



# ADJUSTED REALITY

**SUPERCHARGE**  
YOUR **WHOLE-BEING**  
FOR OPTIMAL LIVING  
AND LONGEVITY

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# INTRODUCTION

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**Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.**

—ALBERT EINSTEIN

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This book is unlike anything you've encountered before. It presents an adjusted reality made of engaging elements that shape a unique and immersive adventure, boldly venturing to places where society hesitates. In its pages, you'll reach breathtaking heights that ignite your potential, supercharging your optimal living and longevity.

In this enchanting realm of possibilities, a remarkable journey awaits that unravels the tapestry of the past, weaves together the threads of imagination, and embarks on an odyssey to reshape the future. Picture a world where misconceptions crumble, trust is restored, and the key to robust health lies not in a pill bottle but in the embrace of a philosophy yet to be fully explored.

Einstein's imagination quote hearkens to the positive piece that so many people are missing in today's world. If you just stop for a minute and pretend you're a little kid in a sandbox, what can you create, and what would that creation look like? How much fun could you have doing it? Indeed, imagination wields a mightier force than knowledge.



But imagination can also inspire fear of the unknown and the lurking foreboding of bad things. For many of us, when we were young, this happened when the lights went off at bedtime. There was no telling what was hiding under the bed, behind a closet door, or in the shadows outside the window. We created our own monsters in a variety of ways, and America's people today are faced with similar unknowns, seemingly one after another. With no brighter, reasonable alternative, we tend to revert to that chilling childhood place.

Indeed, there is an ogre among us, siphoning our physical and spiritual energy for its own yield. It beckons a promise of healing, uttered in language laden with extravagance but void of benevolence. Ensnared in cramped antechambers, we receive the fiend's veiled hope and snake oil remedy yet are ejected hastily back into the same world of discomfort and pain from whence we came.

The ogre is like the mythical nine-headed Hydra, a monstrous entity born from the shadows of past injuries, illnesses, traumas, drugs, lies, addictions, betrayals, guilt, and death. Each head represents a facet of this overwhelming force, poised to strike at any moment. The Hydra's immortal heads generate an all-encompassing fear, their sinuous tentacles wrapping around us insidiously and slipping into the recesses of our deepest nightmares if we let our guard down.

A dramatic but not altogether erroneous depiction of the portrayal of the body as a cohesive whole—intricately composed of interconnected and interdependent parts—presents a Whole Body connected with a mental aspect, which can bring in the spiritual as well, becoming a Whole Self. The sum of the parts—Whole Body and Whole Self—is a Whole Being. Paired with someone who understands the philosophy of the sum of these parts, we can heal from a *whole* perspective.



When a person seeks healing, they bring with them not just isolated symptoms but a complex web of concerns that demand a comprehensive perspective. It is far more than simply treating symptoms in isolation, a common concern being, “I went to my MD, but they only let me talk about one symptom at a time.” Or the classic quip (popularized in Pixar’s *Monsters, Inc.*):

*Patient: It hurts my arm when I move it like this.*

*Doctor: Don’t move it like that.*<sup>2</sup>

Consider the scenario of someone seeing a doctor for a painful stomachache, and it turns out the stomachache was caused by medication previously prescribed to treat the patient’s headaches. The doctor prescribes more meds to treat the stomach pain, missing or overlooking the larger problem.

Healthcare today functions on the idea that it is working for you or with you, but that’s not necessarily the case. The healthcare system is also a business, and its profit margins are defined by the treatments given. Like any business, healthcare functions via return on investment, which is driven by patients’ symptoms. But the symptoms are not the problem; there is an overarching issue in play. In traditional business settings, if the customer doesn’t like the product, they typically receive some type of return or exchange. In healthcare, there is no guaranteed satisfaction, and you can’t return the product.

Modern healthcare is fragmented and disjointed. Now more than ever, it is critical to acknowledge the interconnectedness of mind, body, and spirit. We are navigating the peaks and valleys of a shared journey, where each step—upward or downward—shapes our path toward happiness and, ultimately, contentment through the choices we make. How we respond to the challenges along the way defines who we are, shaping the quality of our lives and influencing our longevity. This is

an opportunity to turn the light back on, realize and quell our fears, and shape a monster-free future of found *happiness* built around an ideal that creates *joy*.

For example, happiness is often related to something you acquire, a material possession, such as a new car. The car is fun and offers a state of jubilation; it's valuable to you in the moment, but over time, that feeling slowly dissipates because it's based on external factors. Joy, on the other hand, is a much deeper, enduring place connected to meaningful experiences and relationships where you are less dependent on outside influence. Joy also includes your ability to be consistent with your spiritual growth and goodness.

A symptom follows the same happiness—joy path—the diagnosis of a problem is based on its duration, intensity, and cause. I've seen the sadness and the loss of trust caused by a system that portrayed an objective outcome that was neither desired nor even thought of. I've walked through fire, felt the pain, and endured scars from the darkest areas of true propaganda misrepresenting and discriminating with malice. But I've also seen and felt miracles along the way, and this is what I wish for you—accurate, honest representation of intentional, whole health.

As a practicing chiropractor for more than a quarter-century and the current president of the Foundation for Chiropractic Education, the soul of my education and experience is reflected in my colleagues' relentless desire to help people be at their best, an amplification of the testament to which you will see the everyday warrior built from the underdog. I am proud that we are out there as a team, with wisdom herein that shares enlightenment of an entirely new way of thinking, adjusting your reality to bring forth healing and hope instead of the painful traumas and victimization of symptomology.

In the early stages of shaping this book, contemplation met inspiration, and from that intersection came a vision that will traverse the realms of health, challenge conventional wisdom, and herald a new era—a transformative voyage that transcends the confines of traditional medicine, which is a tradition fueled by profit.

To wit, in 2024, the pharmaceutical industry in the United States spent over \$19 billion on digital drug advertising, with the US and New Zealand standing alone as the only countries worldwide allowing advertising of pharmaceutical drugs on mainstream media.<sup>3</sup> And mainstream means social, as pharma's target customers live largely within the boundaries of small, handheld devices. For example, contemplate a Caribbean vacation with your family to a world of white sand beaches and palm trees. While you're absorbed in nature's spectacular colors, sights, and sounds, your family members' heads are buried in a prescription drug ad.

This scene unfolded in real time for a friend of mine at the tail end of a life-list trip to the US Virgin Islands. Traveling nearly the length of the island of St. Thomas in an airport taxi van, one of the young daughters in a family of four sat next to my friend and immediately dropped her head to her phone. Outside the windows was a living canvas of some of the most radiant ocean scenery on the planet, and she didn't see any of it. Never once looked up from the screen.

Frightening.

But not surprising. Just as this young girl failed to notice the breathtaking natural world outside the taxi's windows, so too do millions of consumers miss the profound reality of their own health, trapped in a cycle of distractions and misguided solutions. In fact, 57 percent of Americans use social media to research health decisions.<sup>4</sup> However, data from the World Health Organization reveals a disturbing contradiction: The US, a nation inundated with drug promotions,



ranks dismally low in health metrics, plagued by soaring suicide rates, chronic pain, and a quality of life index in the cellar.<sup>5</sup> Do you believe that creating a pill store for everything you experience is going to yield the quality of life you desire?

The problem lies in the profit-driven business model associated not with patient outcomes but with symptom-driven treatment. It's not about the patient—it never was. It's about their symptoms.

Pharmaceutical companies have a vested interest in synthesizing resources from nature and turning them into something “owned.” Nature made a poppy, for instance, but if plucked from its source and synthetically altered (blending the poppy's oxalate with acetyl), it becomes OxyContin. If you don't understand the playbook, all the better. The more you don't understand, the more money pharma makes, at the expense of your health.

For example, as I composed this introduction, my husband was watching the nightly news and saw no less than ten pharmaceutical advertisements. He said, “I'm trying to match the symptom I should have with the corresponding pill.”

The simple fact is that whole-being health cannot be fully understood if you only analyze individual components without a functioning feedback loop, which is noticeably absent in our current health-care system. We have nothing that dampens the negative or reinforces the positive; patients are on their own, and the feedback offered is segmented into parts, with no adaptation or evolution.

In these pages, we will create moments of adjustment and counterbalance to the current healthcare debacle. We need a paradigm shift—a departure from the pill-for-every-ill doctrine toward a nurturing philosophy change from well-being to *whole-being*, an exemplar that reaches beyond the limits of contemporary understanding, where every life thread intertwines with purpose and meaning.

This is an odyssey of change and testimony to the resilience of the human spirit, leaving a past of mistrust behind us and creating a future of evolution from last hope to first hope.

The individual parts of today's healthcare community are disconnected from one another; therefore, they can't communicate, cooperate, or coordinate care. If a doctor doesn't know their patient's background and lifestyle history, how do they help them? If a doctor meets a new patient in the exam room and asks questions to learn about her traditional habits and activities, the doctor now knows that person is a marathon runner—very active and smart with her nutrition and sleep. But what if the doctor didn't ask those questions and only asked the perfunctory, "What brings you in today?" That medical professional would never know why the patient has so many ankle and knee ailments or understand why their BMI index is lower than normal.

Today's world is full of "experts" in every field, but they aren't asking about the sum of the parts. This leads consumers to feel overwhelmed, catatonic even, with misconceptions, fads, and lies about the human frame. I'll bet you remember when you were a little boy or girl, paralyzed with fear because you heard a monster under the bed. If you stayed hidden under the sheets, it wouldn't see you and couldn't get you because the sheets somehow held monster-blocking power. But then you needed to use the bathroom and either held it in all night or ran like an Olympic sprinter across the room.

That same kind of terror permeates today's healthcare world. People need a clear road map out of feeling lost, unclear, and worried—scared of the monster. However, that navigation isn't always easy. Traditionally, when someone explores a new frontier, questions overcome fear. In today's world, it's the opposite. Fear overcomes the question

because we're afraid of asking the "wrong" question and being rejected or outright dismissed.

The problem is the experts may not be getting to the real answer. With all due respect to medical professionals, they are trained to ask about a patient's symptoms to determine the problem and what medication to prescribe. Notable is the ticking timeclock to handle the backlog of patients in the waiting room. To see everyone in there and address their ailments, clinicians must keep to a very tight patient encounter. The common healthcare experience boils down to a physician talking for 5.2 minutes and a patient for 5.3 minutes, with the physician closing for a total visit time of 15.7 minutes.<sup>6</sup> That's roughly five minutes of rushed, largely disconnected talk time with a doctor. This reductionist approach often overlooks the interconnectedness of the human experience.

It's similar to the stranger on the bus syndrome. You meet someone sitting next to you, exchange "How are you doing today?" and then likely share everything about a particular problem. It's generally easy to do, but it doesn't happen in five minutes; it takes the full duration of the trip, and by this time, you feel good because you told a complete stranger about your latest setback.

You didn't just say, "I have a throbbing toothache today." You evoked the nitty-gritty details: "I went eight rounds in the ring practicing with a champion boxer, and he knocked my tooth loose, but it doesn't need any medication. It just needs to be left alone." That was one thing I learned with my young sons; yes, the tooth is wiggly, but it's an adult tooth and will strengthen on its own. Just let it be.

The stranger on the bus understands you don't need medication because you shared the *whole* story. Focusing on just one part not only ignores the whole but leaves it vulnerable. If we ignore the whole, small-scale fixes to the parts are just temporary relief. To fully optimize



health, we must see whole-being as our internal biodiversity—an interplay of all the components working in synergistic application.

Picture it through your daily diet and exercise. You can't eat the same food every day and maintain adequate nourishment. If you run every day with no adjacent strength work, you are prone to injury. If you focus all your attention on only one person, your other relationships will suffer. Diversity fosters vitality, encompassing movement, nutrition, mental health, and social connections that nurture the entirety of our being.

A person with back pain thinks they just need their back pain fixed. A person with a headache thinks they just need the headache fixed. They look to their MD as the person who's going to give them an answer to a part. The problem is we need a better healthcare system that speaks to integrated solutions, with professionals genuinely communicating with patients. Right now, it's dysfunctional, like a car that hit a huge pothole and now the alignment is out of whack and pulls to the left. You don't just align the wheels; you examine the tires, suspension, shock absorbers, and other parts, coordinating all the pieces to work synergistically so the whole car functions as it should.

And yet, in healthcare scenarios, the fallback answer is to do what we always do. Where does that leave us? Where do we turn when we're up against "That's the way it's always been done"? Einstein said it best: "Cherish the questions, for the answers keep changing."

Yes, Albert, the true vision is for the patient to have the ability to reflect on their health and to consider the least invasive opportunity available—the best return on investment with the fewest adverse side effects that maximizes all areas of their life.

The question is: Is the patient knowledgeable enough to recognize that there are options that may create a better long-term outcome? For example, let's say you have a spinal fusion (a surgery that connects

two or more vertebrae in your spine), and you're six months pain-free. You feel great and decide you want to take up running. All is well for a while, but then you start to experience numbness and tingling down your leg, your spine stiffens, and your neck starts to hurt.<sup>7</sup> Ultimately, the solution and outcome were different because the right questions weren't asked or answered beforehand. "If I do this procedure, what am I limited to and what should I avoid?" Was the answer high-impact activity? These questions were never asked or commented on before you were wheeled down to the operating room. "After this type of surgery, your spine will never be the same."

Exploring the right questions will help you reach a desired outcome. What life do you want to live? Once you recognize adverse events versus the symptoms you're facing right now, perhaps reimagining care is necessary, as modern healthcare (and information) systems have failed in terms of self-advocacy. Could the symptoms be managed by holistic means that involve the whole body rather than a single area? What's the whole picture we're dealing with? Remember, we aren't independent parts walking around separately; it's the sum of the parts that makes up who we are as whole-being individuals. And when you have a surgical intervention, there's a change in the parts, which changes the sum.

Your physical health, and everyday exhilaration in all life components, is much more easily navigated knowing you have all rights to your body and the choices you make. This book is a newfound opportunity to view in a new way something you may never have been introduced to before.

Ultimately, it's about vision. It's seeing for the first time the place you always wanted to go and finally getting there. Your eyes are wide open, your heart is full, and all the good, perfect ingredients have accelerated your senses to an "I'm here" moment. You hold the power

to design a meaningful and thriving path for your life. Lose that vision, however, and you've lost inspiration and motivation to push forward, resulting in lackluster performance and negative outcomes.

Think of it as the leadership of a company being out on leave while the rest of the team stumbles, trying to make decisions for the operation to continue. Or the community hardware store versus Home Depot comparison. Your friendly neighborhood hardware store, God bless them, offers parts. But you need to know what parts you need (just ask any amateur home handyman muttering expletives under a leaking kitchen sink). The clerk will sell you a \$5 part, and then you're back under the sink. By contrast, Home Depot comes along and offers *vision* to DIY homeowners they might not have had before.

That's what whole health is about—it's a design, not just a part. You might *need* to cut back on sugars and carbs, but what do you ultimately *want*? You're fixing a small problem with a smarter diet, but perhaps it's time to reflect on the whole environment instead of a Band-Aid solution. The diet may be solving a specific problem, but it doesn't address the core issue. You're frustrated because you're weary of inhabiting a space or living a life that doesn't bring you fulfillment.

Healthcare today is the community hardware store, mismanaging the whole-being through a system that tries to replace one part when you really need an entirely new kitchen. Similarly, we can no longer focus on wellness or well-being, as it is typically reduced to monitoring systems on the brink of failure, assuming by their titles that you are at the end of the journey and have reached the pinnacle of "well" when we all know this is a journey. More often than not, your symptoms, not the cause, are being chased, and if we break away from the symptom, we break the system of revenue. We need to bring healthcare into the whole space that creates a new vision, with vastly improved design and function.



As architects crafting this expedition, we're building your life's Home Depot, with the parts laid out along with the vision to create something beautiful. Through a captivating narrative that embraces the colorful tapestry of the human experience, this book will cater to curious adventurers embarking on the exploration of holistic whole-being and seeking to become seasoned architects of their lives. We will create a picture of better ways to build upon the past in order to create a stronger, more beautiful future—a place where you can reimagine who you are and celebrate the joys and happiness of daily life.

What are the possibilities when we understand that a part is just a part and the vision for everything to come together is much more important than fixing a part? This is the essence of whole-being, founded on the integration and comprehension of knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge represents your ability to merge facts and skills together. Wisdom is your ability to apply knowledge to navigate life challenges, make the hard choices, and contribute to the sum of the parts.

This book unfolds as a mosaic of stories, philosophy, and practical wisdom—a guide to reimagining health, whole-being, and the very essence of existence. As we venture into these chapters, I invite you to suspend disbelief and open your mind to curiosity and a place where the ordinary becomes extraordinary. An exploration of optimized health awaits, one that is free of the matrix of Big Pharma and extends beyond the boundaries of conventional thought to new opportunities and choices available to you, to healing of chronic illness and disease through treating your whole-being rather than one symptom at a time.

From the unknown to the known, from misconceptions to revelations, from nowhere to Now Here. We are at a tipping point where we can change the future.

There are variations to how each piece of the monster can be minimized to remove fear and help you make strong, meaningful

decisions that you can expand on over time. Start with the basics in every area and try to develop a holistic approach to your life that inspires freedom in mind, body, and spirit. Each piece has a desire to be as close to perfect as possible, but we know that in a complex system, there must be redundancies and diversity built in to allow for alternative coping strategies. When you recognize the monster, its power is stripped away, even in your darkest, deepest moments.

We'll begin with an exploration of how the echoes of the past resonate in our present, setting the stage for a paradigm shift from last hope to first hope, a journey encapsulating the essence of whole-being. The chapters ahead are a testament to the convergence of imagination and wisdom, weaving a storyline that challenges perceptions, unravels the complexities of our healthcare system, and propels us toward a future anchored in holistic whole-being that will reshape our reality and reimagine our world.





# CHAPTER ONE

## Investment

### *Setting Things Straight*

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**Who controls the past controls the future; who  
controls the present controls the past.**

—GEORGE ORWELL

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On an otherwise routine day some years ago, a man shrouded in gloom walked into my office. He was the global CEO of a Fortune 50 company and had just lost his wife to brain cancer. He slumped in a chair, sadness on his face, arms crossed in a self-embrace of desperate comfort and coping. I asked why he had come to me.

After a lingered pause, he replied, “You’re my last hope.”

“Where have you been before coming here?”

“Neurologist, physiatrist, orthopedist ...” He went down the list of all the places he had been, the experts he had seen. I wanted, needed, to know why he saw me as his last hope.

“The others can’t help me,” he said in defeat.

“What are you doing that is creating chaos in your life?” I asked.

“Morning, noon, and night, I’m taking three Tylenol. I usually mix them with coffee or Coke. I can’t deliver physiologically, and I can’t pull together my thought processes.”

I asked him if he wanted to get better.

We sat in silence for a moment as he stared at the floor. Then he burst into tears and said, “I’m grieving so badly for my wife. My body is breaking down. I just can’t function anymore.”

The gap we fundamentally needed to address was where he wanted to go in a navigational capacity. He wanted to heal but didn’t know what he was healing—his heart or his body. He needed to start somewhere, so he had tried traditional avenues and so-called experts but had only returned to the same place of physical and emotional suffering. Experts everywhere, but no reliable navigational system in place. He needed someone who could step in when everyone else had stepped out. They hadn’t helped him cope with his trauma, and even worse, they had offered him no hope. None of them had been willing to be the person to step in and say, “Tell me what it is. What does your monster look like, and how can we stand together and face it?”

On another day in another time, a young woman faced a similar crossroads in her life on a street in Calgary, Alberta. On the way to line dancing lessons with her boyfriend, they stopped at a red light, a brief moment of static anticipation for upcoming improvements to their dance moves. She was nineteen, beaming in the passenger seat with brand-new cowgirl boots. In a car approaching from behind, a driver turned his attention from the road to his dog in the back seat. In the few seconds it took him to put both hands back on the wheel, stopped traffic was directly in his path. He crashed into the back of the couple’s car at around fifty miles per hour (eighty kilometers per hour). The impact first snapped her body forward and then immedi-

ately back as the seat belt halted her momentum. Her head hit hard, and the seat belt cut into her hips.

After an ensuing gurney ride to a nearby hospital, a CT scan revealed very little at the time, with only an explanation that the neurological issues were probably due to severe strain and sprain injuries. They released her that night with codeine-fueled Tylenol (an addictive opiate). The next day, a primary care physician prescribed a more aggressive pain reliever to manage her severe headache, with no further explanation. She didn't understand the problem, didn't know what questions to ask, and had no idea what to expect with her health. "Take these meds, get plenty of rest, and come back in two weeks."

She was taking genetics classes at the time, and two weeks later, she returned to her general practitioner with pain radiating down her left leg and a headache so severe she couldn't concentrate on anything for more than fifteen minutes or even carry her backpack to school. She was sent to physical therapy, which was torturously painful. After further specialized tests, including an EEG scan and MRI, she was ultimately told, "We're really sorry this happened, but we're not sure what else we can do. We'll refer you to a neurologist."

The neuro office prescribed new medications for her nerve pain, but after six months, she had no improvement. She was clinging to mental sanity, and one day, a concerned classmate suggested chiropractic. She stared at him blankly. "If that works, why didn't the other doctors give me that option?"

"I don't know, but it's worth a try."

Through seven months of five physicians, a neurologist, a couple of orthopedists, a general practitioner, and a physical therapist, no one ever told her what was going on until she met with that chiropractor. After taking new x-rays, he showed her where joint functions

had clearly been disrupted and told her that upon adjusting those dysfunctional (subluxated) joint areas, she would regain proper nerve function, allowing the muscles, ligaments, and joints to heal and regain overall alignment—she'd be OK.

The patient didn't share the same confidence. *Yeah, right. That sounds way too easy.*

The chiropractor said, "The symptoms are different from the problems, and you'll see the body respond in good time with healing. It's not about the symptoms; it's about the cause of the problem."

Within three visits, she had no neck pain, no headaches, and no pain down her left leg. And those symptoms have never returned to this day.

How did these two people, with seemingly solid success in their lives, allow the most important element, their health, to be compromised—one through grief and sadness and the other through acute injury? Mental health suffering gravely impacted the CEO's ability to maintain everyday composure, much less perform as a high-level revenue generator and strategic planner, amid his crumbling emotional walls. The young woman in the car accident was not properly diagnosed or treated; instead, her symptoms were artificially masked. What if she had been able to understand the nervous system and the philosophy to which, in chasing the symptoms, she chased the cause? In this case, the cause was an impediment in a vertebra function that created a dysfunctional joint, irritating all the pieces around it. And all of those pieces mean something.

The spinal cord and the vertebrae are arguing about which of them is most important. Back and forth they go until the spinal cord finally says, "Enough already, you're getting on my nerves."

Both of these people were on a path to doom, and both needed different reality checks to be adjusted carefully, quantitatively, and

qualitatively. They both found deliverance from their pain through chiropractic. The CEO became 100 percent pain-free with no medications, quit his overly demanding job, and recognized it was time to serve his own best interests. Yet despite success like this, why isn't the practice more widely accepted? Why is it not the go-to first choice or even a main consideration for pain and suffering?

I asked this question once, and the answer has taken a lifetime to discover because the story of the young woman above is mine. I don't want anyone else to spend their life wondering why the last option isn't the first!

Consider a "minor" leg injury, such as a hamstring pull. Any time one component becomes aberrant or dysfunctional and incapable of performing its duty, it calls on a nearby best friend to help out. If your left leg is injured,

the right leg takes over to allow the left to heal. Mental health follows a similar course; during an extraordinarily difficult struggle, a person can become utterly overwhelmed, experiencing a complete loss of hope and ability to cope. Ensnared in a tentacle of total darkness, they see no way out.

You can't have hope and be unable to cope, and you can't cope without the light of hope. Hope and the ability to cope are inseparable. Just as the darkness clamps its vise grip, someone's best friend walks into the room, takes their hand, wipes away the tears, and says, "I am here for you. You can lean on me, and together, we'll make it through. *We are better than one.*"

*We are better than one.*

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The spinal cord and the vertebrae are arguing about which of them is most important. Back and forth they go until the spinal cord finally says, "Enough already, you're getting on my nerves."

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## MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

In the not-so-distant past, it wasn't uncommon to hear young children utter exhortations such as, "Grandma told me chiropractors kill people." And Grandma said that because that's what she was told; it was a learned behavior passed down the generations. The "teachings" are still prevalent today, as I recently heard someone use the term "quackypractors," and I've endured similar disparagement throughout my career.

One of the worst and most disruptive caustic outcomes of the historical "quack" mindset is the residual. It's like when you peel off a product label or price tag; there's usually leftover glue that sticks, and no matter how hard you work to remove it, it just smears. That's the impact that the American Medical Association (AMA) had on the chiropractic profession. In fact, the AMA invoked the most primitive human emotion, fear, in an elaborate conspiracy to attack chiropractic on the front lines.<sup>8</sup> Power, money, and greed led the AMA to tell patients how their ailments needed to be treated. In fact, the power grab and the ability to squash other humans without remorse was motive and execution at a level this country has rarely seen.

Power used incorrectly creates harm and destruction, and the AMA manipulated tyrannical power to create widespread devastation of an entire profession and eradicate individuals' rights and freedom to choose a drug-free option. Making matters gravely worse, the negligence in thoroughly investigating the addictiveness of opioids exacerbated America's opioid epidemic, contributing to rampant addiction and more than 187 deaths every day.<sup>9</sup>



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*You can learn more about the opioid epidemic and the neuroscience behind addiction from Season 6 Episode 3 (“The True Tales of America’s Opioid Epidemic”) of the Adjusted Reality podcast, featuring Sam Quinones, author of “Dreamland” and “The Least of Us: True Tales of America in the Time of Fentanyl and Meth,” who provides deep insights into the societal, economic, and neurological factors fueling this crisis.*



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Why did chiropractic discrimination matter? In short, it fragmented the healthcare system, leaving patients with a conflict of choice and cohesion of whole-being. Confused and disenchanted by not knowing if there was a possibility to heal without a pill, they saw only one option. The trauma, alienation of the chiropractor, and isolation of patients were remarkable. I am honored to share here a condensed version of the AMA story from Dr. Louis Sportelli, a renowned and highly revered chiropractor with a sixty-year professional industry presence:

“I lived through one of most incomprehensible, unlawful, clandestine, and seemingly implausible events in American history. Back in the 1960s, few would have believed the atrocity of the AMA, even with supporting, unassailable evidence. The AMA was invincible, often dubbed ‘the fourth branch of government.’

“The conspiracy not only took its toll on the chiropractic profession but also imparted immeasurable suffering on untold numbers of people denied access to potentially life-changing care, many of whom became addicted to opioids in lieu of a more conservative option. The story began with the AMA on November 2, 1963, where a committee was established with a mission of containment and elimination of the entire chiropractic profession, simply because the AMA viewed it as an economic threat. Under the ruse of ‘concern for patient safety,’ a cleverly devised plan was covertly executed with brilliant synchronization and skill akin to counter-intelligence organizations. From thwarting accreditation of chiropractic colleges to denying Medicare inclusion and insurance equality, the AMA steamroller moved inexorably forward.

“In the early 1970s, confidential documents appeared that included basis for action, spurred by George P. McAndrews, chiropractic’s David versus a voracious Goliath. A seventeen-year legal battle ensued, culminating in an unlikely victory over the AMA, and although crushing, [the] profits over people public relations campaign still has biased and prejudiced the opinions of millions of consumers, medical professionals, and government agencies.”<sup>10</sup>

The victory in the Wilkes versus AMA case was a pivotal moment for the chiropractic profession, affirming its legitimacy and securing its place in modern healthcare. Ultimately, this victory dismantled barriers imposed on chiropractors and reinforced the ability of patients to access other healthcare options.

The AMA’s warpath is a sobering, frightening reality. And because it is so intricately involved in the financial aspect of patient treatment, the AMA has left a lasting, sticky residue preventing patients from finding their optimized health, and their actions had nothing to do with the outcome.

The health professional you see determines your outcome. For instance, if you have a neuromusculoskeletal problem and need treatment for it, a chiropractic visit cuts out the interim, unnecessary medications, impaired activities of daily living, and lost time at work. Patient satisfaction goes up, cost goes down, and the cause of the problem is identified and treated effectively instead of being masked.<sup>11</sup>

In fact, as Dr. Carl Cleveland III illustrates in his white paper, *Chiropractic: A Safe and Cost-Effective Approach to Health*,<sup>12</sup> if you see a chiropractor first, you have a less than 5 percent chance of “needing” back surgery. If you see a primary care physician first, the chances go up to over 40 percent.<sup>13</sup>

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***For more information, we invite you to review the “Scary Past and Promising Future segment” from Season 4 Episode 2 (“Contain and Eliminate”) of the Adjusted Reality podcast.***




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What is in play here is an ongoing drama of misinformation, confusion, lack of trust, and dearth of knowledge. Consider for a moment the spinal cord; its delicate features are so critical to our functioning that to protect it, the cord is encased by bone from the skull to the sacrum. Human beings are the most intricate entities on earth, with the ability to create new realities via bodies designed to reflect spectacular mobility driven by the spinal column and its related

nerves that take input from the body to the brain (a process known as sensorimotor integration), impacting every action available to us. And while the spine is indeed a critical concern area, chiropractic understands the nervous system's relation to the brain and its overall contributions to body function.

The nervous system is our energy source, much like electricity powers a house. You can walk around the house and switch on lights whenever you need them. However, if a big storm blows in and lightning zaps a nearby transformer, the power to the lights goes out. Similarly, active forces on the human body's nervous system deplete its energy, plunging you into darkness and leaving you stumbling through a once-familiar landscape now transformed into a fearful, desperate, injury-laden battlefield.

With an understanding of the brain, our veritable junction box, we know there is no structure if the main functional driver is broken. For example, an ankle strain causes a structural problem that fuels a functional problem. It's classic cause and effect, featuring the key players—mechanoreceptors and proprioceptors. Mechanoreceptors are sensory receptors located in the skin, muscles, tendons, and joints that detect mechanical changes, such as pressure, vibration, stretch, and tension. They play a crucial role in proprioception, the body's ability to sense its position and movement in space, which allows us to perform complex movements without having to constantly look at our limbs. When mechanoreceptors are altered or impaired, it can significantly impact proprioception.

In the case of an ankle strain, as soon as you put weight on it, your receptors highlight the pressure and your body signals a stop, recognizing the injury to prevent further damage. But sometimes our junction box isn't as accurate as we'd like, which involves the element

of neuroplasticity—the ability to easily move through particular circumstances with structure, function, and speed.

To fully appreciate the intricacy of the body's function, we must first understand the elements that enable it. Neuroplasticity in motion is made of three components:

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**1. Synaptic:** how quickly information is transmitted from neuron to neuron and back to the brain.

**2. Structural:** the growth of new neurons and the elimination of old structures that no longer serve their purpose. This changes how the body views an injury as something that can be cared for and brought back online.

**3. Functional:** the brain's ability to move between damaged and undamaged areas. For example, after a stroke, a patient may be left with a partially damaged left arm that does not have full motor control. The brain steps in to circumvent dead ends to ensure electric supply and partial movement. It might not be perfect, and the arm doesn't move like it used to, but it's moving.

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Understanding, then, that the brain is the most structurally important element to our full existence and impacts everything we do, we see how outside influences—drugs we use, sleep deprivation, alcohol use, physical and mental stress, physical injury—are substantial barometers of life experience.

That focus on the junction box inspires a magnified view of how chiropractic differs within healthcare, highlighted through what we will call the Visionary Six:

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### The Visionary Six

- 1. Whole-being:** a holistic approach to health that considers the whole person rather than just the symptoms. Doctors of chiropractic assess key elements to address the root causes of a problem.
  - 2. Self-healing:** an understanding that the body has an inherent ability to heal itself. Proper structure leads to function, and therefore, healing occurs.
  - 3. Functioning:** a bidirectional relationship bound by the nervous system as it relates to structure and function. For instance, an ankle sprain makes it difficult to manage gait, which can lead to further injury.
  - 4. Educating:** a fundamental element to health and healing that provides patients with knowledge and self-care strategies to actively manage personal health. Chiropractors make it a mainstay to educate patients first and foremost.
  - 5. Preventing:** care designed to maintain whole-being and promote long-term health. In addition to addressing existing health concerns, chiropractors emphasize preventive care.
  - 6. Adjusting:** precise adjustments to correct misalignments in the spine and other joints that aim to restore proper function, increase mobility, decrease pain, and support related structure and function of surrounding elements.
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The Visionary Six make up the ancillary energy system of a new, whole-being narrative supported by seven foundational pillars.

## A NEW NARRATIVE

The essence of chiropractic narrative lives in the backstory—a historical unveiling that sets the stage for a compelling future around the Foundational Seven pillars of whole-being: Investment, Replenishment, Nourishment, Movement, Adjustment, Contentment, and Revitalizement. Chiropractors view themselves as conductors of this pillar symphony, orchestrating a movement that promotes optimized whole-being. It's a songbook to sing from, creating momentum that fosters health rather than hinders it.

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### The Foundational Seven

- 1. Investment:** the time, resources, and effort you put into your health, all directly tied to the quality and longevity of the outcomes you achieve
- 2. Replenishment:** the body's ability to perform vital restorative functions
- 3. Nourishment:** the ability to provide necessary nutrients and substances required for growth, maintenance of health, and whole-body function
- 4. Movement:** physical activity that involves intentional exercise or everyday motion to promote full-body awareness and growth
- 5. Adjustment:** the force applied to your body to create and improve alignment, function, and range of motion, which prepares the body's natural ability to optimize neuroplasticity (its ability to easily move through circumstances with structure, function, and speed)

**6. Contentment:** a fostering of balance, stress reduction, and support for your overall whole-being

**7. Revitalizement:** an encompassing process meant to energize, invigorate, and maximize vitality for you, the individual, as well as for your family, friends, and community

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The chiropractic profession started with one critical element: recognizing and adopting the philosophy that the body can use its innate intelligence to heal itself if given the right environment. Remove the interference causing the nervous system to malfunction, and the body will then heal itself. The nervous system is one of the most important aspects of human healing. It is the control system for all functions of the body, and when that system experiences disturbances, which we call misalignments (subluxations) or dysfunction, the body's ability to properly function has been challenged, becoming aberrant in its portrayal of what it's supposed to be.

At its core, chiropractic's philosophy is a holistic approach to accurately diagnose, treat, and heal the body's nervous system and function of the spine and other joints. Doctors of chiropractic are essential healthcare providers who assist the body's natural ability to heal. They are experts in evaluating, diagnosing, and managing neurological, skeletal, and many other types of conditions. A chiropractor provides safe, effective care focused on improving function and optimizing quality of life. Indeed, few other doctors can truly be a companion in a patient's healthcare journey. The chiropractor has the bandwidth, freedom, knowledge, training, and commission to treat your *whole-being*—to walk with you to a full, healthy life.

Consider how most people don't recognize the global impact one event can bring forward to past memories. In the same character

as George Orwell's quote at the beginning of this chapter, the doctor who understands the past will control the future for patients, and that outcome will control where they are and where they want to go.

There's no doctor out there better versed in the whole-being perspective than a chiropractor. Chiropractic care offers a unique and comprehensive whole-being perspective, focusing on prevention, balance, and optimized function. By embracing education and proactive approaches, you can prioritize health and minimize the need for invasive interventions, creating a pathway to a thriving, holistic lifestyle.

Let's say you had back surgery and now you need other doctors to reflect on what that means. They need to communicate, collaborate, and celebrate that you want to prevent further problems. The best way to do that is to have someone on your team who looks at you as a *whole*. Even though you've had surgery, you're still whole, but the parts have been changed. Who's going to do that for you? Who's your advocate? The best expert in your life is you! This is why *you* need to be aware and reminded of who you are and why you need to be looking at health in a different way.

The beauty of it all is that it's so easy! Let's look again at how the solution to a better, healthy life lies in chiropractic's philosophy—the simplicity of the body's inherent ability to heal itself. With appropriate supports found in the neuromusculoskeletal structure, the body has the opportunity to heal injuries without medications or surgeries.

Are you willing to lay down your own biases knowing that a pill can change symptoms but the body itself, if given the right environment, will be able to heal itself? It took me some time to realize the breadth of this power. When I was going to school,

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With appropriate supports found in the neuromusculoskeletal structure, the body has the opportunity to heal injuries without medications or surgeries.

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I always thought that a fever was a bad thing and that it needed to be stopped. But I learned that fevers are actually the solution. These moments of realizing that what you always thought you knew to be true is no longer absolute are very deep experiences, and that's why the questions continue to stay the same while the answers change. I thought getting rid of the fever was necessary for the body to heal itself, but the truth is the body heals itself by explicitly involving the environment to bring forth all the necessary tools and equipment to manufacture its own solution.

The element of chiropractic that has been lost on people for so long is balance. This approach suggests balance and harmony are essential to the *whole-being* system. While it may sound like a very esoteric concept, its principal foundation is simple. First, let's discuss whole-being: the complex intrinsic functions of an individual that represent the intricate interplay of direct or indirect physiological processes necessary for life and health in a dynamic, ever-changing environment. These functions are essential for maintaining the integrity and vitality of the human body.

There you have it. We have guided you from *nowhere* (a pill-focused mindset) to *Now Here*, where you can be fully present. It's easy to believe you're optimizing your health, when in reality, you might be reinforcing a lifestyle that relies on medication indefinitely. We want to lift you up to recognize that you want to be "there." Everyone wants to go "there," but the next place you believe in will offer more fulfillment—especially if you're not entirely satisfied with where you are right now.

So how do you go from here to there? They are different destinations, but as you see in the words, the only difference is a *t*, which is what this book will provide—the *T*-trajectory to move from here to there in balancing your whole-being. Think of your life like a rocket's

trajectory, the first portion of which is the vertical motion you need to understand all the pieces that are in place. And then you understand that you're going to be pulled into an orbit to appreciate the past, recognize the present, and anticipate future possibilities in your continuous journey of human progress.

Our lives are built on movement, and what doesn't grow dies. Whether it's the brain or a ligament, joint, or muscle, everything is built on movement, and the greater the momentum, the higher you go.

This chapter sets things straight, keeping a balance of what the body needs and what the brain desires. You are in a place where you may not recognize how much what you've done in the past plays into your present and creates your future. Hold on tight; you're about to be introduced to the Foundational Seven pillars of whole-being.

### **ADJUSTED REALITY PERSPECTIVE**

We are all free agents, choosing daily how we live our lives, with longevity achievable only through genuine intention. Each wise choice we make is a valuable investment. What life offers you today reflects the choices you made yesterday, and you alone are accountable for them. You make investments and then celebrate the gains or endure the losses—the joy or consequences. If you're unhappy with your returns, reflect on what you've invested.

### **CHIROPRACTIC INSIGHT**

Chiropractic care takes a different approach from Western medicine, which often relies on medication for treating illnesses. Instead, chiropractic care emphasizes the importance of investing in prevention, enhancing function, and relieving pain without the use of drugs or surgery.