

# The Update

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## Social Insecurity

By Bill Decken, DC, LCP

We chiropractors spend a good deal of time teaching people in our practices about the principle of cause and effect. The ability of the matter of the body to express (effect) the intelligence of the body (cause) is made possible because of force. This is the basic message of chiropractic. Are you socially secure teaching this in your community? Looking to the state of chiropractic, have you ever stopped to think what the effect of insecurity is? Soren Kierkegaard, Danish philosopher and theologian, wrote that the history of the world is the history of boredom. (1) Others who study the whole human, and especially the spiritual side of life see many health maladies as being connected to anger. Have we as a society become insecure? If so, are boredom and anger results of this insecurity? More to the point, have we as a chiropractic profession (small segment of society) become insecure? Have we become bored and/or angry?

Effective communication requires that we first connect with others on an ethos level, which deals with our credibility. Since we usually do not know our new practice members and they do not know us, we rely on the credibility we have with established clients as they refer friends and family to our practices. Once we have established ethos, we are able to move to the pathos level of communication, or compassion. By showing that we are caring doctors

we have earned the attention of the other person and we can then begin to speak to them about chiropractic, about healing from the inside out, about the interference to life that is caused by subluxation and the promotion of life that an adjustment contributes to. This is the logos level of communication. It challenges the listener to use reason, one of the three prime functions of educated intelligence.

Reason, according to Berkely Professor of Linguistics George Lakoff, is not an abstract quantity but an organic product of the motor-sensory system. Lakoff posits that policy can shape public consciousness. (2) Well now, let's stop and think about this. If we think twice, we just might be the smartest folks in the neighborhood. It is the straight chiropractic community that has frequently referred to raising public consciousness. But have we, you and I, truly done this if we continually lean on the policies established by chiropractic regulatory boards and accrediting agencies?

There is an awful lot of talk about national health insurance, what it will entail, which providers will be included, what the rules for them will be, and which members of society will be given care when prioritization comes into play. In our own profession we see a lot of positioning taking place. The ACA/ICA summit culminated with a plea for all chiropractors to write to

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their legislators with strong requests that chiropractic care be included in whatever is coming down the pike. Interestingly enough, this coincides with a move within chiropractic to develop integrative care focused on the rehabilitative aspects of physical therapy (exercises) and nutrition rather than the traditional use of modalities used by many chiropractors. Could this have been prompted by a governmental "attitude" that services will not be duplicated in the pending national insurance policy? After all, the physical therapists are perfectly capable of offering their own modalities to the public.

Is the chiropractic profession once again acting insecure? Has insecurity caused chiropractors to look to nutrition and rehab out of boredom ala, "I have been explaining the role of the chiropractic adjustment in a persons health/life care regime for X number of years. I guess I need to do something else to maintain my compassion." Or, are chiropractors so insecure that we have become angry that the PT is stealing our "adjustment"?

It appears that the "leaders" in certain chiropractic groups need the government to make us feel secure, thus the plea for inclusion. My question is why can we not feel secure simply by explaining chiropractic to the public? If we are secure in our ability to do that and if we simply focus on that then we shall truly impact the health of a rather sickly nation, and improve the lives of those we serve. The alternative, using phrases like chiropractic physician, complimentary and alternative medicine, and anything else that helps us frame chiropractic policy in the public's mind obviously has not worked at shaping public consciousness. If it did, these leaders would not find themselves embroiled in discovering or at least creating a new chiropractic identity that will take us beyond the treatment of neuromusculoskeletal conditions.

Is it not the focal point of the letter to the profession from the ACA/ICA? Should we not instead be asking the government to leave us out? We represent an approach to life, and that includes health,

that is different from every other health care field. How could anything sanctioned by the government even reconcile that fact and make us more secure?

Christopher Kent, DC has suggested that we get busy reading and discussing with practice members, the public and politicians the different aspects of chiropractic that have been documented in the research journals. (3) Matt McCoy, DC challenged us to NOT fall under the delusion that chiropractic's political leaders have navigated a safe course. (4) They are both issuing a call against social insecurity. I agree with them. Furthermore, I am an FSCO member because the FSCO keeps chiropractic focused on subluxation. We should always interpret the inductive findings of research in light of our deductive reasoning. It takes many pieces properly fit together to see the picture represented by a jigsaw puzzle. Research provides the pieces and philosophy, whether it be above down inside out or outside in below up, provides the interpretation. Do you know of any other profession that understands the difference between these two worldviews and would thus be able to have this conversation? It can only happen if we are socially secure.

1. Olasky, M., An Era of Insecurity, World, May 23, 2009.
2. Cheaney, J., Who's Getting Framed?, World, October 18/25, 2008.
3. Kent, C., Pediatric Chiropractic: Are You "Experimenting" on Kids?, Dynamic Chiropractic, May 6, 2009.
4. McCoy, M., Journal of Pediatric, Chiropractic, Delusion and National Health, Maternal and Family Health Chiropractic, June 11, 2009.

**Bill Decken, DC, LCP**, is Chairman of the FSCO Board of Directors. In addition to maintaining Family Straight Chiropractic in Spartanburg, SC, he is an Associate Professor at Sherman College. Currently also Chairman of the Philosophy Department, his vision to encourage and to help develop thinkers, writers and speakers for the chiropractic profession has led to the development of the Academy of Chiropractic Philosophers. He is founder and president of the Palmetto State Chiropractic Association.