

# CBP® Certainty



by Marc E. Swerdlick, DC

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The Greek word *Ethos* is commonly used in speech communication classes when referring to the credibility of the presenter. A presenter is said to need two additional primary qualities in order to effectively communicate; Logos, which refers to the rational or logical appeal, and Pathos, which refers to the emotional appeal. It doesn't matter if you're speaking to an individual or to a thousand people in a banquet hall, all three components must be present in order for the speaker to be effective and persuasive. In future issues of *AJCC*, we'll spend time discussing all three components of effective presentation as a Doctor of Chiropractic. In this article, we're going to discuss *Ethos* (credibility).

While credibility is important in any doctor-patient relationship, it is understandably a larger component in a cash practice. For the purposes of this discussion, we will consider a cash practice and a non-assignment practice to be one and the same. While some of you may be unfamiliar with the difference between the two, realize that the difference is primarily a matter of

semantics. The hardcore cash practice model doesn't have anything to do with insurance whatsoever. Typically, these doctors will charge a fee and will not furnish the patient with any coding or documentation for reimbursement. A non-assignment practice also charges a fee for service, however the chiropractic office will customarily provide documentation for the patient to submit to the insurance company so that whatever his or her plan covers for chiropractic care is reimbursed directly to the patient from the insurance provider. In the non-assignment model, the actual money paid out of pocket by the patient will likely be the difference between the fee charged by the chiropractor and what is covered by their insurance. In both models, the financial agreement exists between the patient and the chiropractic office.

The premise of Chiropractic Biophysics® technique is corrective care. Since corrective care requires an earnest commitment of the patient, communication between the doctor and patient needs to be effective in order to establish the need for care beyond symptomatic relief. While personality and a rational appeal are important characteristics of a DC, there are numerous benefits for providing the patient with a credible and indisputable case for corrective care. To effectively establish credibility, put yourself in the mindset of an attorney. If you were an attorney who was about to argue an important case, you'd certainly want to go into court with more than one single bit of evidence in your favor. In fact, you would probably want to prepare yourself with so much evidence in your favor that the case could be won even before entering the courtroom. In the days before the court date, you and your legal team would compile evidence that supports your case, as well as evidence that contradict the anticipated case that will be made by your opponent. Thorough preparation will allow you to walk into court with a great degree of confidence.

While a doctor-patient relationship isn't exactly a legal case, the techniques employed are one in the same. Greater credibility leads to greater influence. A dynamic presenter can overcome some credibility issues by appealing to the

emotions of the patient. Coupling a dynamic presenter with great credibility is an unbeatable combination. For those that are not boiling over with personality but are very enthusiastic about corrective chiropractic care, credibility is an excellent weapon to have in one's arsenal. Does this mean that we should characterize the establishment of a doctor-patient relationship as a court battle or preparation for war? No. But it should be understood that a patient that commits to a longer than typical relationship with chiropractic (especially corrective chiropractic care) may require evidence to support this recommendation.

Each week, I receive calls from many of my CBP® colleagues with questions specifically relating to the issue of credibility. Regardless of their practice management affiliations, many DC's become frustrated when trying to attract new patients. The challenge becomes even greater when establishing long-term relationships characteristic of corrective care patients. Nevertheless, chiropractors will employ strategies ranging from scripts to multiple reports of findings in order to explain the need for extended care beyond symptomatic relief. While many of these techniques prove successful, there is a weapon in your arsenal that often goes overlooked. This weapon is incredibly powerful, very effective and is used everyday in almost every walk of life.

The weapon I am speaking of is RESEARCH. Now, I realize that the word research is enough to put some to sleep. But the fact of the matter is that research is an unmatched persuasive tool. Why do people buy certain automobiles, car seats and computers? Advertising has a lot to do with their decision, but for the most important purchases the answer is research. Research that supports a purchase is the greatest form of credibility. Applying the same principle to your practice gives you a powerful weapon. As a CBP® Doctor, you can only admire the quantity and quality of the research supporting Chiropractic Biophysics.®

Research in chiropractic is important in supporting the profession, building the doctor's knowledge base and supporting an I.M.E. Research can also be

used as a fantastic practice-building tool. I'm not suggesting that a patient will want to peruse the pages of *JMPT* or *Spine*. What I'm talking about is the *value* of the research and what it represents. My practice distinguishes itself as clearly being different from other chiropractic offices in the area. We constantly make an effort to educate the public about Vertebral Subluxation Complex and the value of corrective care beyond symptomatic relief. Keeping this in mind, it is during my consultation and report of findings that I present the patient with a list of all the published research articles supporting CBP®. Then I point to an assortment of large three-ring binders with each page of every research article neatly protected by a vinyl page protector. I briefly explain the value of peer-reviewed research and the credibility of the scientific journals in which these articles are published; journals like *Spine*, *Clinical Biomechanics* and *JMPT*. This brief review of the extensive research supporting CBP® builds a foundation of credibility, which serves as a springboard for the remainder of the presentation. From a business point of view, research makes a highly effective sales and marketing tool. Our patients are educated and committed to their care in our office, which results in better corrections and greater referrals.

CBP® Non-Profit has provided the funding for the research that we have available to us, and the research that is currently in progress. Research that incorporates great contributors like Dr. Rene Cailliet, MD, Burt Holland, PhD and Tad Janik, PhD requires significant funding. All chiropractic techniques have some kind of foundation, some less scientific than others. As chiropractors practicing CBP®, the quantity and quality of the research available allows us the privilege to justify what we do. It is important that we continually support CBP® Non-Profit. CBP® Doctors and DC's affiliated with practice management organizations that incorporate CBP® (or other corrective techniques derived from the efforts of those at the heart of Chiropractic Biophysics®) need to realize the endless value that is provided to us and our livelihoods through the research and the efforts of CBP® Non-Profit.