



**WCCS**

World Congress of Chiropractic Students

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# Diversity Beliefs as a bridge for the future

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## Exposition

**W**ithin the human population of the planet we have many different types and subtypes for diversity. Diversity can be specific or broad. Whether it be ethnic group or race, economic status, specific vaccination status (classified under health views), religion/world views, chiropractic views, way of life and more.

What do they all have in common? Many start with certain beliefs and/or perceptions. Some are conscious and some are unconscious, and do not change unless we go there. Where do our beliefs or perceptions come from? I believe most unconscious ones come from childhood, while others can be created during education or from our own experiences. While we may have communities that go through very similar educational establishments we all have very unique childhood experiences which will also change the way we interact and perceive each education system. So isn't it *'normal'* to be unique and have our own views? Why is there so much hatred or even wars that start over these differences? Is it because most of us come from a fear-base reaction towards anything different to ourselves? What if we remove the fear and start embracing the differences? What if diversity is a key for improving the future of humanity, even chiropractic?

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Diversity is a key for impacting and evolving into a better humanity. How do we do this? Ken Wilber's *Integral Theory* (Duffy, 2020) describes two ideas of waking up and growing up which relate to states and stages of consciousness respectively. (Wilber, 2007) One is temporary and the other becomes permanent. Now is the time to start utilising tools that can do this so we can create harmonious communities of acceptance. But why is now the time?

Social media and other information technology tools have allowed the entire planet to be in connection. Every continent, country, state, city and individual person can now be connected. Due to this we are very aware of the diversity around the world, from something as light as entertainment, to more personal, world views. We are starting to understand where and how our

beliefs are formed. Tools that help us access higher states of consciousness can help us identify and access what may need changing. In other words, wake up and grow up.

Examples of this include certain meditation practices, floatation tanks (sensory deprivation tanks), breath-work (holotropic breath-work), awe state, certain chiropractic techniques, and psychedelic psychology assisted 'journeys' like what *Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies* (MAP's) is researching, or Dr Gabor Mate's clinical experience. However, to utilise these tools to the maximum benefit we have to first create space with love and acceptance for one another.

Chiropractic practitioners have the potential to help create space and acceptance for their patients, but what about each other? Chiropractic has a large spectrum when it comes to defining *what is chiropractic*. One side has a vitalistic view while the other is mechanistic, plus everything in between. The vitalistic chiropractors use the term vertebral subluxation and depending on how deep you want to take it, some have a more spiritual viewpoint. While the mechanistic viewpoint mainly focuses on the physical body and uses the term manipulation or moving a segment in space.

How did this diverse spectrum of chiropractic come about? Is it due to practitioners' overall focus for their patients? Examples being pain, function, adaptability or spirituality. Was it due to a lack of research? The educational establishment you went to? The idea that it had to be pain based? All answers matter. All answers go back to certain beliefs or perceptions we individually have of chiropractic. What matters most is that we accept this diverse spectrum and use it to our advantage when it comes to impacting the world on a larger scale.

Diversity within a team can be a very powerful tool for coming up with solutions or ideas to some of the world's biggest problems. There is a concept known as '*flow state*' or in other words the '*performance zone*'. Flow state is total absorption in the moment where you feel your best and perform your best. This experience can occur on an individual level and within a group, called group flow. Group flow can lead to optimal experiences and well-being which leads to more creativity and higher performance. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996) Triggers required to activate group flow include intrinsic motivation, satisfaction and psychological well-being as an individual within the team, and the entire team itself. (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008)

We cannot do this if a safe space for everyone's diverse beliefs and backgrounds are not accepted. Group flow is key to accomplishing global challenges as explained in '*Abundance*' by Peter Diamandis (Co-founder of singularity university) and Steven Kotler (co-founder of Flow Genome Project). Flow is also important when connecting to your patients. If you cannot create a safe space with your patient and respect their beliefs then it will be very hard to establish a strong therapeutic relationship. If you can't connect and establish a rapport, your clinical impact with the person will be less than optimal.

### *What is the goal of chiropractic?*

Is it to create BJ Palmer's utopia which is a subluxation free world? Or to put it simply: improve the quality of life through achieving optimal health for our practice members/patients. The *World Federation of Chiropractic* (WFC) has a vision: '*A world where people may enjoy universal access to chiropractic so that populations may thrive and reach their full potential.*' How do we achieve this?

The WFC also has a strategic pillar for empowerment: '*A focus on equality, diversity, and knowledge translation to empower people and develop the leaders of tomorrow.*' Equally, the *World Congress of Chiropractic Students* (WCCS) Vision encompasses these in its vision to see '*Early-career chiropractors united to improve the health and well being of our global societies through safe and high-quality care, equipped with the skills to adopt leadership roles both within their communities and on a global scale.*'

Chiropractic ticks the box for diversity. We have mechanistic views and vitalistic views as well as many different techniques which do many different things. Do we have enough evidence based

research alone to completely understand them all? No. However, with the advancement of technological tools we will be able to learn more and confirm what is really going on.

What we have right now is a large amount of clinical expertise where each expert has a different experience. These different experiences are very important as we all enjoy different aspects of life and different ways to live. Part of this is how we want to practice and perceive certain results. All students are different and this diversity allows students to choose what kind of chiropractor they want to become. What we need now are the stories and mentors to help us become the most authentic version of ourselves to make the most impact.

Another good thing about this diverse spectrum of chiropractic is the range of impact we can have on the wider society. People are at different stages of life and come into practice seeking different goals. This can also go back to Ken Wilber's integral theory. For example a professional athlete may get injured and wants to get back on the field as quickly as possible. Does this person want to focus on evolution and to uncover unconscious belief patterns? Maybe. But first and foremost they will want their leg to be fully functional again to get back onto the field.

The other side of the coin is someone who is trying to uplevel themselves. Will they only want a mechanical adjustment without going deeper into soul, spirit or other dimensions?

This diverse spectrum could potentially help both people reach their full potential if we allow it to, resulting in further reach and impact, and creating universal access to chiropractic care. However to do this we must accept diversity in all.

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