

"WHY TALK CHIROPRACTIC PHILOSOPHY?"

PHILOSOPHY I

Chiropractic doesn't HAVE a philosophy ... chiropractic IS a philosophy.

When chiropractors get together, they often discuss philosophy. Yet, you will seldom hear them mentioning Plato and Aristotle, or comparing notes on Nietzsche or Emerson. The philosophy they are most interested in is chiropractic philosophy, the fundamental beliefs and underlying precepts of the entire profession.

Many people find it odd that chiropractic has its own philosophy. After all, other professions don't have one. Have you ever heard of pediatric philosophy – accounting philosophy – or legal philosophy? Why, then, does chiropractic have a philosophy?

Actually, it is somewhat misleading to say that chiropractic has a philosophy. According to Dr. B.J. Palmer, the developer of chiropractic (whose father, D.D. Palmer, is credited with its actual "discovery" in 1895), chiropractic IS a philosophy – as well as a science and an art.

That is, chiropractic is not merely a method of adjusting a person's spine or correcting subluxations. It is a set of beliefs about the human body and the natural order of the universe.

These beliefs – this philosophy – is the WHY of chiropractic. The science and art of chiropractic (such as the specific adjusting techniques) were developed, and are used, in accordance with the philosophy.

Chiropractic is unique in this respect. Other professions are not based on a set of unchangeable principles. The legal profession, for example, deals with a system of laws and statutes that change rapidly. A few years ago, it was legal to cruise 75 MPH on most highways. Today, it's against the law.

Even a single action can be viewed differently depending on the circumstances surrounding it. Taking another person's life, for instance, can be murder, manslaughter, negligent homicide, or justifiable homicide. There is no single, universal principle by which to judge the action. Lawyers, then, must deal with rules and laws that fluctuate with time, location, and society's preferences. The same is true of accounting. Try to convince a tax accountant that tax laws are consistent.

Even the field of medicine changes according to the latest research results. Not long ago, for example, M.D.s were routinely taking tonsils out as a preventive measure. Today, it is a rare procedure.

In chiropractic, the basic underlying precepts remain unchanged and unchangeable. Understanding of those beliefs may deepen, and the techniques may improve, but the elemental doctrines will be constant. The importance of philosophy to the chiropractic profession cannot be stressed enough, for it is the basis of everything a principled chiropractor does.

According to one of the profession's early philosophers, Ralph Stephenson, D.C., "It is the explanation of everything chiropractic – the difference between a good chiropractor and a poor one is, that the good one has an ample supply of abstract principles in his head and the poor one only a few – Poor chiropractors are apt to substitute machinery for knowledge."

Although there are many principles which comprise chiropractic philosophy, a few of the key ones include:

- There exists a **Universal Intelligence** which brings organization to all matter, and maintains its existence;
- All living things have inborn, or **Innate Intelligence** which adapts universal forces and matter for use in the body;
- Every living thing has ALL the Innate Intelligence it requires to maintain its life and optimal health;
- Health is the expression of the Innate Intelligence through **Innate Matter**, via **Innate Energy**;
- When there is interference with the transmission of Innate Energy, the result is a decrease in the expression of Innate Intelligence, which chiropractors call **dis-ease** (not to be confused with disease!).

Because these terms and concepts are so important to chiropractors – and their patients – they will be explained in detail in the other "booklets" in this series. When you understand chiropractic philosophy, you will know that chiropractic works – and why!