.

In the midst of it all, many DCs are not seeing the practice incomes they enjoyed a decade or so ago. While there are many reasons for this, the net result is a recognized need to adapt to the current reality.

You have many options when it comes to how you can adapt your practice to improve your success in this ever-changing health care climate and market yourself to a larger population within your community. Off the top of my head, I can think of nutrition, weight management and wellness. A little deeper thought leads me to other ideas, such as participating in a chiropractic franchise, integrated practice model or other strategic practice arrangement. Many DCs have reportedly been successful with these approaches.

Still other doctors appear to be leaning toward fitting more into the medical model. For example, consider [the reaction](#) to our [recent article](#) regarding two controversial resolutions passed by the American Chiropractic Association's (ACA) House of Delegates,¹ which drew this remark from Dr. Leon T. Kolodziej, along with strikingly similar remarks from other chiropractors across the country:²

"The way I see it, the more power we have, power to use tools such as limited drug use constructively, the more competitive we can be with other members of the medical community. Who would object? Certainly not the patients who trust their chiropractor. Now they could go to him or her for a throat infection or for pain pills to manage the pain along with the manipulation. Who wants to go to the MD first and then to the chiropractor? Answer: *nobody*! Would the pharmaceutical companies object? What do you think? How about the family of the chiropractors who sometimes need a prescription for [a] bacterial infection?

"Would the ability to prescribe drugs increase our income? Would it make more people see

chiropractors as viable medical practitioners on a par with medical doctors? Would it increase our credibility? Would it help us to survive and prosper into the next century? *Yes, Yes, Yes!*"

Perhaps the more important question *you* want to ask yourself is, why do you do what you do? What do you want to accomplish as a doctor of chiropractic? As you consider this, it may give you a better sense of what changes you want to make to adapt to the challenges your practice may be facing now, or in the not-too-distant future. Certainly, making a professional living and feeding your family are your priorities. But being a doctor of chiropractic should be about more than just a paycheck.

A closing comment made in a letter we received from Dr. Charles Simkovich Sr. posed the question: "Are you in the profession just to make outstanding financial rewards or to achieve results for a variety of health problems?" The answer is probably "Both." How you do it is obviously up to you. But perhaps it's time to get back in touch with why you are a DC and what you want to accomplish with chiropractic.

References

1. "A House Divided? ACA House of Delegates Passes Two Controversial Resolutions." *Dynamic Chiropractic*, April 15, 2015.
 2. We Get Letters & Email - responses to "A House Divided?" *Dynamic Chiropractic*, May 15, 2015.
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JUNE 2015