

## **The Spinal/Neural hygiene model: The time has come for chiropractic to create a societal value system around our principles. (A 6 part series)**

Creating a generational value system around the concept of Spinal/Neural hygiene is essential for the growth of chiropractic. I am convinced that for chiropractic to move forward and establish our rightful place in the Health Care delivery system we need to have a model that becomes an integral part of societies overall value system.

The question that I pose first is? What is the perceived purpose of chiropractic from a societal standpoint, and what is its value based on that perception? You see you can't have one without the other. The intrinsic value of any product or service is based on its perceived purpose and the relative cost or ease of obtaining the product or service.

I believe that we are stuck in the quagmire of our own marketing and propaganda. (Not to mention the A.M.A.'s curriculum on quackery that was taught in schools starting in 1964); we will get to that later in the series though. You see, we as a profession went from nothing more than an idea and a burning desire, to the second largest health care system in the world in a period of time equal to roughly 65 years. The initial growth of chiropractic is the most amazing fact about the history of chiropractic. Now, Consider this, for all intents and purposes we have not grown significantly since the 1960-70's, sure we see more people because there are more people here, but statistically and based on percentages, chiropractic has been in a holding pattern for decades.

It is obvious why chiropractic stopped moving forward from its humble beginnings as an obscure health care system steeply based in philosophy and supported by a set of 33 principles to where it is today, an ill-defined and divided profession without a common unifying voice or identity. The reason we have stopped growing is in large part the effect of chiropractic shifting our message of purpose from one of health and wellness as it relates to the individual and the relationship of the spine and nervous system in the development and maintenance of potential, to one of consumerism and insurance benefits, relegating chiropractic's purpose as one of a treatment modality for acute injury and symptomatic palliation. I believe that our reliance on the third party system of reimbursement was the beginning of the end of the growth of our profession. I don't think that insurance benefits are a bad thing; I think that our sole reliance on the insurance and third party pay system is a bad thing. For chiropractic to grow from where we are today to where we could, should and would have been, we need to go back to the fundamentals or the truth about chiropractic. Where we explain that, yes chiropractic adjustments are a safe and effective program of care for the short term acute care needs of a sick society, however, the chiropractic wellness model is not a sick care allopathic model of treating illness or injury but a comprehensive wellness model that is defined by our philosophy, principles and yes even science. It is time to end this tiresome and losing fight to gain market share in a sick care system and start highlighting our role as lifestyle and wellness coaches and mentors in our communities. We need to develop long-term relationships of leadership from a societal, civic and health care perspective. Our founding fathers would ask for nothing more than for us to hold up our beloved profession and be proud to share it with the masses.

In the next 5 segments of this series, I will be highlighting two different models that have been used by dentistry and medicine to very effectively shape the collective consciousness of society and highlighting a model for chiropractic to do the same. I thank you in advance for taking the time to read this series and I hope that through this process

you can make distinctions that will empower and inspire you to become the leader your community and our profession needs you to be.

**Jeffrey S. Slocum, D.C.**

Dr. Slocum is a 1993 graduate of Logan College in St. Louis Missouri. He is a fourth generation chiropractor, the 11th member of his family to practice chiropractic.

Dr. Slocum and his partner Rok A. Morin D.C. are co-creators of Learning Curves™, a three tier community education and marketing program for the Chiropractic profession. One of the highlights of the Learning Curves program is the curriculum written to teach 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders spinal health, backpack safety, the language of chiropractic and body awareness. The Learning Curves™ curriculum meets national health education standards and meets the social and cognitive development needs of 7-11 year olds. Dr.'s Slocum and Morin lecture on a national basis to chiropractors encouraging them to spread awareness of chiropractic in their communities. Go to [www.learningcurves.us](http://www.learningcurves.us), e-mail at [info@learningcurves.us](mailto:info@learningcurves.us) or call (800) 613-2528 for more information on an opportunity to implement Learning Curves™ or their Community Education Marketing Program in your practice and community or to have Dr. Slocum or Dr. Morin speak at your next event.