

Australian Chiropractic College Graduation 2025: Keynote address

Tim Cooper

Narrative: Speech as delivered by the Chair of Te Poari Kaikorohiti O Aotearoa, the Chiropractic Board of New Zealand, Dr Tim Cooper, at the 2025 Graduation Ceremony, Adelaide Australia.

Indexing terms: Chiropractic; History; South Australia; Australian Chiropractic College; Graduation; Chiropractic Board of New Zealand.

Preamble

'All those who sleep under the mountains of this land are of this land. Dreamtime- whole other dimension of knowledge, knowledge is sung into you, song of the ages, nothing is ever lost it can always come back. Personal heart and universal heart are joined, there are enough one-hearted people in the world who speak their truth and walk it. This is an age when there are no secrets. Blueprint of life. Don't worship anything but revere and hold everything sacred. Reflecting the Kurna name for the area- Tarntanyangga - which means Red kangaroo dreaming. Coona, Tarn dun young ga'.

*Ka tuohu matou ki a koutou
e te ahi ka
o Tarntanyangga, o Karrawirra Parri
-a Ngati Kurna
Mo o koutou manaakitanga tonutanga
Ki te iwi whanui
He mihi maioha, ki o koutou kahui kaumatua,
O koutou marae maha, o koutou kainga,
Me o koutou whanau
Tena rawa koutou katoa*

I wish to acknowledge the Kurna people of the Adelaide Plains and pay my respects and those of the New Zealand Chiropractic Board to Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise and respect the Kurna people's cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land

Speech

Thank you Patrick for your invitation to address the inaugural Australian Chiropractic College's graduation today.

Good morning faculty, graduands, esteemed guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Well, that's the formal part of my speech out of the way, so I'd like to relax, let my hair down just a bit, and with no disrespect to the august assemblage of persons here today, I can address the people who I came across the ditch to see.

That is you, wonderful, dear, most precious but certainly not delicate graduands.

But! who am I to stand here, as an interloper, as a Kiwi and speak to you intimately on your home turf, you don't know me ...

In Aotearoa, New Zealand, we have a concept called whanaungatanga, and when we meet for the first time, we are interested in connection, in kinship, where do you come from, what mountains do you sleep under, where are the bones of your ancestors buried, what and who do you love and hold dear? Sometimes we just do this (raise eyebrows), and other times we cover these things in a pepeha or introduction.

I am the Chair of Te Poari Kaikorohiti O Aotearoa, the Chiropractic Board of New Zealand, and have practiced for 26 years as a clinical Chiropractor. I studied at the New Zealand College of Chiropractic under people such as Dr Bernadette Murphy, Dr Jim Stinear, Dr Graham Dobson, Dr Phil McMaster. And, this is critical, was a member of the first class to graduate from the College.

So my dears, I remember what it was like to sit where you sit today, I remember the strong bonds of friendship with your classmates forged in adversity, I remember what it was like to wonder if you were going to graduate and if you did whether you were actually going to be able to practice as a Chiropractor. I remember having to hide all the knives in the student area, and the forks, because as much as you loved your mob, you'd just got that frustrated with everyone.

I also remember what a whirl it all was, so please....

... Centre yourself in your heart, let love flow through your hands as you care for your patients, you are the future, and you are going to change the world ... '



Congratulations

Allow us to congratulate you on a job extremely well done, take the time to really feel it, you've made it, you're going to be a Chiropractor.

Take some more time, look at the person next to you, and the person on the other side, really enjoy being with your class. This may be the last time you are all together, please enjoy each other now, give each other a hug. Suddenly thirty years will go by and you will miss each other.

Any graduate of a Chiropractic College is incredibly precious, as they are the tangible embodiment of the future of Chiropractic. Being the member of an inaugural class means you have a joined a very exclusive club that is quite frankly a step above.

You have persevered through a very different furnace fire of doubt and uncertainty and are forged as a different steel. We are watching your future with great excitement.

I am incredibly proud of the way the inaugural class of the New Zealand College has shaped Chiropractic over the last quarter century, and I am certain you will do even more over the next 50 years.

It is expected.

As you walk towards your future as a Chiropractor, I would caution you against seeing Chiropractic as a spiritual pursuit in itself. The practice of Chiropractic is definitely energetic, however, it remains a Science, a Philosophy and an Art.

It is said that there are many paths to the top of the mountain, but the truly enlightened float above that mountain.

The practice of Chiropractic is undoubtedly one of the paths to the top of the mountain. You just need to choose which mountain you are climbing.

The Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders have lived on this continent for over 65, 000 years, fair to say that's a bit of time to accrue some wisdom. I am simply in awe of peoples who with no material possessions, are able to not only survive, but prosper in a land for millennia, where a modern human would perish in a matter of days. Prosper to the point where a deep connection to mother earth is formed, her cycles and moods are respected and understood, and a substantial spiritual belief evolves from this relationship.

The Dreamtime

From the outside the Dreamtime seems to be a beginning that never ended, a time of creation that persists and sits outside the constraints of dimensions as western metaphysics define them.

Knowledge is sung into you, and you sing it into the next generation. Personal heart is joined with universal heart.

It is another dimension of knowledge that I believe you as the future of Chiropractic, have the opportunity and potential to access.

Vitalistic Chiropractors who have some flying hours under their belt speak of attaining a state in practice where they are able to provide exactly what each and every patient needs to heal and connect them with their purpose and place in the Universe. Chiropractic isn't providing this in itself, but it's practice can be a portal to the divine knowledge of the Universe, a means to transcend and walk in the Dreamtime where the blueprint of life and the fabric of the universe can be felt, appreciated and flow into the now.

Rather than seeing the future of Chiropractic as sitting in a digital, virtual world I encourage you to ground yourself on this planet, in this universe and allow the knowledge of those indigenous, earth-centered peoples who have come before to flow through you and shape your future as a Chiropractor.

Vitalistic, holistic healthcare that centres itself in the understanding that life flows from within is the future of healing, you are that future, and we simply cannot wait to see the impact you are going to have.

Centre yourself in your heart, let love flow through your hands as you care for your patients, you are the future, and you are going to change the world.

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Cite: Cooper T. Australian Chiropractic College Graduation 2025: Keynote address. Asia-Pac Chiropr J. 2026;6.4. <https://apcj.net/Papers-Issue-6-4/#ACC25Cooper>