

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

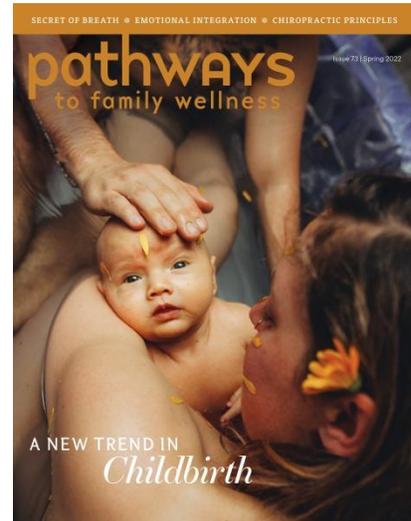
Share with the group your topic and why you chose it, why it interests you, and the importance you see in it. Summarize the article (some article summaries are provided below). You can read the entire article or article summary out loud to your group and share your thoughts at this time.

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 #73 Introduction

Welcome to the Spring 2022 issue.

Charting new waters! Pathways issue 73 offers an acceleration of the Pathways Magazine Movement. The intent and purpose of Pathways is to offer information for families to make informed, conscious choices throughout their journey. A wealth of material has been presented since the inception of Pathways that represents a powerful introduction to what many have called “the chiropractic family wellness lifestyle.” As new families seek out this lifestyle, it is important that key, cutting-edge resources are presented and discussed, because they help fill the gap that allows us to cross over into a brighter future. These resources, we believe, can make the vital difference for family well-being.

The chiropractic family wellness lifestyle represents more than a philosophy. It represents a new paradigm of health, a new model of understanding life. In this issue, we have worked to include articles that call this emerging paradigm into existence.

Millions are waking up to the core premises and ideas that have long-defined the chiropractic outlook on life: That there is innate intelligence within all life; that freedom is paramount to an individual’s health and well-being; and that the focus on the nervous system represents a new horizon for understanding what life and health *is*.

However, the times we are passing through require composure and discernment. There are so many confrontational discussions that are shaping our perceptions amidst the current climate. Some of these discussions help enlighten us. Others appear to be distracting. And yet, for the most part, regardless of differing beliefs or attitudes, many discussions from all sides appear to be ‘clinging to the past.’

To move forward in a way that honors our organic human potential, it’s important to let go of the paradigms we have previously accepted as reality. If we can do this, then a future will manifest, and it will be one that can exist in full alignment with our core values—values that have always existed for the sake of a better tomorrow.

To help families make the transition, chiropractors and other key figures in healthcare can direct our attention to the vitalistic understanding that the *individual holds the key to his or her health*. When we understand this resounding principle, as well as the science which validates it, we immediately come to enjoy a clearer vision of the better tomorrow. And with this vision we discover something else... a calm, clear sky that exists above the turbulence of the past and present.

Please enjoy this issue and stay connected to the Pathways to Family Wellness community, as we continue to move forward together on this exciting journey.

PW #73 Talking Points, Group Questions, and the Chiropractic Connection

Feature

A New Trend in Childbirth

By John Ohm and Wintergreen

For the majority of the past 5 decades, the childbirth conversation has been centered on informed choices. Aligned to this conversation were midwives, obstetricians, chiropractors, and other birth workers, who saw the need for better maternity care, better understanding of the physiological processes of birth, and greater freedom for women to give birth where, with whom, and how they desired.

However, a gap was created as the conversation advanced along these lines of securing a better environment for childbirth. That gap was about what women and their husbands/partners could do for themselves during and throughout the activity of labor itself. The new trend in childbirth is about encouraging the self-learning of birth skills to better engage and work through the challenging activity of birth. Birth is an activity called “labor,” and it *centers on the baby’s intelligence which inherently knows how to be born*. We can greatly support our baby’s intelligent efforts to be born by learning and employing practical skills, techniques, and methods that open up the passageway of birth. We can also learn skills to soften, re-position, and relax the body through the process of labor. These skills help keep the mother and father cope and stay focused throughout the process of labor. And when we actively use skills in labor, we become resilient to external detrimental factors.

So often, birth doesn’t go according to plan, and this may not be the fault of anyone, but is rather Nature’s unique and individual design. There may be a spiritual purpose for birth’s unpredictable nature. Creating a birth plan with contingencies, with excellent informed choices, and by choosing providers that respect our choices, is only one piece of childbirth preparation. We need to fill the gap by becoming adaptable and resilient amidst the birth process itself by preparing for birth using birth skills. When families self-learn simple, relatable, and effective skills, they become empowered to navigate the activity, no matter how the birth unfolds.

Informed choices regarding the “where,” “when,” and “with whom” of birth is empowering, however it centers our mind on the outer environment and the people present. Often, it’s about expecting birth providers to “deliver” us the outcome we’ve chosen. Yet, when we learn skills to “do” the activity, we become empowered to move through the process despite any challenges that arise. Bringing informed choices and birth skills together is at the heart of the current Childbirth Revival. And Webster chiropractors who already bring unique birth preparation knowledge and support into the childbirth conversation, are perfectly geared to help universalize this Childbirth Revival of self-learning adaptable birth skills in addition to making informed choices.

(Visit pg. 21 in this issue for a list of childbirth skills-based methods).

Questions for Consideration:

- How much time has you or your family spent on making choices about birth providers, place of birth, and the birth environment?
- How much time has been spent on learning breathing, relaxation, communication, and body skills for birth?
- Are you aware that there is such a thing as “learning birth skills?”
- Do you believe these two expenditures of time and effort are *equally* important?
- Do you believe that birth skills can help women achieve their desired outcome, even if the birth doesn’t go according to plan?
- Do you know of any personal stories where women after birth came to reject or criticize the “natural birth philosophy” of trusting the body because their births didn’t go according to plan?
- Are there other ways besides making informed choices and learning active birth skills that can safeguard women’s positive experience of birth?

Chiropractic Connection:

For over 30 years, Webster chiropractors have helped women achieve better birth experiences through a focus on the pelvic alignment, uterine tension, baby positioning, and nervous system balance. In other words, they focus on the three “P’s” of birth: Power, Passage, Passenger, involving the muscles/ligaments, pelvis, and baby. It is often espoused by chiropractors that the body holds an instinctive knowledge and ability to give birth—that birth is a normal physiological event. The truth of this statement is best understood when we see how it applies to the baby. The baby is amazingly intelligent at birth. The baby knows, without any instruction whatsoever, how to “do” birth in a way that is ideal for success. When we work to support this amazing intelligence, we come to realize the inherent need for conscious support to the mother and her body. The body is often compromised by modern living habits which often disconnects us from Nature’s delicate rhythms which can greatly inform the body at the instinctive level. Because of this, it’s becoming clear that in order to “do” the activity of birth from the perspective of the birther, it is important to re-condition the body and mind with knowledge and wisdom. Every other field of human life benefits from learned knowledge and skills. And these skills are all the more helpful when they are aligned to the intelligent efforts of Nature and the body.

Just as chiropractors can greatly facilitate the birth process through specific chiropractic techniques focused on the mother’s body and pelvis, so too can mothers and fathers facilitate the birth process by learning a set of adaptable, effective skills to prepare for and use at birth.

Staying the Course
The Secret of Breath
By Rose Bergen

Babies naturally breathe through the diaphragm due to lack of development of the nervous system. As we move through life and through stressful situations, we adapt the habit of breathing into the chest. Breathing through the diaphragm allows us to “feel” everything, which is what chest breathing attempts to avoid. While shallow chest breathing appears to temporarily dismiss the emotions, it keeps us trapped in a state of tension and anxiety. Diaphragmatic breathing allows us to open back up, to release and heal.

Developing a relationship with diaphragmatic breath helps unlock emotions that we have attempted to bury. With this comes initial discomfort, but moving through these emotions unlocks a healthier, more authentic connection with yourself and the world around you. When diaphragmatic breath is initiated into our habitual breathing, we access a high level of cognitive function. We activate our vagus nerve, allowing us to moderate our amygdala and stress responses. This steers us away from primitive survival methods so our focus can remain on higher cognitive behaviors.

Breath is naturally wired into both the Sympathetic and Parasympathetic nervous system. During inhalation, the sympathetic system activates, accelerating the heart rate. With exhalation, the vagus nerve secretes the transmitter substance “ACh”, which decelerates the heart rate via parasympathetic activity. HRV (Heart Rate Variability) can analyze the robustness of an individual's vagus nerve responses and vagal tone. A higher HRV is correlated with better vagal nerve function, which in turn is associated with improved overall health, lower chronic stress levels, and heightened cognition. Fluid diaphragmatic breathing contributes to health and well-being, but chronic, shallow chest breathing can diminish it. Not only does chronic chest breathing increase tension, it restricts movement of the diaphragm, which reduces oxygenation and lymph flow. This contributes to a host of other problems—both physical and psychological.

Breath is our infinite companion. Learning to nurture it enhances our capacities for well-being. It takes only practice and patience, yet offers a plethora of rewards. Scientifically proven benefits include: calmness, relaxation, focus, concentration, memory, immune function, lymph flow, oxygenation, asthmatic conditions, digestion, detoxification, healing (both physiological and psychological) and well-being. Diaphragmatic breathing is also proven to reduce: tension, stress, anxiety, panic attacks, and heart rate.

Questions for Consideration:

- Do you practice breath work in your own routine? Do you try to encourage your children to join you?

- How often do you feel stressed in the length of a day? Do you feel you have proper moderation over it? What precautions do you take to moderate stress otherwise?
- Do you see your stress relay onto your children?
- How do you respond when your children are stressed?
- What kind of discussions do you have with your children about their feelings?

Chiropractic Connection:

The release of nervous system flow and expression through regular chiropractic care achieves similar neurological benefits as conscious diaphragmatic breathing. Sometimes, efforts such as conscious diaphragmatic breathing can only take us so far if the nervous system is held up by subluxations that limit the nervous system's full range of function. HRV has been a widely used tool to assess the positive changes people experience with chiropractic care. In combining multiple tools and methods to open up and balance the nervous system, individuals of all ages can achieve the higher cortical and neurological functioning that leads to the fuller expression of their innate potential. This is why chiropractic is associated with so much more than the alleviation of symptoms or reduction in stress. It helps us tap into the source of our well-being from an early age, whenever it is utilized by parents for the whole family.

Staying the Course

Chiropractic Principles: The Story of Conjoined Twins

By Daniel Roytas

Germ theory and the infectious disease theory has many shortcomings in explaining and predicting the phenomena of disease. One illustrative example of this is in the study of conjoined twins. Radhika and Dudhika Nayak (known as the Orissa twins) were conjoined twins that puzzled doctors of their time when one twin contracted tuberculosis, while the other was unaffected. Tuberculosis was, and still is, considered a “highly infectious disease,” but despite the conjoined twins sharing a partially conjoined body (as well as an identical genetic makeup and environment), this disease did not “spread” from one to the other.

There is also the case of Masha and Dasha, born in 1950. Both twins shared a common blood supply, being conjoined at the waist. However, the twins experienced quite disparate diseases. Dasha, prone to colds and experiencing a case of measles, did not have any “infectious effect” on her twin Masha who remained completely healthy.

Then there’s the story of Rosa and Josepha Blzaek. Like the others, they shared a common blood supply and “immune system.” Rosa developed symptoms of influenza in 1922. After her convalescence from this disease, Josepha experienced an entirely different set of symptoms, including abdominal pain, and cholecystitis or swelling of the gall bladder, but neither of them shared the same diseases.

In all these cases, the twins shared a common circulatory system and blood supply. However, what was not shared between the twins was a single functioning nervous system. In other words, each twin had their own, independent nervous system from which they perceived and adapted to their environment.

Could these differences in disease symptoms be explained by this single fact? Can it be possible that the nervous system offers a better basis for understanding the manifestation of disease?

Questions for Consideration:

- What is your thoughts on why infectious diseases did not cross over from one twin to another despite their sharing a common blood and immune system?
- Does anyone here have a story of one child in the family getting sick, while the others remained unaffected? Supposing the nervous system to be the key factor explaining the difference, can you think of anything that occurred to your child’s nervous system that the others did not experience?
- Have you experienced disease states alleviating after getting the spine and nervous system checked and balanced by a chiropractor?

- What is the nervous system in your words? What are some ways you see it relating to subjectivity such as emotions and perception?

Chiropractic Connection:

Since the early days of chiropractic, diseases considered to be “infectious” and appearing to “spread” from person to person were understood to have been reduced or avoided due to chiropractic care. Many early chiropractors questioned the scientific validity of the idea of “infection” due to visible or invisible microbes. Coinciding the inception of “Germ theory,” a different, though less publicized hypothesis called “Terrain theory” existed which chiropractors adopted, claiming that germs and microbes were not the cause of disease but were rather implicated as servants of the body, helping in some way to decompose or expel unwanted substances from the body. Chiropractors then and now maintain that the “culprit” is not the “germ” but exists as part of the Subluxation in the nervous system, namely misalignment or emotional trauma that affects nervous system function. Today we have a wealth of additional findings that greatly support this view of disease. (See next article summary)

Living the Journey
Discoveries of the Nervous System
By John Ohm

German New Medicine completely overturns what we previously thought about the nature of disease. It offers verifiable science that the cause of disease is in the brain and nervous system. This includes previously considered “infectious diseases” such as influenza, measles, and tuberculosis. This is how it works:

The brain initiates a specific response in a specific organ, as a result of a traumatic, unexpected, threatening experience in life. The purpose of the organ-brain response is to help adapt the organism to the challenge, offering an advantage in overcoming the threat or shock. In most cases, this adaptation goes unnoticed, without any symptoms, even though deliberate changes are occurring on the brain and organ level. Once the threat or shock is resolved, the nervous system initiates a reversal of the previous adaptation with the intent to bring the organ back to its pre-adapted, normal state of function. This adaptation-reversal process is then accompanied with the necessary inflammation, fever, discharge, swelling, and pain which we have come to associate as “disease.”

We used to think of disease as a breakdown or error in biology. Now we understand that these diseases are a consequence of an organ adaptation, recognized to be an intelligent response directed from the brain as a result of an unexpected, biological trauma. When the trauma is resolved, the body needs to utilize resources, including microbes living in the microbiome, to reverse the organ adaptation and re-establish normal tissue function.

The significance of these findings are far-reaching. Among the most important is the fact that we can now understand disease manifestations in a completely new light, which aids tremendously in our ability to describe, predict, and navigate the symptoms of disease, as well as support the body’s efforts, which involve the underlying principle effort to fully resolve the conflict. Disease expressions are therefore not “malfunctions” of biology that need to be “fought,” “battled,” or “defeated,” but are rather intelligent organ-level sacrifices in normal functioning designed to offer the organism a short-term advantage. If the organ-level adaptation proceed for a long period of time, however, the sacrifice is often costly, but even then, the body can be supported to heal, when the mind and doctor understands the intelligence operating under the symptoms.

These organ-specific adaptations that are controlled from a specific region of the brain represent a new biological discovery—a discovery some have called the greatest discovery in medical history. The brain-directed adaptations have been given the name: “biological program.” These programs can be shown to exist in the brain using CT scanning technology where they present as concentric ring formations. Using this technology, one can assess what disease—if any—is present in the body with 100% accuracy! And using the logic of these discoveries, and how they are connected to a person’s life experiences, allows us to assess

when a disease—if any—will arise in a person’s life, and how the disease will progress to completion.

The shortest way to describe the significance of German New Medicine is to say that it unifies, for the first time in human history, the Psyche, Brain, and Organ of the living soul. That is to say, it unifies the individual’s mind, his or her life story, and biology. It secures the new paradigm of health, showing the way to a vitalistic science envisioned by so many great men and women of the past.

Questions for Consideration:

- Have you ever heard of German New Medicine (GNM)?
- What parts of these discoveries interest you most?
- Why does disease often come to be interpreted as a “malfunction” of the body?
- Do you have any stories of someone “resolving” a unique conflict or stress, followed immediately after by the arising of symptoms?
- Do you have any chronic conditions? What are they? Is it possible that they are causally connected to significant, emotional experiences that you can identify in your life?

(If you’d like to learn more about specific symptoms and GNM, go to learninggnm.com and make use of the a-z index found on the home page)

Chiropractic Connection:

The nervous system may hold the secret of biology, especially the phenomena of disease, which most of humanity still greatly fears, and for good reason! Disease can take our life. We all know people who have died of disease. If we begin to look at disease as part of an adaptive process going on in the body, we can begin to see why some diseases are so extreme—some of us (most of us) experience at least one kind of extreme, unexpected distress in life, requiring drastic biological adaptations. Knowing that chiropractic care has the power to enhance our adaptability to stress in general, chiropractic provides an amazing foundation for families to become more resilient in life. And in addition to this, since chiropractic has been focused on the intelligent operation of the nervous system and has learned to support this underlying intelligence in many ways, it’s natural to see how chiropractic combined with the discoveries of GNM represents the basis for a ***new kind of medicine*** to take root in humanity, one that free humanity of so much fear, and which recognizes the key principles of life—that life is intelligent; that human beings are highly adaptable; and that caring for the whole human being in mind, body, and spirit represents the most important elements of a sane and healthy world.

Living the Journey
Navigating Our Experiences
By Michael Brown

This article by Michael Brown engages us to learn a technique that allows us to influence our lives in a much deeper, *causal way*, which is distinct from our normal efforts at influencing the external world through the “imposition of our will.” As Michael Brown says, “By behaving as if we can change our circumstances through imposing our will on the outside world, we constantly enter revolutionary behavior. The word revolutionary reveals the inevitable outcome: We wind up revolving into the same circumstances from which we are attempting to depart—and often worse.” Brown states: “The intent to consciously navigate our experience is evolutionary.” And it is based on a new model of understanding how events in our life unfold, which is rooted in our ‘feelings.’

In life, we usually understand that the cause of things are outside of us, beginning in the physical world. However, according to Brown, events don’t unfold without first passing through our feelings, internally. He describes this as the Pathway of Awareness we all experience, and is well demonstrated by the development of a newborn child from being an “emotional being” growing into a “thinking being” and then a “physically acting-in-the-world” being.

The Pathway of Awareness begins on the emotional level. To navigate our experiences in the world, we must move from the *emotional* to the *mental* and then to the *physical*. Although, because we are largely unaware of this, and we don’t know as a culture what it means or how to use it, we therefore often navigate this pathway unconsciously, and when the world gives us unexpected, or undesired experiences, we believe the cause to be ‘out there.’

The way to consciously navigate our experiences therefore, requires that we emotionally attune to the feeling of the future outcome that we desire, and project this emotionally felt state into that future. By doing this, we consciously initiate an underlying Pathway of Awareness that will guide us toward that desired end. The most important part of this process, says Brown, is that when the experience approaches near—perhaps it’s a romantic date, a birth, or an important business meeting—we must allow ourselves to be anchored into the physical sensations of the moment which often accompany tensions or anxieties. These anxieties *are precisely what anchor us onto the Pathway of Awareness* that we selected and projected, and which will lead us to the desired outcome!

Michael Brown illustrates how this is done in detail, through the story of a CEO of a large corporation, who needed to achieve a consensus agreement at an important upcoming meeting. The CEO’s experience of all his past meetings were always horrible, they never reached a desired outcome. Once he learned to consciously navigate his experience using the Pathway of Awareness, by projecting the feeling of the desired outcome at the end of the meeting, and while approaching this meeting, to allow the anxieties and tensions to surface

without inhibiting them or imposing his will or try to sedate them. By this, he was able to achieve his desired outcome with precise success—the emotions he projected while speaking with Brown, were exactly the ones he ended up experiencing at the end of the meeting.

After this, this CEO has used this technique in his life and all his business dealings, with greatest benefit to himself and his family.

Questions for Consideration:

- Do you know anyone who seems to always make things work out in their favor? People who just seem to travel through the challenges of life without great difficulty? What have you thought their secret was?
- Have you experienced any events in life where you were amazed at how wonderful the outcome was for you? Can you remember projecting any positive emotional feelings onto the end-state of the event, knowingly or unknowingly?
- How do you typically relate to anxiety when approaching important experiences? Do you try to avoid these feelings, bury them, or sedate them? Does it make sense to you that these anxieties are actually major gifts that anchor you into Path that leads to success?
- Do you believe the Universe can conspire to help you achieve your desires, if only you can allow it?

Chiropractic Connection:

The secret of life is in the nervous system, and the secret of the nervous system is in our relationships. First among these relationships is your own relationship to your emotions. The body and nervous system are innately intelligent. This means, the life you experience is almost entirely a result of organic, indwelling forces that know how to live, and how to move forward. So often, our minds become burdened by the imposition of the idea that we must “will our way” to success. But as the experience of regaining health so often teaches us, health comes when we relax, when we let go, and when we trust. What in your life remains tense for you emotionally? As you begin to open up your nervous system with chiropractic, try to re-establish a new Pathway forward, where new emotions are allowed to guide the Pathway of your Awareness.

It is undoubtedly true that the key to health rests with the individual. The future of health may lie in this truism. And chiropractic, which honors and supports the individual on all levels, centering its care on the intelligence of the nervous system, represents the foundation of this future model of health for humanity.