

# Education Resource Center

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Practice Growth



## Practice Growth: Systemize, Organize, Energize

I will assume that every person reading this article is interested in practice growth. If you are not, just turn the page. If you are, however, read every word, then take the time to have a look around your office and decide what you need to work on. No matter how good you think you are, you always have room for improvement. In fact, every practice's goal should be continual improvement in areas of organization and patient care. After all, how will we make a difference around the world if we are not able to help and impact more people? That's your challenge; I hope you take it!

Recently we hired a new Chiropractic assistant who came to us from another Chiropractic office. After a week in our office, I asked her if she was enjoying working with us. She said she was so impressed with our organization and efficiency. She added that the office she had come from was extremely disorganized and, therefore, a very stressful environment. She ended by saying, "There is no stress in this office."

I was somewhat surprised at her comment. I know we are ultimately organized, but I never considered our office to be stress free! In fact, I always thought we had a fair amount of stress. I decided that everything is relative and wondered how many offices are disorganized and subsequently stressful, which would lead to staff burnout and job dissatisfaction. Since burnout is such a problem in our profession, I think this issue needs to be addressed and taken very seriously.

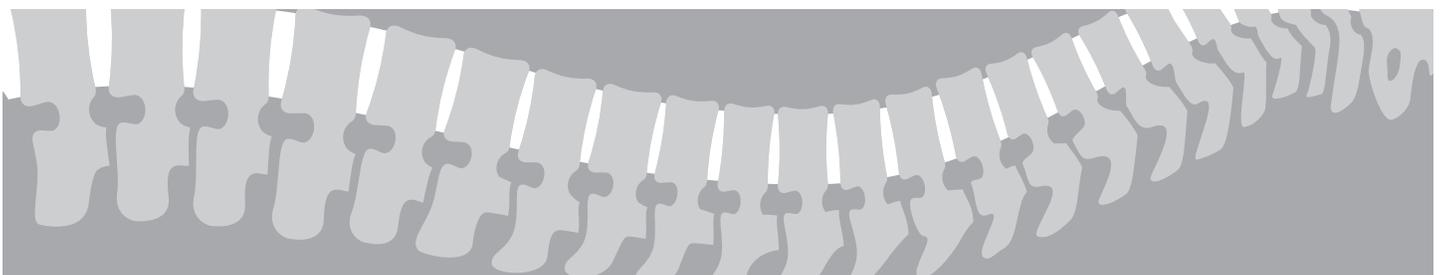
I like to make the analogy of the human body. It is entirely made up of systems - the Nervous System, Immune System, Respiratory System, etc. Each system works methodically

to fulfill its responsibility to its ultimate purpose; to sustain the life of the organism it supports. Each system does not work independently, but entirely together with the other systems. Each system has a responsibility and then helps the other systems in the process of sustaining life.



Each system should work together with the other systems in order to support and sustain the life of your practice

Wouldn't it be incredible if our office worked as well? Can you imagine how successful we could be if we worked as well as our bodies? I cannot help but think it should be our goal to have our offices work as easily and effortlessly as our bodies. Our office should be systemized just like our bodies. The new patient system, report of findings system, patient flow system, billing and collections system, are just a few of the many systems that should be perfected. Each



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When new employees are hired, they must adjust themselves to your system instead of making up their own systems. I believe it should take a board decision to change a system—never, never, never on a whim from any member of the staff, including the Chiropractor (who sometimes is the worst offender). Unfortunately, stress abounds when the system gets changed every other day, and no one understands the system.

Sadly, patients get lost because of the disorganization. Why would they want to enter into a stressful environment? They get plenty of that in their own offices! It certainly doesn't promote healing, and it definitely doesn't make them feel like you are in control! All of which leads them to think, sloppy organization...sloppy Chiropractic care. Why would they want to stay or refer?

Unfortunately, what also gets lost in this environment is our enthusiasm and passion for what we are doing. No great Chiropractic practice ever existed without enthusiasm and energy. Here's another human body analogy, morbid as it may seem. I can go to the morgue and find a perfect body with all of its systems intact. Of course, there would be something missing...wouldn't there? Yes...life force...energy...passion, whatever you want to call it! Your office may have all the systems and all the tools, but if life force, energy, and enthusiasm are not there, you will have a lifeless practice.

Beware of the "Law of Familiarity," which states that anytime you are around anything enough, you will begin to take it for granted. We cannot afford to take what we do for granted. The wonders of Chiropractic are presented to us every single day, so often that we consider it our daily routine. So what if a patient crawls in and walks out? Of course, most of our patients leave our office feeling better than when they entered our office; no big deal... happens every day, all day! Sometimes it takes a patient's enthusiasm and excitement to wake us up again. Folks, that's not the way it should be, and it certainly will not increase your practice.

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to keep more new patients? Can you imagine how busy you would be if you were able to have 50% of your patients commit to wellness programs and refer at least one patient to your office? I believe you would have a waiting list practice.

The practice that is unorganized and unsystemized and unenergized will not be attracting new patients or keeping patients to wellness. You just have to examine your patient visit average in order to evaluate how you're doing. Even the practice that does have enthusiasm and passion will not be able to keep patients if they are unorganized and unsystemized. The patients you attract will fall right through the crack!

Systemizing, organizing and energizing is a process that will take time and hard work, but it will pay great dividends to you and your staff. Not only will your patients stay, but your staff will stay, too! The best part is that your patients will benefit. Let's be honest: Our goal is to make a difference with every patient we contact, so do the work and give it your best shot!

#### About the Author

Susan Hoy speaks to Chiropractic assistants throughout the country, specializing in staff growth and the difference they can make in the practice and in the healing process.

Susan's work as a Parker Seminar Speaker, Management Consultant, and Seminar Counselor has received well-deserved recognition. In 1998, she was honored by the Parker Chiropractic Foundation as its "Management Consultant of the Year."

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