

Dr. G's Thots

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"Thot" was a term BJ Palmer came up with to describe the brief and rare moments that our Innate Intelligence speaks to our conscious Educated Intelligence. Like droplets of Innate wisdom, these thots speak volumes when they are appropriately mentally digested.

Throughout his career, Dr. Gonstead has dropped many pieces of G wisdom, knowingly and unknowingly, that when they are mentally digested, make all the difference in the world. I hope you enjoy my musings on some of the statements Dr. Gonstead has left us.

"The principles of the Gonstead Method are the simple principles of chiropractic put to work; how to understand what causes nerve pressure, how to find it on the patient, how to achieve a corrective setting of the offending vertebra, and how to know when the chiropractor's job is done, and nature begins."

I chose this one to begin with because I feel it encapsulates what sets us apart from all other forms of chiropractic. *The Chiropractic Textbook*, published in 1927, is a seminal book for chiropractors. The definition of chiropractic given in the introductions is as follows:

Art. 2. CHIROPRACTIC DEFINED. "Chiropractic is a philosophy, science and art of things natural; a system of adjusting the segments of the spinal column by hand only, for the correction of the cause of dis-ease."

Reading this, some may wonder as to the definition of Dis-Ease, which is explained in Article 21 as, "DISEASE AND DIS-EASE". (55, M & M) Disease is a term used by physicians for sickness. To them it is an entity that one can have and is worthy of a name, hence diagnosis. Dis-ease is a term used in Chiropractic, meaning not having ease. It is the condition of matter when it does not have ease. In chiropractic, ease is the entity, and dis-ease is the lack of it. Dis-ease, in chiropractic, is indicative of the body being minus something that should be restored, in order to make it normal; that is, in various modes of expression the body lacks ease, health, coordination, transmission, adaptation, well-being, 100% quality, soundness, sanity, etc., which must be brought up to 100%, or RESTORED. That is what chiropractic aims to do; remember it, RESTORATION. In trauma the tissues are not degenerated or depleted. They are just injured; and this is proven by the fact that a wound will heal readily and healthily if the region of injury, or the body is not suffering incoordination. Dis-ease is the condition of tissue cells when there is incoordination. It is the result of incoordination when the tissue cells do not do their duties coordinately. The tissue cells that fail to function are not always where the symptoms of trouble are; example, gas and timpanists when the liver is not functioning coordinately."

These definitions beautifully paint the picture of chiropractic—a profession that's sole concern is to align the segments of the spine to restore coordination and ease to the body. When Gonstead said that the principles of his method are the simple principles of chiropractic put to work he was summing up his life's work and dedication to the Chiropractic profession. His system, which looks

at all aspects of patient physiology (showing function or dysfunction), anatomy and the patient's history and experiences to help find and correct their specific subluxation. His methods stand apart from all others in Chiropractic.

In order to know where, when and how to adjust, you must understand the body in both the state of ease and dis-ease. If you don't know normal, then how do you know abnormal? If there is one shortcoming that has ensnared us all it is that we don't spend enough time on normal. For example, when your patient whom you have been taking care of for months with horrible sciatica, constipation, headaches (pick any incoordination you want) comes in and says that they are better.

Symptoms are all gone and have been gone for a week, what do you do? At some time, we have all said "GREAT! See you in a week...". What we should have done is walked them down to the exam room and done the best exam and x-ray we have ever done. If we had, we would have seen what had changed and what had not. We would have seen normal, or at least more normal for that patient.

Dr. Gonstead understood the importance of normal and abnormal, of coordination and incoordination. He understood physiology. This is why he had a full lab in his clinic. We use the shorthand WNL to indicate things are "Within Normal Limits". What it really means is We're Not Looking. How can we see the changes in physiology, the big important ones, if we are not looking?

A simple summary of the principles of Chiropractic is this: The body is self-healing and self-regulating. The brain and nervous system controls and coordinates everything in the body. Anything that interferes with the brain and nervous system causes the body to malfunction, break down, get sick and die. Subluxation is an interference to the nervous system. Chiropractic exists to correct subluxations and restore control.

So, when you look back to Dr. Gonstead's quote you can see how beautiful and genius it is. Now for the big payoff. I said that that quote encapsulates what sets us apart from all other forms of chiropractic and here is why. Our system covers all aspects of the human experience. We have 5 tools of analysis to use on every visit to help us find the subluxation and to determine when it has been corrected and to leave it alone. No other system in the profession has this. None of these tools is perfect and when used as a stand-alone, as many other techniques do, they fall amazingly short. But, when used together as intended, they coalesce into something beautiful and much greater than they would apart from one another. Just like black, red, blue, yellow, red and white are just colors but when put in the right hands, coordinated hands, they become something beautiful like Starry Night.



Symptoms are the expression of our physiology, normal and abnormal, which is influenced by many things, subluxation being one of them. Knowing when a symptom is important to the patient's chiropractic case is very difficult if it is your only tool. Palpation is an interesting tool. Most of us think we are much better at it than physiology and science dictates we can be. We feel things move underneath our fingers and we assume that it is the spinal motion, but we forget that there are many layers between our fingers and the joint. There is the epidermis, dermis, and hypodermis. There is a layer of fat and muscle or muscles and let's not forget the fascia. There are other things contained in those layers as well. All of them are moveable to some degree and logic would dictate that as one moves it will have an effect on them all. This is why study after study shows poor outcomes on palpation. Having said that, I still palpate on every visit. I know that it is a flawed tool and do not put all my eggs in that basket.

Visualization again shows us many things on the surface but as a stand-alone tool is very limited, except perhaps, in the case of shingles, head tilt, limp, gait problem, etc. All will need information from another tool to rule out several possible causes and confirm the actual cause.

Instrumentation is the tool most of us rely heavily on, especially when we are new in practice. It too can be misleading, especially when we are starting out. Finding a break is not an easy thing early on. Add skin disorders, tags, blemishes, scars, hair etc. into the equation and it gets much more difficult. There are some patients that you can't get a good, accurate scope reading on.

X-ray is a fantastic tool. I love everything about it. But, you don't see a subluxation on x-ray. You have to use all the other tools to find it on the patient and then confirm on the x-ray. That is the beauty of the 5-tool system to find the problem. If every tool says it is 3rd dorsal, you can be certain it is 3rd dorsal.

No other system in chiropractic has this. None. It is these redundancies that help us become the best of the best. We must continue to study and develop our skill in using them and continue to better understand physiology. Study normal every chance you get so that you will understand abnormal when it sits down in front of you. ✱