

Interview with Dr Martin Harvey after receiving the International Chiropractor of the Year Award.

Congratulations on being recognised at the Parker Seminar as International Chiropractor of the Year. It's a prestigious award and something of which you must be very proud.

I was thrilled, honoured and surprised. I am proud to have been acknowledged but am also really conscious that I am being honoured for work that I was part of a team doing it. The Foundation Board, staff and all our volunteers did a huge amount of work and I was fortunate enough to be part of it.

What is your background?

I decided to become a chiropractor because my family had great experiences with chiropractic as a kid and I thought it looked like a great lifestyle. I was right on one hand but didn't realise I would fall in love with chiropractic and its ability to help people live healthier happier lives. As a student DG was a massive turning point for me-it enabled me to see chiropractic in a new light and helped me connect with some amazingly generous and inspired chiropractors. I would say that whatever success I have had in practice and in chiropractic stems from attending DG for the first time in 1990. I started in practice at the end of 1991 so have just clocked up 18 years in practice and I love it-I can't imagine doing anything else or retiring out of practice. One of the things I have come to realise is that the future of chiropractic depends on the amount of research we do, there is a real urgency for us to get the data that supports what we do.

Martin, despite your humility, these awards are not given to people without achievements. What are some of yours?

I have always felt very fortunate to be a chiropractor and felt it was only fair to give back so I have been on number of chiropractic boards including the CAA Victorian, Chiropractic Education Australia and of course the Spinal Research Foundation. One of the achievements that stand out for me in that time are being the Chair of the Parker organising committee for last years Parker seminar, to be part of something where so many incredible people were all working to help chiropractic improve was amazing. Another highlight is when I was elected to be President of the Foundation. To follow in the footsteps of people I admire greatly like Dave Cahill, Brian Kelly and John Hinwood is a great honour. Getting to deliver a paper at a conference in the US describing the Foundations unique funding process, where we only fund studies that relate to the core paradigm of chiropractic also stands out. Finally, being asked by Dr Matt McCoy to be on the editorial review board of the "Journal of Pediatric, Maternal & Family Health-*Chiropractic*" was a great honour.

The chiropractic profession has faced many challenges and achieved remarkable progress. What challenges do you see the profession facing currently and what aspirations do you hold for the profession?

I believe that almost everyone has the opportunity to have a healthier, happier life by having regular chiropractic care, so my aspiration for the profession is that we move to a position in society where this is our role. I can see having a chiropractor being like having a dentist-something that everyone knows they should. To get there is where the challenges lie. At the moment registration boards,

insurance companies and most importantly consumers are saying to put up or shut up. They are demanding that we have scientific evidence to support what we say. I see the biggest challenge the profession faces is whether we have the commitment, patience and vision to support research on the scale it would take for us to provide that evidence. I'm excited though that Spinal Research can facilitate the needed research and we have great people in our professional leadership who can then use it to promote the profession to government. We are also committed to getting this information to practicing chiropractors, patients and the 80% of our communities who don't yet get chiropractic care.

Many of us are interested in the philosophies adopted by successful people. What is your 'mantra' and what philosophies do you embrace?

From a practice perspective two mantras I love and use frequently are "great practices are built on the days when you don't feel like being there". It keeps me doing the right things even when I don't feel 100% or I'm running late or something negative happens. I also like "you can't be a revolutionary and be accepted at the same time". When it comes to chiropractic, as a health philosophy it is the opposite to what our culture traditionally embraces. We need to expect a bit of rejection or opposition of our ideas but still strive to communicate them in a way that is accessible to people with a "pre-revolutionary" view of health.