

Thot of the Week

By Kevin Donka, D.C.

As The Twig Is Bent, So Grows The Tree

This is a phrase that is read on a poster or heard spoken in many chiropractic offices. We have used this example in nature to describe to parents what can (and probably will) happen to their children's posture if a spinal distortion in childhood is not addressed as they grow. Many children have benefited from the care they have received as a result of chiropractors telling their practice members these words. Indeed, many lives have probably even been saved. At the very least, the quality of these kids' lives has been improved, and this is a crucial understanding for all parents to gain. But when Emerson first wrote these words, he was actually referring to how a child sees the world. He knew that the thoughts, beliefs and attitudes we develop in childhood determine in large part how we will see the world and respond to it as adults.

We chiropractors see that children who believe that a drug, remedy, surgery or any other kind of treatment *from the outside* is necessary for them to heal, will continually look outside themselves for help, and they will live in a world where they are constantly trying to eliminate or prevent something they don't want in their lives. This may not seem like a bad thing. But, if all our time is spent working on getting rid of what we don't want, we have very little time or energy left to give to creating what we do want!

But, this is just the tip of the iceberg as far as the kind of thinking that develops in individuals who are brought up in the medical mindset. Not only do they think this way as far as their health, they also learn to see themselves as imperfect at EVERY level! Since we all learn at a very early age to identify ourselves with our bodies, being told how imperfect our bodies are on a regular basis (i.e., you need these shots, this medicine, this operation, etc.) causes many of us to develop and carry over these attitudes into every aspect of our lives.

In contrast, kids raised in the chiropractic mindset grow up understanding that we all have within us a mighty force called "Innate Intelligence" that runs, regulates, heals and grows our bodies. They are taught that we have *perfection* within us just waiting to be fully expressed! And, because we identify who we are with our bodies, these kids grow up believing that we all have a vital purpose. And, more importantly, *we have everything we need already inside of us to actualize that purpose!*

There is yet another aspect of chiropractic that is of supreme importance in understanding what Emerson was saying. We perceive and interpret everything we encounter as a result of impulses we receive through our nerve systems. If we lose the CONNECTION between our brain and our body, we cannot receive or interpret the information from our senses in a way that is most useful to us. In other words, ***our view of the world and how we fit into it will be distorted!*** And, as a result, we will not *respond* in the way that will best support our own growth or the growth of those around us.

The problem is not *how much* of our connection we lose; *ANY* loss of connection has the effect of distorting our view of the world!

Understanding this is critical! This means that even if children are brought up with empowering belief systems, they may not be able to gain the desired lessons and therefore will not benefit the way someone with a fully functioning nerve system will. *The result will be the same as if that child were brought up in the opposite belief system!* And, the same loss of Nerve connection that causes a child to grow up with a distorted view of the world will cause an adult to misinterpret the world too! Will this affect your performance at work? Can you be the parent you want to be and teach the lessons you want your children to learn if you aren't at 100% yourself?

So I ask you, how important is it for everyone to maintain the function of their spine? The way I see it, without chiropractic care and a fully functioning nerve system, the world will end up with an awful lot of crooked trees!



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