

THE PIVOT REVIEW

Joseph B.
Strauss,
D.C., F.C.S.C.

Volume 15 • Number 4
July 1999

piv'ot (piv'ut) n. 1. a point, fixed pin, or short axis on the end of which something turns. 3. That upon or around which something turns or depends; the central, cardinal, or crucial factor, member, part, person, etc.

The Pivot Review is a free publication for those chiropractors who desire to be a "central person" in the preservation of the chiropractic principle. No subscriptions are accepted. It is published by the Foundation for the Advancement of Chiropractic Education. If you would like to help defray the cost of this publication, you may send a tax deductible gift to F.A.C.E. at the address below. Please designate it *The Pivot Review*. If this is your first issue of *The Pivot Review* or you do not receive it regularly and would like to, please write us at the address below.

Faith, Empiricism or Reason

Recently I was listening to a non-chiropractic speaker discuss the above methods of coming to a knowledge of truth. He mentioned that faith, empiricism and reason are directly related to the degree of intellect an individual has or is willing to use. Faith or belief necessitates the least amount of intellect. A small child can exercise faith or belief. It is the first and primary method of learning in the early years. Faith depends upon the character or the quality of the object of that belief. The greater the character or integrity of the object of faith, the easier it is to believe. While it is the easiest method and requires the least amount of intellect and effort, it is also the most fragile. A belief system can be challenged and upset rather easily. Conversions are quite commonplace. Beliefs can change from day to day.

The second method, empiricism or what has become known as

the scientific method, calls for a bit more intellect. It is based upon the powers of observation, the senses, if you will, which everyone has to some degree despite great variations. Unfortunately, the senses can be fooled. We often perceive something other than what was meant. Optical illusions are commonplace. New research often contradicts previous research and cannot provide irrefutable truth. All the factors that distort or fool the senses make empiricism unreliable. Science is now doing research to determine whether research is reliable, given all the factors that influence it, including the influence of the one doing the research! Someone recently asked how the "placebo effect" was proven reliable. Did they substitute a placebo for the placebo?

The last method, reason, is the most difficult method to master. Oddly enough, those who use this method, at least with regard to chi-

In this issue...

- An excerpt from a NOT soon to be published commentary
- Subluxation-Based Nutrition-A Shaky Foundation
- Chiropractic is Different
- A Subluxation-Free World

ropractic, are made to feel that they are intellectually inferior when, in fact, it takes more intelligence and intellectual acumen to use reason than empiricism or faith. While this method is the most difficult to master, people who use reasoning very rarely “change their mind.” They may not act according to reason but that is not a failure of the reasoning. It is a flaw in the character of the individual. For example, those who see the logic of the objective straight chiropractic approach will rarely change to a different practice approach. If they do, it is not because they have reasoned differently. It is usually for economic reasons. They realize mixing is not rational or reasonable from a straight chiropractic perspective but they want to make more money (or work less).

Critics of our deductive reasoning approach will mistakenly claim that what we hold to is a belief system. They do this in an effort to relegate our system to one inferior to their own (faith vs. empiricism). We must not be fooled or made to think we are somehow inferior because we have not “scientifically proven” chiropractic. We have done better than that. We have demonstrated it is true by the best method--reason. It is true that there is a cer-

tain amount of belief associated with our method. It is however, much less than that required by the empirical method. We must “believe” that “there is a universal intelligence in all matter giving to it all its properties and actions thus maintaining it in existence.” Even that premise is not based solely on faith but on inductive reasoning which is part of the scientific method. The empiricist, on the other hand, must believe that the methodology was correct, the scientists were honest, all the thousands of variables were removed, his observations were correct, and the procedures were done correctly, just to name a few. Empiricism is clearly an inferior method of determining truth. That is why much of today’s scientific research will be obsolete or refuted tomorrow. Further, what has been empirically proven for the human body is not a principle or law. It works for some and not for others. The human body itself is a variable. We are all different and that variable cannot be removed.

From a practical position there are two final points which must be considered. First, when in debate with an empiricist who wants proof, we just have to say we do not function in that paradigm. Sorry, it is not our model.

But if they would like to come into our model then we can debate. First, they must refute our Major Premise or show where our reasoning is wrong. They must show us how our reasoning, that the body has an inborn ability to run itself, is illogical. They must show us how the idea that the nerve system is a significant tool of this self-controlling mechanism is unreasonable. Since it is understood that structure affects function, they must explain why the concept that a change in the structure of the spine will affect the nerve system, is not a logical deduction. If they want to operate in our model they can try to show us by logic where we are incorrect but they cannot expect us to try to fit our model to their game.

The second point which must be considered relates to the first. We must realize that those who function in an empirical model may be “reasoning challenged.” They just do not comprehend our approach. Like the character in the movie Rain Man, they may have great abilities in one area (they may have good eyes, ears and a strong belief system), but they lack the ability to look at life using a reasonable, rational, deductive approach. Be kind to them, they just may not have the ability to understand the big idea

Those who are really to be admired are not the ones who were drawn to chiropractic because of a “miracle cure” but those who had no symptoms and sought chiropractic care--those who were drawn to chiropractic by the philosophy and the logic behind it. It is easy to be convinced by a spectacular experience. It is more commendable for one to be convinced by the sheer logic and beauty of our philoso-

The following is an excerpt from a NOT soon to be published commentary on the Green Books. This particular commentary is from Palmer's Law of Life, Volume 36. It reflects, in part, B.J.'s view of the vitamin controversy.

In the last paragraph on page 27, B.J. talks about those “who live outside the main stream of contemporary life” referring to those of us who have not embraced the outside-in philosophy and its application in the health field, the medical model. I tend to look at it differently than the Developer. I believe that what we straight chiropractors adhere to IS mainstream. I believe that the ADIO philosophy is the norm. We do not represent a departure from current thinking. Current thinking is a departure from the norm. Before there was science, there was reason. Before there was the authority of the medical model, there was common sense. Before there was the worship of the educated brain, there was the recognition of the innate intelligence of the body. Somewhere along the way the world has lost its direction. It has strayed from the path of truth. As chiropractors, we are still on that path and asking those who are lost in a jungle of confusion to join us on that path. The Anacin example that B.J. uses, in which he describes people conforming to the prescription of the medical doctor is, I be-

lieve, more correctly, people conforming to a deviation from the norm. We as straight chiropractors are the ultimate conformists. We have conformed to the law of life. We are following the dictates of the law as it applies to human function. We attempt to conform our thinking to what the innate intelligence of the body would want for each person as an individual. Anything else is rebellion. It is disregard for the law of life. It is the ultimate nonconformity.

Today, in chiropractic we see the profession traveling in two opposing directions: one established by the law of life (chiropractic) and the other dictated by expediency (medicine). Each chiropractor needs to continually “check his slipping” as B.J. said. Are we headed down the wrong road? Have we gotten off the path of chiropractic? B.J. mentions that the use of vitamins by chiropractors conforms to the medical model. This further addresses what we have been discussing throughout this chapter. Not too long ago medicine rejected the use of vitamin sup-

plements. (I am inclined to believe that is at least partially responsible for chiropractors' willingness to embrace the idea). Vitamin supplements are outside-in. That is why medicine has so easily reversed their opinion of them. It does not represent a change in viewpoint, it is a change within that viewpoint. As far as the chiropractor is concerned, vitamins can never be chiropractic. They are simply not above-down. They depend upon the chiropractor establishing a norm for the patient. Yet many so-called traditional chiropractors are embracing the idea of prescribing nutritional supplements. B.J. did not condone the use of vitamins and nutritional supplements in 1958 any more than he did the use of surgery in 1960. But what he did tell us is that both are outside-in approaches and as such have no place in the practice of chiropractic.

Straight and mixer terms aside, all chiropractic organizations, schools and approaches to chiropractic can be simplified into two groups. The first is working toward the future success of chiropractic, separate and distinct, as the Palmers meant it to be. The second group is working toward chiropractic's destruction, some purposefully, some unwittingly. The FSCO type chiropractic is the first group. Everyone else is in the second.

If we dismiss a patient or do not accept them, they will go somewhere else where more than likely they will learn that chiropractic is something other than what you practice. Would it not be better to have them come irregularly and hear each time what chiropractic is all about than occasionally go somewhere else and have their incorrect perception of chiropractic reinforced? If what you do and say is more important than what non-straight's do and say, why send people to them?

Subluxation-Based Nutrition - A Shaky Foundation

Recently one of the publications that extols the virtues of “subluxation-based chiropractic” began to promote the idea of subluxation-based chiropractors selling nutritional supplements to their practice members. Besides the rather questionable practices of multi-level marketing programs, there is the issue of whether this is consistent with the philosophy of chiropractic. Perhaps the problem relates to the concept of “subluxation based.” It is a meaningless term in that it allows for the addition of anything and everything to the correction of vertebral subluxations. You can do full body diagnosis and be “subluxation-based”. You can prescribe drugs and be “subluxation-based”. The real issue is whether these other procedures support the true reason for correcting vertebral subluxations, to enable the innate intelligence of the body to be more fully expressed, which is the unique chiropractic objective. Or do they support the medical objective, which is the treatment of disease? Specifically, is supplying nutritional supplements to people as part of a “subluxation-based” practice as innocuous as its proponents suggest?

The human body was designed to get its nutritional needs from the

food that we eat. Ideally, the innate intelligence of the body extracts from food what is necessary to build tissue and to adapt the organism. Some reason, however, that today’s soil is vastly depleted, and as a result the foods that we eat are not capable of naturally supplying the nutrients our body needs. This, of course, puts the blame on the environment, an outside factor, and necessitates outside-in remedies such as taking supplements. Since we cannot control the inadequacy of the food source, the remedy appears to be more acceptable, especially because these supplements are touted as “all natural” and made from food stuffs.

However, if it is true that our soil is depleted, that processing and cooking further affects our food, and that we cannot possibly get the proper nutrients from the food that we eat, then we are suffering from nutritional deficiency. But that is a medical problem. Nutritional deficiencies, regardless of their cause, are medical problems. Scurvy is a disease. It is a medical problem. The treatment of it, even with citrus fruits, is a treatment. It really does not matter whether the disease has manifestations as in scurvy or if it has no manifestations as in the overall nutritional deficiency that

the supplement salesperson claims. It is a medical condition and requires a medical solution. A person would not take supplements for the fun of it (especially at their cost). They may take supplements because of a medical condition (a nutritional deficiency) and want to treat it before it manifests serious symptoms. There is no difference between prescribing nutritional supplements to treat an unspecified nutritional deficiency and prescribing vitamin C to treat scurvy or the common cold. It is the practice of medicine whether done by a medical doctor or a chiropractor. Medicine is the treatment of any and every disease, before or after symptoms appear. The means of treating disease does not define medicine. It is defined by its objective. That is why medicine has been antagonistic to chiropractic over the years. They believe that we are trying to treat disease by hand only and it is an infringement on their practice.

There is another issue to be considered. Whenever we as chiropractors endorse an outside-in approach (especially to the point of using it), we simultaneously endorse the medical paradigm. It does not matter whether or not the medical procedure is needed and it might very well be needed in this situa-

tion. Who knows whether our soil is capable of producing nutritionally sufficient food? If the problem is poor preparation or poor eating habits, then to endorse or prescribe supplements undermines people's attempt to seek true health. Whenever we endorse a medical procedure we say that the outside-in approach is the answer. Heart transplants may be necessary for some people but they are surely not the answer to an unhealthy body. If we endorse supplements we essentially admit that they are the answer and in the long run that undermines people's understanding of what an ADIO lifestyle and ADIO thinking is all about. Selling nutritional supplements in the office does just that. It undermines the ADIO philosophy as much as recommending any other medical procedure.

If you want to practice medicine, to tell people when they need or do not need heart medical procedures, drugs, chemicals, or nutritional substances to treat medical conditions, you are free to do that. But do not call it chiropractic, "subluxation-based" or otherwise, because that is not what it is. ^s

That

The technique of some straight chiropractors necessitates that they only see patients every six months, while others will dismiss the patient for coming that infrequently. Strange isn't it?

Chiropractic is Different

Without doubt the most misunderstood, overlooked and little emphasized fact in chiropractic today is the idea that chiropractic is different than anything else. The public surely does not understand that concept. In this day when people are talking about alternatives to medicine, chiropractic is hardly ever viewed as an alternative. We are seen as mainstream back pain care. The alternatives do not want us, we are too mainstream. I am not suggesting that we should be viewed as an alternative. We are different than them. The point is that we are not even viewed as different enough to be classified as an alternative (which is really only a different means of achieving the same objective).

The most difficult task in educating the public about chiropractic is convincing people to view us in a different light. They cannot seem to get the idea that we are not about sickness and disease, and we are not interested in relieving their symptoms. Chiropractic is not another approach to the same objective. We are different. This is about their life, about experiencing greater potential in life by having an interference to the proper function of the nerve system removed.

Medicine does not view us as different. Most of the problems we have had with medicine over the years have been due to their misconception that we were trying to do the same thing that they were, only with what they viewed as an inferior method and not nearly the training. We have spent the last 30 years improving our

training and appropriating their methods in an effort to convince them. They have never grasped the idea that chiropractic is not an alternative or a substitute for medical care. It is a unique service that everyone needs, even those under medical care. The idea that medicine is beginning to accept chiropractic on a limited level is cause for great joy among some chiropractors, but they have not accepted us based upon our difference. They have only accepted us to the degree that we are willing to abrogate the uniqueness of our approach and accept a limited role in the health care delivery system, taking care of minor and uncomplicated back problems. If we are willing to play a minor role in medical conditions, like the dentist or the podiatrist, then we can gain acceptance.

The last group which does not recognize us as different (and to our profession's shame) is the one that fails the worst to understand our difference. It is the chiropractic profession itself. Most of our profession has never grasped the idea that chiropractic is different. If it is to succeed in gaining worldwide acceptance, it cannot attempt to compete with medicine. Even if we could compete and replace medicine as the number one healing art, cornering 51% of the market (and the whole idea sounds delusional), what about the 49% that stay with medicine? Do we want to condemn them to a life of less than it should be because they think they need to choose one or the other? This is not a Hertz/Avis competition or a Coke/Pepsi battle. This involves the lives of

fellow human beings! Making them think they need to choose medicine or chiropractic may be the difference between life and death. It essentially denies them care as much as if you locked them out of the office. Do we really want to do that? Have we been hurting more people than we help over the past century

because of our insistence that chiropractic care must be undertaken INSTEAD of medicine and some choose not to make that switch? If you need a rental car, you have a choice and you can only drive one car at a time. If you want to drink cola, you have a choice. The only alternative to chiropractic is to live

a life of less than full expression.

Chiropractic is unique. It is different. If our history teaches us anything, it is that we can not and should not be confused with anything else. The sooner we learn that lesson, the sooner we can reach our place in society. ^s

A Subluxation-Free World

The above seems to be a goal for the straight chiropractic profession. It is undoubtedly a very noble goal, for we know that an individual without vertebral subluxations functions better on every level. Further, there is nothing wrong with having lofty goals as long as they are reasonable. I am not quite sure that a subluxation-free world is a reasonable goal, especially from a philosophical viewpoint. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to say our goal is a “regularly-checked and adjusted-when-necessary world.” After all, if we see the vertebral subluxation as a worldwide plight that occurs in all people of all ages as a result of the normal activities of life, we cannot expect to wipe it out as we would some medical plague.

Vertebral subluxations occur when a person fails to adapt to the state of the environment (the negative qualities of which are usually brought on by man). Clearly, both the environment and the inherent weakness of the body (limitations

of matter) are factors. Whether in the occurrence of vertebral subluxations you see man moving up in an evolutionary process or down in a devolutionary process, his matter is not perfect nor is his environment. To create a subluxation-free world we would have to have a perfect environment. Further, we would have to have perfect people who did not make mistakes like tripping over the curb or falling down steps. We would all have to be perfect drivers so no automobile accidents occurred. We would all have to eat natural wholesome foods, drink pure water, and breathe pure air. We would have to ensure that the adversities of life did not cause stress.

Unfortunately, adjusting subluxations will not in and of itself make a subluxation-free world. Only a perfect world full of perfect people could do that and given the above factors and the nature of man, I frankly, cannot see that happening. Consequently, I do not strive to create a subluxation-free

world. I simply cannot embrace a goal that I see as impossible to achieve from a philosophical, practical and/or theological standpoint. Does that make me a pessimist? No. I think I am a realist. I believe I can keep people in my community walking around on a day-to-day basis with less subluxations, expressing more of their innate potential. That is a worthwhile and rewarding goal. Will it create a subluxation-free world? I doubt it. But it will improve to some degree the expression and the quality of life of individuals in my community and that to me is a goal worthy of attaining.

Innate intelligence must be expressed without regulation or control. Educated intelligence must be both regulated and controlled.

Odd isn't It

If studies have shown that chiropractic is more effective for back pain than massage, why are chiropractors adding massage to their practices?

Also

D.D. abandoned magnetic healing because chiropractic was more effective, why are chiropractors now selling magnets in their offices?