

Retracing Cycles of Repair

Dr. B.J. Palmer wrote the following information during the early development of chiropractic as an art and science. You may be impressed with the different writing style in which it is presented. Keep in mind that his words are as true today as they were years ago. The laws of nature remain consistent.

***"As it took time for the condition ...
to change from health to a maximum degree of abnormality ...
it takes time to RETRACE ... BACK TO HEALTH."***

Retracing: Cycles of Repair

What do we mean by retracing? Primarily it implies going over ground which has already been covered until the individual reaches the point from which he started.

When a patient is under chiropractic care, it often occurs that he exhibits symptoms that have not manifested themselves for months, or even years. His first impression is that he is becoming worse, but he is retracing the several stages through which his disease progressed in the making.

The question of time is essential in the matter of retracing. If a disease has been in progress for a number of years, the patient should not always expect to regain the normal state within a few days.

As it took time for the condition of the patient to change from health to a maximum degree of abnormality, so it takes time to retrace from the abnormal condition back to health.

Response Varies

The time consumed in the recovery does not always correspond to the time consumed in the production of the disease. As a general thing, however, it may be stated that acute diseases respond rapidly, while chronic cases of long standing are slower in their response.

Some abnormalities show very extensive involvement of tissues, while others show very little involvement of tissues. In any involvement of tissues, the structures must retrace the various steps through which it passed in assuming its normal condition.

This is well shown by the various eruptions on the skin where tissue gradually changes and becomes abnormal, reaching its greatest degree of abnormality and then returns through the steps that it has covered in its appearance until the skin again becomes normal. This is equally true of those tissues in the body that are not visible.

What The Chiropractor Does

The chiropractor is thoroughly trained to detect the abnormal positions of the vertebrae in the spine. He is further trained in the technique of restoring these vertebrae to their normal positions.

The question naturally arises in the mind of the patient as to why the chiropractor cannot return the vertebra immediately to its normal position and thus immediately restore the tissue to a healthy state.

What actually happens when an adjustment is given is the vertebra is returned toward its normal position. When an adjustment is done, the ligaments and muscles are given an opportunity to regain, in part, their normal tone, and this permits them to hold the vertebra in a more nearly normal state.

Points To Remember

The spine, however, and the body in general is subject to more or less strain during the every day life, and it is possible that the vertebra may recede toward its old abnormal position, thereby necessitating another adjustment.

Keep in mind that tissues often must be rebuilt in order for the vertebra to hold its normal position.

In addition, tissues that have perhaps for years assumed an abnormal condition, due to the gradually increasing pressure upon the nerve fibers, must be allowed time to return through the various stages they have passed in the production of the abnormality.

This all takes time, and patience becomes a cardinal virtue, based on the knowledge that all is progressing as it should.

Gradual Retracing

It can thus readily be seen that there is a gradual retracing in the position of the vertebra from the time when it attains the maximum degree, to the time when it returns again to normal.

There is also a retracing in the condition of the tissues that are supplied by the nerve fibers impinged. They have gradually attained a maximum degree of abnormality and must return through those various stages by which they progressed in the attainment of that abnormality.

Not only is there retracing so far as the vertebrae are concerned and the tissue cells affected by the subluxation, but there is also a retracing in the symptoms exhibited by the patient.

Various Stages

Different stages of the disease give rise to different symptoms, and as the order reverses itself, symptoms which were present, perhaps years ago, may again occur.

If the vertebra is being returned rapidly toward its normal position, an entire series of symptoms may develop at one time and the patient consequently will believe his is getting worse.

As a matter of fact, the outlook is particularly bright at this time, and the patient should realize this fact. Naturally, if he does not understand the condition, he will assume that he is becoming worse and may stop chiropractic care entirely.

It cannot be made too emphatic that this is the very time when he should continue with chiropractic care, because the results are being obtained which will do the greatest good.

Must Be Retracing

It is immaterial whether the disease is one of long standing or an acute condition. There must be retracing in the position of the vertebra and in whatever structural or functional change has occurred.

Naturally, if this is true, there must be a retracing in the symptoms. In acute cases they may be so slight in degree that they pass unnoticed.

Finally, every chiropractic patient should realize the necessity for continuing with chiropractic care, even though you cannot note the progress made from day to day, or even though you believe the condition is worse.

It is essential for this period of retracing to be passed through, and do not allow any temporary discouragement to preclude the ultimate health which will be yours if you continue.