

Talking Points & Resources

Hello Pathways Connect Group Participants,

Preliminary note: There is no wrong way

To run your Pathways Connect Gathering, the steps below are to help guide you. However, we encourage you to embrace the flow of your gathering and allow for your meeting to take on its own momentum in whatever direction it might go.

Step 1: Select topics

Prior to your group gathering, find and select one or more of the magazine articles that you found interesting and want to share. Pick topics that make you passionate, as these are the easiest to talk about and spark discussion.



Step 2: The Gathering

Welcome everyone present in the group and ask each person to introduce themselves and share a little about themselves. Be sure to share about yourself as well.

Step 3: Introduce the topic

Share with the group your topic and why you chose it, why it interests you, and the importance you see in it. Summarize the article (some article summaries are provided below). You can read the entire article or article summary out loud to your group and share your thoughts at this time.

Step 4: Encourage conversation

We provide questions after each summary section that will help people to engage. Make use of these questions or devise your own.

Step 5: Make the chiropractic connection

At the end of each article summary are notes about how this topic relates to chiropractic. If you utilize these meetings to educate parents on the importance of chiropractic care you will be benefitting your office growth and the health of your community.

PW #58 Talking Points/Group Questions**CONSCIOUS PATH***Ask What, Not How* by Vince Gowmon**Article Summary:**

A young child expresses interest in becoming an astronaut. What does his father say in response? In this article, Vince Gowmon shares his dismay at the father's response: "How are you going to do that, Son?"

It's not that this question was totally out of place. If someone wants to be an astronaut, there are steps one needs to take to achieve that goal. But there is something that is common to all astronauts, aside from due diligence. They have a burning passion and love for the stars, for space, and for exploration.

As Gowmon tells us, "It's very tempting to jump to the *how*." But what if we abated the rational adult in us who asks "how" for the sake of the dreamy child who would much rather wonder something such as "What would you enjoy about being an astronaut?" "What would you wear?" "What might you discover in outer space?"

"What one loves in childhood stays in the heart forever."
—Mary Jo Putney

"By engaging the dream, we validate the child," says Gowmon, and rightfully so. Nothing is more validating than engaging in the playful world of the child, as far as that child is concerned. And it doesn't mean we have to throw away our logical, timeline mind, but it does mean we have to recognize the value of throwing away certainty and control for a time so that the mystery of life and the jewels embedded in the heart can come alive.

With this, children can learn to use the voice of intuition instead of the voice of negative criticism, and inhibitions can finally be replaced by courage.

Questions for Consideration:

- What is a sufficient amount of time spent "dreaming with our child in their world" and do you feel there is any negative consequences to spending more time than this?
- What keeps us from experiencing the world through our children's eyes?
- What keeps us from playing with our child in their world experience?
- Is rational "How" over "What" thinking robbing *adults* of something that could be practical for living in the world?

Chiropractic Connection:

The human nervous system is fundamental to how we perceive the world. Is it possible that incoherencies, subluxations, and interferences to the nervous system build up over time to result in survival-based perception? Asking “how” instead of “what” may seem to be a proclivity in adults to act “rationally” and plan practically for the future, but it could simply be a consequence of our nervous systems under tremendous stress. When we are stressed, brain systems engage in life-saving modes of perception, and the “higher cognitive” systems that we disengage from include playfulness and open dreaming. Stress cuts us off from the perception that we could even have time for such things, keeping us blind to the fact that we can live in our higher cognitive modes of perception all the time, both while we’re “busy” and while we’re at rest.

COMMUNITY***Village: Our Loss, Our Longing*** by Jessica Rios**Article Summary:**

In the preceding article titled “The Roseto Effect,” we learn about the scientific findings of a team of researchers who studied the inhabitants of a small town in rural Pennsylvania called Roseto. What they found, to their surprise, was a drastically lower rate of heart disease, crime, and social subsistence than neighboring towns and the general country at large. What was even more surprising was the health habits, or lack thereof, of the majority of community members who, daily, ate food fried in lard, smoked thick cigars, and drank red wine liberally. Generally speaking, Rosetans didn’t emphasize any “healthy living practices” that we have come to associate in modern times. So what did they have to explain their superior health and longevity? The researchers concluded: It was *community support*.

In her article, “Village: Our Loss, Our Longing,” Jessica Rios describes her story into motherhood. From a college experience of communal living that left her in dismay, she came to enjoy her adult life with a house to herself, well-kept and tailored to her preferences and aesthetics. This is what most modern people enjoy today.

After a trying birth and the ill-health of her newborn daughter, a wave of post-partum depression kicked in. “Did I need more aerobic exercise? Sure. More grieving, to process the trauma? Sure. Yet there was one word that kept repeating itself, an echo of wisdom from deep in my womb, over and over and over again as the months of depression carried on. One word that captured what a solution would feel like. One word that spoke of the medicine a mother like me so painfully needed. Village.”

Jessica Rios gives some excellent advice for anyone who shares her opinion. “For the thousands of [modern] families who want to create a more community-oriented ‘Village’ lifestyle” we can

- 1) Share food.
- 2) Share childcare
- 3) Share chores and tools
- 4) Share your dreams

And in a single sentence she sums up this last point well: “By living the values and feelings associated with Village life—and by making our lives look more like the way Village speaks to us through our child-honoring wombs— we can satisfy a deep longing that cannot be denied.”

Questions for Consideration:

- What personal character traits are helpful to foster a village style of living?
- Are there any family difficulties you experience, or child-centered difficulties, that you can perceive changing for the better with adoption of more village style living?
- Has anyone experienced an extended period of time that might be called living with community support from friends and family?
- If people value their time alone from others, even at the cost of the benefits of a more village style of life, why might that be?
- Are there any barriers beside the desire for personal space which keep us from inviting others into our village?

Chiropractic Connection:

While chiropractic serves the individual and the nuclear family to increase the life expression of the body, a community effect is generated from every adjustment. Just consider the impact a single person's renewed health and expression might have on his or her group of friends. What choices or directions will they take as a result? Without the need to be outgoing or to be "the life of the party," simply existing in health can have a silent and positive effect on the people around you.

Chiropractors are often some of the most engaged community members who represent the field of health and well-being. Chiropractors offer something for the individual which they also hope to see unfold in the world at large: Greater life expression and alignment with the forces which animate humanity. The practice of chiropractic, and the experiences that unfold from it, brings people to a higher calling which transcends differences and can bring us past our inhibitions. There's nothing more powerful than a chiropractic adjustment for an individual's well-being except perhaps the philosophy underpinning it, which can adjust the world at large.

CHIROPRACTIC***Building Resilience in a Fight-or-Flight World*** by Satya Sardonicus, D.C.**Article Summary:**

Life can be stressful. In fact, our bodies are designed *for stress*. When we experience alarm, our body activates systems and hormones which help us adapt to the alarm. This highly intelligent response is not a fault of nature, nor are the diseases which can result from it. The problem, Satya Sardonicus explains, is our preponderance to *remain in our stress response*, after the stress is gone.

Nature, for the sake of our survival, has tilted our physiology to be able to enter into a state of fight-or-flight easily and to remain there for as long as is necessary to solve the problem. However, this tilt toward sympathetic nervous system activity must be counterbalanced once the stressor passes so we can enjoy parasympathetic rest. But because our bodies are hardwired to deal with stress, there is much that is required in order for our biology to make an effective counterbalance. In the time of our ancestors, stressors were always real life dangers involving running from or fighting the source of our stress. Afterward, we would always convene back to our place of safety, *recount our experiences*, and resolve ourselves to the present moment as we ease into the night.

The value of movement

“When we move, special receptors called proprioceptors send signals that activate the brain and downshift the nervous system from an elevated sympathetic fight-or-flight response back toward the resting parasympathetic (rest-and-digest) baseline.”

Stress today is not exactly as clear-cut as it was for our ancestors. Most of our modern stresses don’t involve a situation of literal “fight” or “flight.” Instead, stresses are often intellectual or emotional in nature and can be activated through the imagination while we are seated at work or lying down in bed. The built-in mechanism for down-regulation which comes from body movement is rarely engaged.

The value of chiropractic

A chiropractic adjustment induces proprioceptive signaling to the brain but it also clears nerve-system pathways throughout the body. All body movement, small and large, will then balance the autonomic nervous system with greater success. In addition to correcting subluxations (which are a constant signal of stress to the brain) chiropractic also builds resilience to future stresses, allowing our system to process each and every wave of stress that it encounters.

Chiropractic Connection:

As a parent, most of our stresses are centered on our children. We are bound to be afraid and stressed out as our children grow to stand on their own two, wobbly feet. From an early age, their fate is almost sealed for injuries to occur. Partly, we know this and accept it, but another part is inherently fearful for their safety.

Parental fears are easily interpreted as a sign of mistrust by the child. It's desirable not to show our children our fear for their safety and to instead teach them and model appropriate behavior with an underlying courage and trust. But when it comes down to it, there's much we are not able to know about our children's adventures in life, and this "not knowing" is the foundation from which fearful expression emerges.

The beauty of chiropractic is in the recognition of the innate intelligence within each and every person. The value of chiropractic is in strengthening the connection we each have to our greater intelligence, so that the body and mind can work in alignment with it. Whenever I see a child under chiropractic care, I hope that the parents recognize that, because of this, their child will be more awake, more attuned, and more resilient than he or she was before. I hope we can all learn to take heart in this fact and learn to trust in our children and their physical abilities and choices in life, instead of fearing for their safety all along the way. I hope, through the principles and practice of chiropractic, that we will come to know, once and for all, that our children have an innate intelligence that keeps them safe.