

Ponder With Me a Few Moments

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At times it is good to just sit; at other times, I believe, it's good to sit and ponder. For some, thinking time is a luxury. My belief is thinking time is essential to a good life. Your thoughts may ignite a spark that may change your entire life. Take a few moments; think about:



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We must be willing to get rid of the life we planned so as to have the life waiting for us. Joseph Campbell

What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry like a raisin in the sun? Langston Hughes

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For a moment test these ideas against your past, present and future. Become willing to take chances. Allow your thoughts to become a part of your future plans. Your life is not a contest. All you can do is your best. That's all you owe yourself and the ones you care about.

My earliest plans were small and simple. When I let go of those plans, the life waiting for me began to unfold. It was like I was beginning to swim with the stream rather than against it. As I reflect upon the two quotations I wonder about the challenges we face today. I wonder what the future may hold. I question, what I will take from my present practice and what will I get rid of as I move towards my future practice. While I was thinking, I discovered values encompass my personal and professional life. My dreams were not deferred dreams that had become dry like raisins. These values are helping me answer the challenging questions.

I ask myself, what is the point of being a chiropractor in the future? Is it possible that what I value in my present life and practice may have little or no value or relevance in my future? Consider how I feel about my family, my friends and my patients. They are all mine. Where ever I go in the future I want them to stay with me. This may be impossible.

There are many emerging models both for living and for conducting a practice. One example has health care providers working as a team, each contributing what is best for the patient. Is it possible that in my present practice, I valued my income and the number of patents I have seen? I may feel both are worthy of consideration. I may find the emerging model is not concerned with what I have done. Rather they require an evaluation of what I know and believe about chiropractic. Might future practice be based on many factors: applicability of care, outcome studies, patient satisfaction levels, cost effectiveness, alternative care and safety of chiropractic care? I know, as many of you know, the health care system cannot sustain itself given the increasing costs of services. Some services must be rationed. Which services am I, as a profession willing to give up? What will I be left with? The chiropractic profession needs to work on answers to many of these questions.

My packing list for my future practice is not complete. I continue to ponder what the future holds for me. I find I continually make changes to my list. For today, I would take my present chiropractic practice, my profession, to my future where it could be made into a profession with

increased status. A profession, having the status chiropractic needs for its growth and development. I would take my wonderful patient relationships with me. I would take those marvelous techniques that make the difference for patients knowing that the future will provide answers to understanding all the benefits of chiropractic care. I would take with me many of my colleagues who are also my friends. I would leave behind some outdated concepts I insist on holding onto. I would leave behind the desire to keep chiropractic isolated from other health providers. I would leave my desire to remain isolated from my professional group to preserve my independence and avoid challenge. Such feelings of isolation, hopefully, would be replaced with genuine transparency. "In health care, the term describes a policy of medical professionals and providers openly sharing with payers and patients facts about their performance and background. In turn, the government, insurers, and consumers are expected to use this information to identify effective, valued based care." (Nothing to Hide: Transparency in Healthcare – Thomas R. Russell – Medscape).

Pondering, thinking, making lists and using introspection and insights provides new opportunities for learning about change and adapting to it. Thinking helps me build directional signs to our future. *Pathways in Philosophy*, Dale Jacquette, share some insights about taking a walk on a trail through the wilderness. His words may benefit you on your journey?

"When you first set foot on a hiking path, you generally do so with a purpose. There is always a reason why we embark on a particular path. There are some paths we may not choose to follow, but if we give them a chance and try to see where they are going, we will at least be in a position to make informed choices, and we might surprise ourselves by discovering new things. Each of us passes through the scenery a different way and sees and thinks about different things from a different perspective. No two individuals wandering the same course will notice precisely the same features or think precisely the same thoughts. To walk on a path means, among other things, that someone has been there before. The path is trodden or marked by another walker, someone who has sought out a way to get from one place to another and has left a track for others to follow. We follow in the footsteps of major thinkers who have come before us and have partly shown us the way. They have chosen a direction

for thought by beginning with one set of assumptions rather than another, with one choice of methods as opposed to another, which to them somehow seemed to be the right starting place. We must eventually choose the path that is right for us and thereby make it our own. The joy of philosophy is not merely to a predetermined path that we think is right for us, but to achieve a higher level of understanding by learning about the multiplicity of choice, the many different pathways of thought.

I believe that as chiropractors we are hiking on a particular pathway that we have chosen. As we walk we begin seeing things from a different perspective. We become aware of choices. I am hopeful that by walking together, with my professional colleagues, this walk into the future will yield to unity and inspiration.

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