



Transcript Episode 1: Welcome to Chiropractical = practical info for chiropractors.

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Chick: Hi, everybody. Welcome to Chiropractical, a brand new podcast about chiropractors for chiropractors.

Melissa: At NCMIC our motto is “We take care of our own,” and this podcast is all about that. Helping you take care of you.

Chick: My name is Chick Herbert, and I'm thrilled to be your cohost with my good friend, Melissa. I'm a husband and a dad of three sons, and to have a great passion for helping other people be successful.

Melissa: Hi there, my name's Melissa Knutson. I'm a mom of three, and I have a passion for process improvement, giving back and helping people just like you be more successful.

Chick: We are confident that the unique and practical resources that we're going to provide on each episode will benefit you both personally and professionally. And our number one goal is to help your practice be more successful. We're going to inform you inspire you. And at times if Melissa and I have our way make you laugh and smile.

Melissa: Hit the subscribe button so this podcast ends up in your feed automatically.

Chick: This is truly a unique time in history, but looking back there have been many disruptions and impacts to the chiropractic industry. When we look back in 2020, what will we say? Well, if anyone can help put into perspective the challenges that have faced chiropractic over the years, it's Dr. Louis Sportelli. Dr. Sportelli has seen the ups and downs of the industry in the practice for over five decades. We are also going to introduce you to Chris Myers. I'm really excited for you to hear from Chris. Chris is an expert in small business, but more importantly, he brings an expertise around emotional intelligence and the importance of the human element in running your practice. You have to develop deep relationships with your patients, with your team and with the community if you're going to be successful in today's world.

Melissa: Well, without further ado Chick, let's get this started!

Melissa: As we kick off our very first episode of Chiropractical, it's not lost on me that the world's a really interesting place right now. And because of this, we wanted to find the right guest to join us on this episode. Today, we've asked Dr. Sportelli to share with us his tips for running a successful practice, and I've got to tell you what I'm really excited for you to hear those foundational elements. And we're also going to talk about how by working together as a profession, we can grow and strengthen chiropractic. It's great to have him with us today. Dr. Sportelli has had many leadership roles in the chiropractic

profession, including president of the World Federation of Chiropractic and president of NCMIC Group. So welcome Dr. Sportelli.

Dr. Sportelli: Thank you.

Melissa: Dr. Sportelli, you've been at this for more than six decades. What continues to burn that fire and that passion and make you dig in day in and day out?

Dr. Sportelli: I'll tell you: injustice. That's really kind of what motivates me on almost every level and I say "injustice" because whether it's the injustice that the profession suffered or the injustice that people in need who were denied chiropractic care or the injustice of society in terms of not accepting this profession yet because of a whole host of issues, it's the injustice that really drives me in every aspect of my entire career.

Melissa: So right now we're all focused in on COVID-19 and its impact on our lives and our business, but chiropractic is no stranger to crisis. So what events in the past have shaped the chiropractic community and prepared it for today's events?

Dr. Sportelli: This profession has been in crisis and essentially under siege since it began 125 years ago. In 1962, the American Medical Association formed what they called the Committee on Quackery. Their goal and their mission as stated, was to first contain, and then eliminate, chiropractic. And they were going to do it in a very systematic way. Number one, they were going to prevent the profession from getting into Medicare or any other insurance, and then make sure that we stayed divided. So those were the pillars that the AMA was after for chiropractors - first to contain and then eliminate.

Dr. Sportelli: In 1975 the profession, a group of five chiropractors, Wilke at all, basically filed a lawsuit against the AMA. And that was a historic profession changing event.

Melissa: If chiropractic had this easy trail, what would it look like today?

Dr. Sportelli: If the AMA would have embraced the profession I don't believe we would have survived as a professional. We would have become yeah, essentially engulfed and there would have been no more distinction, no more profession, whatever we believe that would have been essentially emasculated. So I think that it was an absolute gift of the chiropractors that we basically were not embraced and that we did not have an easy trail, because where we are today is a result of our resilience, our fortitude, and the fact that we've come to the realization that we can't depend on anybody for resources, we have to depend on ourselves.

Dr. Sportelli: Chiropractic isn't about what we do in healthcare. Chiropractic is about relationships. It's about the relationships we have with our people, with our patients, the relationship that makes us an essential provider. People don't think about that, but when you basically go someplace and you entrust your healthcare, if you, as a mom would bring your child to me, your most priceless possession, that says it all about confidence. So it's about relationship.

Dr. Sportelli: The worst thing that ever happened to this profession, it was insurance coverage because what it did was doctors got fat, lazy, sassy, and rich, and they basically forgot fundamentals of patient centric care. And prior to that time, when we didn't have coverage, every patient that came in, you better be patient centric and patient focused because they paid their bill with cash. When they left and you better do something right or they're not going to come back and pay with cash again. They made you successful. And they determined who was successful by their feet. They weren't going to come back anymore.

Melissa: Yeah.

Dr. Sportelli: We were patient centric before the word patient centric was even in the vocabulary because we had to be. If your patients found you necessary and found you essential prior to COVID, they're going to find you necessary and essential. The question is, how did you maintain that relationship? Hm. And if it was fragile, it's not going to happen. If it was strong, you'll be back up in a heartbeat.

Melissa: It's that foundation that if it was there, I would even suspect that they value even more after covet or after we've gone through this crisis. There's a higher value for that care. What do you see as opportunities right now?

Dr. Sportelli: So I would go back to fundamentals, basic fundamental foundational relationships. How do you build it? Make reconnect with the folks in your community that you've been involved with and had some relationships. And if you haven't incidentally, you're in bad shape. If you have to call your banker for the first time, you've missed the boat. You should have had a relationship with your banker long before you ever needed your banker. You should've had a relationship with an attorney long before you ever needed your attorney. So again, I get back to the fundamentals about relationships. It's all about relationships and making them when you need them, long before you ever need them.

Melissa: So now, in your opinion, what does the role of the chiropractor look like in 10 or 20 years from now?

Dr. Sportelli: Well, if you looked at the landscape and I always look to look at things first from 30,000 feet, you get a very, very different view of the world from 30,000 feet than you do on the ground. So almost every challenge I look at from that mindset. Well, I will tell you that the nuclear weapon of the 21st century as research. So as I look at this from a COVID point of view, I'm saying to myself, okay, chiropractors in all but a few states were actually deemed "essential", but some of them were not allowed to be open. And then the single common question was, is there a value of chiropractic care in the body's immune system? We do not have any clinical evidence to support that. We've got 125 years of anecdotal evidence as a practitioner. I know it, and everybody who's ever practiced knows, that patients are better and their immune systems better. They themselves are healthier. Now whether that's a subset of the population that we attract as chiropractors - people who want to be healthier - I have no idea one way or another. I am convinced that the data will become positive for us.

Dr. Sportelli: So what's in my crystal ball? My crystal ball says the chiropractors are finally going to come to realization that research is really what we need. We are going to spend a modest sum each because collectively that'll be a nice pool of dollars. And we will develop a research agenda in a programmatic way to be able to begin in 2021 to begin to answer the very question that has held us back in this particular

pandemic. And it will also be helpful again for the profession, for the rest of the time of our existence. We will then become an essential provider in a very different way.

Melissa: So if you could go back in time and give Dr. Sportelli in his first five years of practice advice, what would you say?

Dr. Sportelli: I'd say focused on your patients. That's what I would say. I mean, that's been exactly where that concept of focusing on your patient. Um, it seems so trite. It just seems like it's kind of nonsensical, but it really isn't. It, it really does create the entire foundation of where you are. And when I first started in practice, of course, I believe me, I had no money. I was young, single Italian and a chiropractor. I didn't have any staff at the time. I was in practice by myself and early, early, early on sometimes it's not only about you and your patient relationship. It's about your staff. I used to do practice evaluation and I don't care how long the doctor's been in practice. The very first question I would ask when I would go to the do an evaluation was ask their staff how long they'd been with the doctor. And if the doctor has been in practice for 25 years and his staff's only been with them a year or two, something's wrong with the office.

Dr. Sportelli: So that was one of the indicators that you has nothing to do with the money, has nothing to do with the economics has nothing to do with books, but it has to do with the quality and the ethics of the practice. So there's a lot of indicators like that, that the doctors who basically take care of their staff and take care of their patients and are focused that way - years ago, they used to call it PTC, present time consciousness. When you're with a patient, your mind isn't wandering someplace else. It's right there, focused. And that's kind of where all the successful practitioners derive their skills from.

Melissa: Dr. Sportelli, I'm glad we chose you as our first guest. You certainly did not disappoint. I could listen to you talk for hours. So thank you for sharing your wisdom and taking time in your busy schedule to join us today.

Dr. Sportelli: This isn't something that I've read about. It's something I've lived. So I've lived every one of these challenges. If you walk in my shoes for a mile, you will feel what I see. And that's part of what we don't have, because there's not a lot of folks that have been around and are still active and involved after 60 years.

Chick: We are in this strange and unique time where things have dramatically changed over the past several months. No longer is a good enough to simply be a competent chiropractor. You have to create a positive connection with your patients. You have to bring a unique patient experience and you have to be creative in how you approach your business. That's why I'm so excited to introduce our guest today: Chris Myers, who is a very accomplished entrepreneur. He is an author and he is a CEO of a small consulting firm. Thank you again, Chris, for being on very excited to have you,

Chris Myers: Hey Chicks, thanks so much for having me.

Chick: Chris. I read what you wrote about the importance and the differences between having a fixed mindset and a growth mindset. I'm also interested in you elaborating on the importance of emotional intelligence and I'd like you to talk a little bit more about what emotional intelligence is and why that is important to have beyond just the technical skills and competence of a chiropractor.

Chris Myers: I mean, I think those are the two most important topics really for anyone in business. I think we've all been to the point where we've met really smart people, people with a lot of intellectual horsepower and experience, but they just don't, they don't click. They don't, they're not magnetic, they're not the types. And then of course, we've met people who are tremendously successful and connect with people on a very deep level, but you know, maybe they're not the sharpest folks out there or the most skilled, you know, to put it a little bit nicer. And the difference is EQ versus IQ. And, you know, the good thing is you can increase your EQ. You, you know, it's difficult to increase your IQ, if not impossible.

Chick: Chris, if I'm understanding what you're saying, it is that EQ trumps IQ.

Chris Myers: As I think particularly about chiropractors, that's the difference. That's the, you know, that's the key. You can have all the education and training and certifications in the world, but if you can't connect on that level with your patients and help them feel safe and helped and secure, then you're not going to be successful. And the growth mindset comes into that to help you grow and develop that EQ skillset.

Chick: The one thing that I really enjoyed is your description of your company and what you focus on, which is helping small business owners make better decisions and find success in what they love to do.

Chris Myers: I came to understand the definition of emotional intelligence on really kind of an intuitive level while trying to share my creation with the world. Right? I think like a lot of us, I grew up thinking that the person who had the most degrees hanging on the wall, the person who went to the best school, the person who knew the most about their particular field was going to be the most successful. And I created a relatively technical and complicated product and brought it out to the world and swiftly realized that that was not the case. It's the people that can connect with others, that speak that language of, you know, kind of the intuitive human, emotional spectrum that we're able to connect and really dive deep that are successful. The degrees and the skillset and the certifications and all those things are really secondary to the magnetism that you can create as an individual.

Chris Myers: So when I think about emotional intelligence or EQ, I think about the ability to really speak to the soul of another human being, right, to connect with them on a level that creates almost instantaneous trust, that creates a sense of comfort and really enables you to clear the path to deliver products and services and help people. You can go out and try to help as many people as you can, but if they don't trust you, if they don't open the door for you, you're never going to get very far and EQ is the way to go out and do that. And it required a major shift in my own thinking and my own actions as an entrepreneur to, to develop that skillset and to nurture that skillset in order to make my business a success.

Chick: Our listening audience is predominantly chiropractors. The majority of those chiropractors have their own practices or are in a practice. Some would be an education. But if you take the example of I'm a doctor of chiropractic and I have a small practice and I might have another associate, I may have an office manager. How does EEQ fit into that world? Is it patient focused? Is it staff focused or is it both?

Chris Myers: It was probably the most essential step that I took was the realization that I needed to create that, it was the most essential step I took as an entrepreneur. And so the first thing I help people understand when confronted with that is really know thyself. Are you truly an introvert? Are you kind of a

manufactured extrovert? Are you really, you know, how do you like to engage with people and what's your natural flow state, right?

Chris Myers: And once we identify that you can go to work either increasing EQ in your own skillset or surrounding yourself with people that are talented in that area. You know, they position themselves as kind of the, the expert, right? the knowledge base, but they surround themselves with really great people who are able to serve as a translation buffer to really enable them to connect with their patients on a different level. And when you connect with them that way, whether it's directly or through surrounding yourself with people who have that skillset you're going to find a couple of things happen almost right off the bat. One, your patients are going to be happier and that's with the experience, whether or not they are feeling the effects of your treatment, right? Sometimes treatment takes a very long time to set in, but if you can make them feel comfortable, if you can help them and recognize that you're coming alongside them on this journey, and you're there, if they're going to feel better. When they feel better, they're going to spend more with you.

Chick: That's great. It goes back to IQ and training. You can have all of that, but if you don't have the emotional piece, it's difficult to create that loyalty and a customer base or a patient base.

Chris Myers: We have to make money in order to keep helping people. And if you have happy clients and happy patients, they're going to spend more, they're going to come to you for more and you're going to be able to grow and expand yourself. So that's why it's really, really important to start with that understanding of who you are and what skills you already have at your disposal. And then if you don't have them, or maybe you think you do but the results aren't showing, engage with people who specialize in this area and surround yourself with folks that can help you grow.

Chick: Well, this has been very helpful, very enlightening, and we sincerely appreciate your time and expertise and sharing that with all of us. And congratulations on your long list of successes. I can see why that has been the case.

Chris Myers: Uh, well, Chick, thank you very much for having me. And it's been a pleasure. You know, this is a, this is an industry I care very deeply about. And you know, I think that the folks on the front lines of alternative medicine and chiropractic are, are really making a difference in people's lives. So it's an honor to be part of that.

Mike Whitmer: Hi, this is Mike Whitmer with NCMIC. Not a day, goes by that I'm not helping chiropractors with questions about their practice, the profession, or the future of the industry. I thought it would be great to take a few minutes from every podcast where we answer your question. We're calling it "Ask NCMIC". This episode's question comes from Hannah in New Jersey. Hannah asks, "How do I overcome some of the knee jerk reactions I encounter when I say I'm a chiropractor?" To answer Hannah's question we checked in with Dr. Nicole Ingrando who practices in Orlando, Florida. Here's what she had to say.

Dr. Nicole Ingrando: That's actually not you. It's a branding problem with a community that doesn't understand what we do. It's getting better, but the way we can overcome poor branding and really confusion over what chiropractic can bring to the healthcare field is by demonstrating results, communicating results to other doctors and building new habits that force us to take positions that are

really essential and necessary. Essential and necessary - two big terms right now that are flying around. We've always been essential and necessary. We have an opportunity to be so even more.

Mike: If you have questions, send them to us. Shoot us an email askNCMIC@NCMIC.com.

Chick: Well, Melissa, what a great first show. I'd love to hear your thoughts about what you took away from Dr. Sportelli's comments.

Melissa: There was so much there to dig through, Chick. What really stood out to me was a bit Dr. Sportelli, but it was also with Chris and that's the value of relationships.

Chick: Completely agree with you.

Melissa: As you think about this podcast, what do you want the listeners to take away?

Chick: I'm a very practical person and I want our listeners to take away things that they can put in place immediately into their practice to help them and their team be more successful. And what I've found for myself and others is we're creatures of habit. And we do a lot of the same things every day on autopilot and make a lot of non-conscious decisions. So if there's one thing I want people to take away is be intentional about the time that you invest in developing meaningful relationships with others.

Melissa: Do you have any advice for our listeners on how to get off of autopilot?

Chick: Yeah, I, that's a great question, Melissa. I think it's important to have a plan going into the day and pause and think about what are the most important interactions that you're going to have and how do you not go through those in an autopilot way? So how do you hit the pause button and make sure that you're not just seeing the patient going through the process, but that you're taking time to ask questions. You're being a better diagnostic person in terms of identifying what their issues are, not just from a chiropractic perspective, but from a human perspective. And we do have an EQ overview worksheet that you can download from the show notes. And it gives a little more explanation as to emotional intelligence.

Melissa: Yeah, I think that's interesting Chick. I always, I love the phrase, listen to understand, not to respond.

Chick: It's a great point. And did you take a similar message away from Dr. Sportelli in terms of relationships?

Melissa: He said really, that's the foundation. And if we think about the crisis that we're facing today, or challenges that we can face in the future, you've got to have those relationships. You have to take the time to nurture them because they don't just happen on their own.

Chick: Yeah. That's great advice. And so very true. And I know you've known Dr. Sportelli for a number of years. From a personal perspective have you felt that nurturing with him?

Melissa: Absolutely. So my very first conversation with Dr. Sportelli, he cared about the things that were important to my heart with my family and my passions as they are related to work. So I definitely saw it in action in that instance.

Melissa: Tune into our next episode of Chiropractical where we will meet with several guests one of whom is Dr. Sherry McAllister.

Dr. Sherry McAllister: It was that moment of I'm deeply disturbed that I went six months in injured. My stomach lining did all these crazy exercises that made me worse and no one ever gave me the option of seeing the chiropractor.

Chick: We hope you enjoyed the first episode of Chiropractical as much as we did. We'd ask that you do two things. Please take time to review the podcast and by rating the podcast that will help others find us. And the second thing is please subscribe, click on the subscribe button and by doing so, the next episode will automatically show up in your feed. That's it. Thanks for listening.

Melissa: See you next month. Stay healthy.