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Practicing above the Treetops

Running a Christian Practice - Atmosphere
(Part 2 of 5 in a new series)

While we DCs, as professionals in our respective communities, should act responsively and with integrity, it is also true that we chiropractors who are Christians should live above that level of professionalism. I'm referring to that lifestyle as 'practicing above the tree tops' - living a lifestyle that is ethically above the level of a merely moral chiropractor - a lifestyle that stands out as a Christ-follower. As a part of being a light in the world, and in an effort to be a witness to our patients as well as to our peers, we should 'be mature and fully developed' in our faith walk. Granted, this is a tall order, but the Word commands it, so by His grace, we can do it.

Yet practically speaking, what does that look like? In this, the second of my articles on the topic, I will discuss the first aspect of living above the tree tops. You might think that the first part of that lifestyle might be 'witnessing' to those around us. But I suggest that we need to earn the right to do that first by living a life that demonstrates that we offer something different - something better.

So the first part of running a Christian practice is the atmosphere of our practice. When a patient walks into our practice, what do they experience? Once a month, doctor, take 5 minutes and walk into the front door of your office and experience the reception area as a patient would. What do you see? Smell? Hear? Are you greeted with a smile and 'hello' immediately? Are the corners cobweb free? Is there dust in the areas around the chairs? Is the music uplifting? Is the bathroom clean and fresh smelling? Are the magazines congruent with what you live and believe? Walls must hold information that is congruent with what we teach also. Pictures and posters should trigger thoughts that point conversation toward improving health.

Of course all of this must be built upon the good foundation of our attitude. And that attitude - the purpose for which we are in business and in practice - must be tied to what Jesus said was most important - loving God and loving people. Take a moment right now. Can you write out in one sentence the reason why you are in practice? Does your purpose take you above the level of earning a living to impacting your world for eternity?

And what of the attitude behind the front desk? The staff must believe that what they are doing is positive and important. They must know that what your office offers people is good and right. They must know in their hearts that what the patient is experiencing is real and important. They must focus on the patient more than on their own life drama.

Finally, our efforts must strive toward excellence. We must never rely on what we knew and did yesterday to set the standard of care. Whether we

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Above the tree tops, continued, graduated last month, or 30 years ago, we must continue to hone our skills. While knowledge is not the end all of what we can offer people, still current, cutting-edge skills will bring more to our tool kit, allowing us to do a better job of assisting people in their search for better health.

In practice, our exam protocols must be excellent, current, and relevant to what the patient is experiencing and what we are aiming to improve in their symptoms and activities of daily living. Our exam should be designed to uncover the cause of their problem, and to measure improvements over the course of their treatment. Changes in the areas of examinations and treatment are not generally fun for the doctor and staff, but if we are still using the same protocols we did even 10 years ago, we are missing new, and potentially better techniques and technology. We must invest in our skills and knowledge to stay excellent at what we do.

Practicing above the tree tops - establishing an atmosphere in the office that shines as a light to those who enter - that is a crucial part of running a practice that is not merely good chiropractic, but Christ-like chiropractic. In my next article, I will discuss the level of integrity that we must maintain in our business lives. Until then, practice well in an atmosphere of excellent Christ-like professionalism.

Dr. Charles Roost has been a member of the CCA since 1989 and is currently serving on the Board of Directors as our Missions Committee Chairman. He and his wife Judith live in Lansing, MI.