

SUTHERLAND MEMORIAL LECTURE

2012

...Deeper still, there is Love

INTRODUCTION

This Sutherland Memorial Lecture is an effort at partial payment of a debt of gratitude, as well an act of devotion, to my profession, my teachers, my colleagues, my students, and the Creator who blessed me with the opportunity to put my gifts to a valuable purpose as an Osteopath. I also want to thank The Osteopathic Cranial Academy Board for bestowing this wonderful honor upon me, all who gave me feedback and advice in this process and, most especially, my loving wife Joan, who shares so generously with me her talent for living life with an unparalleled clarity and grace.

The wonderful thing about living life as an Osteopath is that we can actually participate in the living processes of the natural world. Osteopathy is not just a philosophy or a collection of disembodied thoughts and facts. This idea is an integral aspect of the living matrix of life. It blesses all who are willing to do the work with the opportunity, through our seeing, thinking, feeling, knowing fingers, for the living principles of the natural world to become real to us and to reveal their meaning. What Anne Wales, DO called, "Getting our facts."¹ So it is my intention today, to speak to you only about principles and concepts with which I have had a perceptual experience in my work as an Osteopath.

That being said, truth be told, the reality is that I often have no idea how or why the healing process comes to its resolution. There is a cartoon that I often use in my lectures to try to capture the pathos of this reality and to convey it to my audience. In the cartoon, a scientist has written a series of complicated mathematical equations on a blackboard. Then there is an arrow, after which there is a large space in which is written

the words, “Then A Miracle Occurs”, followed by another arrow, after which there is another series of complicated equations. His colleague observes, “I think you should be more explicit here in step two.” Our work is often like that. We learn to sense the innate healing forces and to communicate with them, and yet their actions are often as miraculous to us as they are to our patients. I was once listening to Terry Gross interview a world renowned reading teacher. At one point Terry asked her, “So how does someone learn to read?” After a slight pause, the teacher replied, “I don’t really know. But I’m always grateful to be there when it happens.” I found it comforting to hear that Osteopaths are not alone in having a knowing and meaningful relationship with natural forces that they do not, and perhaps cannot, fully understand. It was also a pleasant surprise to hear that there was someone else who was willing to admit it.

While the mystery of the healing process is, at times, perplexing to us, it can be a source of great vexation to our allopathic colleagues. Early in my practice, I began to notice a pattern that many of you have probably also experienced. When my patients returned to see me after following up with their primary care doctors or specialists, they would tell me that they were told by these other doctors that, although they still weren’t sure what the patient’s diagnosis was, nor what other testing might be helpful to discover the cause, nor what treatment options might be helpful for them, they were absolutely certain of one thing - that what I had done had nothing to do with their improvement! I guess I could take some solace in the fact that at least I had given these doctors one thing about which they could feel completely confident and absolutely certain. But I also began to consider whether we should create a new specialty. We could call it “Coincidental Medicine.” We would be Coincidentalists. Who knows, perhaps these people who had been suffering for 2 weeks, 2 months or 2 years just happened to arrive in our offices at the exact moment that their healing process was poised to unfold. Don’t we all wish that it was just that easy? Maybe not, but of course, now nearly every large MD group in the greater Portland area has hired DO’s and put full page ads in the paper advertising their Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine services. If only more DO’s shared that type of enthusiasm and respect for their birth-right.

The reality is though, even if none of them would care to admit it, that for all of their talk of science and of “Placebo-controlled, double-blind” studies, modern medicine doesn’t really understand much of what is going on either. They are constantly changing their explanations for the mechanisms of growth and development and of the disease and healing processes, and I credit them for their continued exploration. But as Osteopaths, we seek primary cause, the source that doesn’t move or change. The principles to which Dr. Still and Dr. Sutherland directed us are eternal truths that are large enough to encompass the full spectrum of life’s infinite variety of expressions of matter and motion. No moment throughout eternity is ever repeated yet these principles remain universal and inviolate. We truly are, as Dr. Blechschmidt said, “Momentary aspects... of spatially ordered... metabolic movement.”² So we seek the quiescent point that orients us to our Origin.

All of which brings me to the topic of my Sutherland Memorial Lecture. I am here today to talk about an idea in the teachings of Dr. Andrew Taylor Still that has been one of these central principles at the foundation of the science of natural healing that he discovered since its beginnings in 1874. This is a word that appears prominently throughout his writings. In fact, it occurs with almost identical frequency in his Autobiography to his use of the word “Bone.”³ Dr. Still clearly saw it as an essential and integral part of this new science. This concept, however, is a challenging one and one which might even be considered by some, controversial. Certainly in the world of modern medicine it is a topic that is rarely addressed. Even among Osteopaths it is not always in the foreground. But I believe that it is an essential presence at the heart of Osteopathy, which gives meaning to our work and serves as the fulcrum for our ability to perceive the presence of the Health. It is an idea that deserves to be acknowledged and explored. This word, this concept, this idea, is Love.

What I want to do with our time together today is to explore the presence of Love in our profession, in our relationships with our teachers, and in our work. And as we explore, I also want to remember that Dr. Sutherland was adamant about the importance of our having a sensory experience, of “Obtaining Knowledge rather than mere information.”⁴ So as we proceed, we will engage in a Contemplation, a step at a time with each section,

to afford you the opportunity to have a living experience of these ideas. So let's start our discussion with the Love of our profession...

THE LOVE OF OSTEOPATHY

I can't take credit for choosing this topic, it was given to me. When I heard Mark Rosen's invitation on my voice mail, the idea came to me, unbidden. As usual, I questioned and struggled with it a bit, but I was eventually led through a series of synchronistic events and, with time to ruminate, I came to know that this topic was my responsibility. We *are* a loving profession. I saw this often in my nearly 15 years as a Family Practitioner. I often referred my patients to DO specialists, docs who did not practice Osteopathic Diagnosis and Treatment in any form, and yet, when the patients returned to see me, they would tell me how this specialist was different than their counterparts: more accessible, more compassionate, more patient. In a word, they were more loving. There are countless other examples, but I will highlight just one more. One year at the Maine Osteopathic Association's annual banquet, I was sitting next to an MD Emergency Medicine doc I know. About an hour into the awards presentations, he leaned over to me and said, "Donald, can I ask you a question? Is there always this much hugging at the Osteopathic meetings? I mean, I have been to a lot of MD meetings, here in Maine and on a national level, lots of meetings. And I can tell you, there is *definitely* NO hugging!" What was remarkable to me was that I realized that I hadn't even noticed the hugging. It was as if he had asked me, "Is there always this much breathing at the Osteopathic meetings?" We are a Loving profession because that is the foundation upon which Andrew Taylor Still built this Osteopathic house. He said, "This is a war not for conquest, popularity, or power. It is an aggressive campaign for Love, Truth, and Humanity."⁵ I reviewed all of the 22 SML's that Jenny could find for me and I was struck by the fact that, no matter the topic, all were presented with a loving tone. It is my intention today, to place Love alone at the center of our attention, to see if we can come closer to perceiving its presence in our lives and its importance in the healing processes.

Love is an ineffable term, like the “Health” or the “Breath of Life”. Not only is it impossible to fully define or capture its nature, it is hubris even to try. Lao Tsu says that, “The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.”⁶ Still, we do have the ability and, I would suggest, the responsibility, to honor and explore Loves meaning in our lives and in our work. We can develop a knowing relationship with it based upon our study and our experiences, even if we can’t come to fully understand its true nature. Love is always present but, if it is to be more than just a concept and able to fully express its power for healing, we must commit ourselves to that intention and allow it to become a living reality in our lives.

It is not then romantic love of which we speak here, but the Spiritual. The vital signs of this Love include the sensation of Wholeness and the embrace of undiluted beauty. Dr. Still modeled this for us, seeing God in the faces and forms of all of her creations.⁷ In all of the spiritual traditions with which I am familiar, God is defined as Love. So, in those moments when we have a sensory experience of the reality of wholeness incarnate, this mystery come to life, Love is then present and available to us. I believe that the powerful sense of embrace we perceive in our work, and the associated profound feeling of peace and comfort, is Love itself awakened in our being. For me, its’ simplest and most essential expressions are kindness and gratitude.

Dr. Sutherland’s students always described him in such terms: kind, patient, calm. He clearly was a loving teacher and physician. But Love also demands action. It is uncompromising in its imperative for bringing us all home to the state of balance and harmony and peace for which we were intended. Dr. Sutherland showed the willingness and conviction to take such action. He had the courage to talk of the Spiritual aspect of Osteopathy, the loving source from which all meaning and purpose flows. He referred to this Creator simply as “Dad”⁸, a relationship that resonates with the Loving affection that exists between father and son. To openly model that sort of a relationship with Deity was another courageous and generous act that gave others permission and support in pursuing and living their own intimate spiritual paths, “Sans Peur”⁹ (without fear). He was adamant about its importance: “I have often said that we lost something in

Osteopathy that Dr. Still tried to get across. That was the spiritual that he included in the science of osteopathy... I mean the *spiritual*, direct from his Maker...”¹⁰

And Dr. Sutherland, when presenting his new Cranial Concept to a skeptical world, didn't just talk of the body's therapeutic forces, he spoke of the Breath of Life. Neither was he cautious in talking about the role of Osteopathic Treatment as merely a musculoskeletal modality of therapy, but challenged us to see it as a “Non-Incise Surgical Art.”¹¹ Dr. Still had said, in explaining the goals of treatment that, “Normal” did not simply mean a readjustment of bones to a normal position, “But beyond all this lies a still greater question to solve, which is how and when to apply (the touch that sets free) the chemicals of life as Nature designs.”¹² And Will boldly echoed these sentiments by identifying the end point of a successful treatment as “Transmutation.”¹³ All of these courageous steps re-orient our perspective in Osteopathic Diagnosis and Treatment. Dr. Sutherland challenged his students to “Get closer to your Maker than mere material breathing.”¹⁴ I believe that a key element in that journey is to come to appreciate the role that Love plays in this process and to let it move into the forefront of our awareness. Dr. Sutherland is quoted as having said:

*There is always foam on the surface of the Sea
But, if we go deeper, there is Quiet.
And, deeper still, there is Love.*¹⁵

So, when Dr. Sutherland encouraged us to “Be Still and Know”¹⁶, deep within that Quiet, that Stillness, is the true essence, the object of that Knowing – Love. In the words of Anne Wales, Roland Becker, Rebecca Lippincott, and Viola Frymann, Dr. Sutherland lived a life of Love and a commitment to principle. I want to take you on a journey into the Sea Around Us, the great ocean of life, to see if we can find a way to go deeper and to sense the presence of this Love within the stillness of life.

CONTEMPLATION OF LOVE - FIRST STEP

Let us begin by putting our books and pens aside and allowing ourselves to settle peacefully into this moment: our feet resting comfortably upon the floor, our heads floating easily above our tail bones, our shoulders floating above our hips, our hands resting softly in our laps. There is nothing for us to do. We are only observing what is freely given to us. Let your senses rest, your mind become quiet, your eyes soften, open or closed. Sometimes when we close our eyes we tend to pursue rather than allowing ourselves to be found, but do whatever moves you most effortlessly in the direction of ease.

Allow the sensation of your breath to come to your awareness. Thoracic respiration is a beautiful gift, a blessing. Feel how you are being breathed in this moment. In inhalation, oxygen, our most precious nutrition, is given to us. In exhalation, all we no longer need is carried away and we are cleansed. Allow yourself to feel the gratitude for this life-giving blessing. This breath is given to us. It flows to us from out of the natural world, to which it then returns. Dr. Sutherland told Dr. Wales that to understand our fluid nature, she should come to appreciate Rachel Carson's book, "The Sea Around Us". We are all floating within this great ocean. The breath emerges from this living sea into our being, giving us life and vitality, then returns home to the sea, cleansing us. Allow the awareness of the Sea Around Us to be given to you.

Rachel Carson also told us that "Every drop knows the Tide."¹⁷ Every drop in the sea feels this loving presence directly igniting and purifying it, just as every drop of fluid within us, every atom, also knows this Tide. Let your awareness float on this Tide as it breaths you. Sense the living presence of the sea. How large is this living space that we have been given in this moment? Not just in this room, but the whole of the natural world: the liquid atmosphere and the liquid ocean and the liquid earth, all one drop. And where is our place within this ocean, this sacred space? We float in neutral buoyancy within the whole of the sea, floating not on the surface but deep inside its living presence. Become aware of who accompanies you on this journey: our friends

and colleagues here in this room, and we can also allow our awareness to flow out into the sea, to include all human beings... all forms of life... all of the natural world.

We are being breathed by the loving Intelligence that created us and re-creates us in every moment, with every breath. This breathing flows to us from the sea and returns to the sea. There is only one world, one living ocean, although we can sense it from different perspectives. As we return our attention to this time and place, our perception of the Sea Around Us, of its living presence, and of the Tide breathing us, can stay in the forefront of our awareness, if we choose to allow it to be so.

THE LOVE OF OUR TEACHERS

Now let us turn our attention to the Love of our teachers. All of my teachers were clear about their Love of Osteopathy and of their students. They also made their intention clear that they expected me to continue this legacy of mentoring with future students. This loving tradition of sharing our skills and experiences with students and with our colleagues has been passed down through the years since the beginning. Dr. Still taught Dr. Sutherland. Dr. Sutherland taught Dr. Wales. Dr. Wales taught us. I consider this a sacred responsibility and it is another reason why I stand before you today. This Love and respect between teachers and students is at the core of my experience of our Osteopathic profession. It is one of the most beautiful, precious and profound expressions of the reality of Love's central place in Osteopathy and another valuable way in which we can realize the blessings of what Dr. Still was trying to teach us.

STANLEY SCHIOWITZ, DO

I would like to start with my first mentor, Stanley Schiowitz, DO. Stanley was the chairman of the Osteopathic Principles & Practice department at the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine and my teacher, and he invited me to be one of his first 2 fellows at NYCOM. During the first year of my fellowship, the program was new and we didn't have many clinical sites so we worked at a clinic far out on the eastern end of

Long Island. Some of Dr. Schiowitz's patients from decades before when he had been in private practice in Brooklyn would drive from Brooklyn or Connecticut or New Jersey, sometimes 2 or 3 hours, to see him. And then they would end up being treated by me! One day, I was treating one of these patients who kept questioning what I was doing and offering encouraging observations such as, "That's Not what Dr. Schiowitz used to do". At one point he said to me, "Someday you should be *Half* the doctor, Dr. Schiowitz was. They called him the man with the 'Golden Hands.' Man comes in, can't walk, this man. He goes in to see Dr. Schiowitz and when he comes out, he is walking, this man. He says, 'God bless Dr. Schiowitz'. They called him the man with the 'Golden Hands.' Someday, you should be *Half* the doctor, Dr. Schiowitz was."

Dr. Schiowitz came in at the end of the appointment and the patient wanted to tattle on me but Stanley quickly shushed him. He only wanted to know what I had found, what I had done, and if it had helped. He never let his attention waver from our responsibility to be of help to our patients. He cared deeply for their welfare and was uncompromising in his attention to every detail. He had "Golden Hands" because he had a Golden Heart.

Stanley did not practice Osteopathy in the Cranial Field. Yet once, after I had returned from my first basic cranial course, I found him sitting quietly holding the head of his patient with his eyes closed. I never found out exactly what he was doing, but I know that he had a great love of Osteopathy, absolute faith in its healing power, and an insatiable curiosity. He devoted his life to sharing his Love with others, spending the last years of his life traveling all over the country to teach small groups of interested DO's solely for the satisfaction of sharing his gift and an adequate supply of coffee. Teaching was a tremendous source of joy for him and you could see how it ignited him when people shared his passion. At convocation in 2010 Dr. Schiowitz said to me, "Donald, the fellowship program, when I see what you and the others are doing... that was the best thing I ever did. The best thing I ever did." It was overwhelming and left me speechless. And those of you who know me at all, will realize that this was quite an accomplishment. All I could do was to hug him and give him a kiss on the cheek. I not only felt deeply loved but also comforted to see that he also knew how deeply he was loved by us.

ANNE L. WALES, DO

I would next like to talk about Anne Wales, DO. I remember distinctly my first study group meeting. Dr. Wales came into the room, looked around at each of us, beamed, and said “*Well, everybody’s here!*” So I was part of “Everybody”? And my presence helped to make Dr. Wales happy! Such a simple act of kindness helped me to feel acknowledged and welcome. What a precious gift. And Dr. Wales expressed that same Love and respect for us every time we were together. When she was talking with you or giving you an “adjustment”, you knew that you were the most important person in the world to her in that moment.

Anne Wales was not only the greatest Osteopath I have ever known, she was also the most outstanding teacher and, to my mind, a perfect human being. Perfect in the Love that she showed to all of us. Perfect in the way that she shared what she knew with such brilliance and generosity and grace. Perfect in the way that she loved cake and scotch and a good laugh.

Anne’s presence was totally about Love: of the moment, of everyone within her sphere, of her patients, of Osteopathy, of the Natural World, of her Creator, and of herself. Once, after I had had a particularly difficult experience during a lab session at a course and was feeling quite vulnerable and unsure what to do, I called her up during the lunch break. She warmly invited me to come right over to see her. I hopped into my car, drove to her house, and she took care of me, easing my body, my mind, and my spirit back into balance. We then had some lunch, talked awhile more, and I left for home feeling whole and safe. Another time when I was visiting her, we were discussing the CV4 and I was wondering if I was really getting it. So she suggested that I perform the procedure on her. I remember being surprised to notice that I felt no fear or insecurity in doing this. I trusted her and I knew that she trusted me although, I must admit that, I was relieved when she told me that I had done the procedure properly and that it had been of benefit.

Before almost every lecture I would talk with Anne and we would discuss all the key points of the particular topic. One of the most memorable occasions came when I was preparing to lecture on the living human face for the Cranial Academy. As I prepared

my lecture, I realized that it would be important for me to present the embryology of the face as a foundation for understanding its form and function. I wasn't sure how this might be received as it was not part of the template I had been given, so I called Dr. Wales to see what she thought of the idea. Anne said, "Well, when does that process that starts at conception stop? Does the adult form finish the process? I'm 91 years old and I'm still a developing embryo. I think that's a good picture. It's breathtaking."¹⁸

The idea that we are all developing embryos is breathtaking and it has continued to be breathtaking for me over all of these years, as well as, a tremendous source of inspiration and comfort. Seeing my fellow human beings as developing embryos has helped me to realize that they deserve my patience and compassion and Love as they continue on their journeys of self-realization. It has also helped me to become more patient and compassionate and loving with myself, which has often proved to be a much greater challenge for me. Anne taught me that we are all developing embryos, all perfectly human, and all deserving of giving and receiving God's Love.

JAMES JEALOUS, DO

Now I would like to talk to you of my third mentor, James Jealous, DO. Jim has also been an incredible source of loving support to me over the last 20 years. Along with Stan and Anne, Jim formed the core of my foundation in Osteopathy. They provided me with an understanding of what it means to be an Osteopath. Jim welcomed me into the Saturday morning study groups at New England College of Osteopathic Medicine when I first moved to Maine before I was known to anyone there or felt accepted by some. At my second meeting he asked me to give a lecture and a lab on the Midline. This was a terrifying gift for me but one which allowed me to engage with the group and to begin to become a part of that family. Jim has always been very generous in encouraging, and challenging, students and new physicians to become engaged and to find and trust their own voice.

In 2002 he asked me to begin teaching Biodynamics courses. It was a startling request and one that I did not accept for another 2 years. It took me that much time to realize that this blessing was not so much a gift to me as it was a request for me to accept the

responsibility to share the burden of carrying Dr. Still's and Dr. Sutherland's work forward. During that time, he invited me to co-teach two Phase courses with him, I guess as a way to get me comfortable with the idea. When I decided to begin teaching, knowing that I was feeling the pressure of this commitment, Jim suggested that we meet before each Phase. To my amazement, he came to me, driving the 5 hours roundtrip from NH to Maine. He kindly helped me to prepare the 22 hours of material and patiently answered every one of my questions. We walked on the beach discussing the key points and spent many hours reviewing the slide shows. It was an act of tremendous generosity and humility that I aspire to emulate and will long remember.

I really cannot fully express the gratitude I have for the blessings that I have received from this opportunity to teach the Biodynamic model of Osteopathy in the Cranial Field. Its central idea that we are each the primary focus of God's Love, as revealed in the wisdom and beauty of the embryo, seems to me a perfect expression of our core Osteopathic belief in the primacy of the Health. Without Jim's loving encouragement and support, I never would have dreamed of accepting this challenge, nor do I believe that I would have been nearly as successful.

VIOLA FRYMANN, DO

I will close this section by telling you the story of another teacher. At a Sutherland Cranial Teaching Foundation continuing studies course in 1991 Dr. Maurice Bensoussan gave a presentation on the biomechanics of the fascial planes of the tongue and their continuity with the fascial layers of the oropharynx. He then introduced a lab in which we were to use the patient's tongue to diagnose and treat any fascial strains in this mechanism. As we stood up, I noticed that the people with whom I was sitting had all paired up and I began looking around for a partner. Out of the corner of my eye I noticed that Dr. Viola Frymann was standing next to me, also unpartnered. Now I had first seen Dr. Frymann at Convocation in 1982, where I listened to her give an inspired lecture and then watched her perform miracles treating 2 students during the "Evening With The Stars" program. In my mind, her stature as an Osteopath was unparalleled. I was in awe of her knowledge, her talent, and her very presence. At this time, I was a pup only about 4 years into practice and she was, after all, Viola Frymann. The thought of

holding her tongue, much less unwinding her oropharynx, was more than I even cared to imagine. I anxiously looked around the room, desperate to find someone at my level with whom I could safely work. Forget about me, surely God would not allow this to happen to Dr. Frymann! This was simply wrong in so many ways.

So I prayed an urgent prayer, forgetting in the heat of the moment that my God has a wicked sense of humor. And God answered my prayers as she often does when I am afraid and certain of disaster, “Sorry kid... No can do!” At that moment I heard Dr. Frymann saying very gently at my shoulder, “Well, do you want to go first or shall I?” So we proceeded to do the lab together and Dr. Frymann was more kind and supportive and open to working with me than I could have had any reason to expect. She put me completely at ease and the experience was a wonderful and meaningful one. There is no other word but Love that captures that moment.

I learned something of tremendous value that day about judgment. I had not only underestimated the generosity and kindness of one of my revered elders but, as importantly, I had also underestimated my own worth. The Golden Rule tells us that, in order for us to meet that highest virtue with which we are charged in every spiritual tradition, to Love our neighbors, we must *first* truly Love ourselves, for that is our reference point. Nearly 20 years later, at Convocation in 2010, I had an opportunity to see if I had learned anything. After my lecture, Viola came and observed my lab session on the use of embryologic fulcrums to assess and manage unresolved healing processes in the living human pelvis. And no, I didn’t unwind her pelvis in my lab demo. But I was more excited and honored that she had come to observe than I was nervous. And afterwards, we talked about the lab and she was, again, very gracious and kind about what she had observed.

CONTEMPLATION OF LOVE - SECOND STEP

We will now take a 2nd step into the Sea Around Us and see if we can allow ourselves to be brought deeper into its true presence. Notice if you are still being breathed by Primary Respiration. Are you still In the Sea? Is its presence still near the forefront of your awareness? Allow yourself to be found by the Tide that is always pursuing you.

Adah Sutherland painted a picture of a House Under The Sea.¹⁹ We are each a House Under The Sea with all the doors and windows open. And the substance of this sea is Stillness. We float in an ocean of Stillness that flows through us and through all of life. The Stillness breaths through the spaces within us and within the whole of the sea. It carries the sensory experience of the reality of Oneness. Each of us, human beings, animals, birds, fish, trees, earth, sky, and stars, is a drop in the sea on our journey home.

This Stillness flows through the substance of life, resolving us all into One form, One motion, One “Momentary aspect of spatially ordered metabolic movement.”² Out of this Stillness, we are breathed into life, into form and function. As Dr. Sutherland told us, “When all the fulcrums are synchronous, there will peace and harmony.”²⁰ All is now: the Sea Around Us, the Stillness, the breathing of Primary Respiration, are always present. It is a question of what we choose to welcome in.

Again we return our attention gently to this time and place, by broadening our awareness not by focusing it.

THE LOVE OF OUR JOURNEY IN OSTEOPATHY

Now let's talk of the presence of Love in our work... the Love of our journey in Osteopathy. My journey to Osteopathy followed an improbable path whose design can only be explained by the mysterious principles of Synchronicity. It is a path that anyone possessing even an ounce of common sense would have rejected out of hand as a likely

plan for successfully leading anyone to their intended destination. And yet, to my knowledge, my improbable path is neither unique nor uncommon among my Osteopathic peers. In fact, it intrigues me to see how many of us who practice Osteopathy have come to it only through some form of Divine intervention. The process that brought me to Osteopathy was not of my creation. I was open and seeking and can only take credit for having said “Yes” when each opportunity was offered, just as, later on, the opportunities for the Undergraduate Fellowship at NYCOM and for teaching Biodynamics, would also come to me unbidden. Others opened doors or pointed the way and I was willing to explore. The final step in this initial stage of my journey was a referral to Muriel Chapman, DO, a student of Will Sutherland’s. I had no idea what Osteopathy was, much less Osteopathy in the Cranial Field. So, I had no idea what to expect nor could I tell what Dr. Chapman was doing. But as she treated me, something in Cranial Osteopathy was familiar to me. There was a resonance deep within me and I knew that I had found, or perhaps been found by, something that I loved, that loved me back. This wonderful blessing. This Love of Osteopathy.

In 2000 I had an experience that may well have been a seminal factor in the inspiration for this talk. I was invited to UNECOM to participate in the Orientation program for the first year students. I was part of a panel of docs who were asked to welcome the new students and to share our perspectives on life as an Osteopath. After the talk, I was approached by one of the first years, Kiran Mangalam, who simply said to me, “You are the only one who has talked about Love”. As with the “Hugging” observation at the MOA meeting, someone had cast a light upon an experience in my life that was so familiar to me that it was invisible. It surprised me at first. But after a while, it helped me to see clearly the central importance of the presence of Love in my life and gave me the opportunity to move it into the foreground of my conscious awareness.

Love is not just a presence that nurtures and integrates and inspires. Love also supplies the power that vivifies all of nature. Anne Wales used to say that human beings had 4 basic needs: Air, Food, Shelter, and Water. I have recently learned of the “Law of 3’s”, which is a guide used in wilderness survival training and its principles echo those of Dr. Wales. The law states that a person can survive: 3 minutes without oxygen, 3 hours without shelter, 3 days without water, and 3 weeks without food. And then they add a 5th

basic need to Dr. Wales's list: a human being cannot survive more than 3 months... without Love! So, no matter the context or the field of reference, Love is the primary cause, the essence, the fundamental source from which all of life flows and is sustained. In the world of wilderness medicine, this Love translates into hope, another powerful, and, in this case, life sustaining, expression of Love. Earlier this year I was suffering from an illness that didn't seem to want to let me go and I was getting a little impatient with my immune system and more than a little worried. My friends called with their concerns and advice, which made me feel very supported and was much appreciated. But the more people called with their commiserations, the more I began to wonder if I was, in fact, a "sick person." Did my Homeodynamic Mechanisms, as my dear friend Jayne Alexander, DO used to call them, still possess the capacity for self-healing? It was a crisis in confidence, a weakening of my faith in the Health that had always sustained me. I was beginning to lose hope, the North Star to which my inner compass had always been set. I am an optimist not only by nature, but by choice. I have cultivated a "glass half full" outlook on life and, when I felt myself drifting from that shore, the concern itself seemed to drain my life force. Then one of my dear Osteopathic brothers, Andy Goldman, called me and simply said, "Donald, you will get better." The Love in that statement healed some deep wound within me and I again *knew* that this was true. I remembered who I am. This re-establishment of hope in our patients, a firm faith in their capacity to heal based upon our helping them to have a physical, incarnate experience of the Health at work within them is, I believe, of crucial importance in healing.

A. T. Still expressed strong feelings about the importance of hope. He said, "...If you should be indiscreet enough in your report to remove every ray of hope, you have chilled the vital energy, you have silenced it... (But) Should you find any hope for his recovery and make that your report, like a thrill of lightning dipped in the sea of love, his vitality dances with joy. He is warmed up soul and body."²¹ So, for Dr. Still, our job is not just Love in thought, but Love in action. A responsibility to embrace our patient's sorrows as well as their joys, their dis-ease as well as their ease, their challenges as well as their gifts, with unconditional Love. Then they may come to know the living reality of

perfection that is always within them - loving them and guiding them towards wholeness.

And, of course, the reason I can talk to you with any authority about the importance of Love in our lives and in our work, is because I have stumbled so often and so spectacularly in working with this living principle over these many years. I remember there was a guy I played basketball with who drove me, and quite a few of the other players, quite to distraction on a rather regular basis. Jed wasn't a bad person and he was talented and played hard, but he was prone to random acts of emotional immaturity that were maddening. So one day I decided to pray for him. I had great hopes for this pious and, if I don't say so myself, inspired act. To my dismay, at basketball the next week, nothing had changed. Jed was the same guy he had been before I prayed for him. Trying to figure out how God could possibly have gotten it all so wrong, I thought back on my prayer and realized that it had amounted to something along the lines of, "Dear God, could you please fix Jed, he's making us all nuts?" Well, that was certainly a prayer *about* Jed but clearly not a prayer *for* Jed. So I opened my heart and tried again and the prayer actually turned out to be about God helping me to change my attitude. And that prayer worked. I became more loving and Jed responded to the change. It was another lesson for me that our responsibility is to start with our own healing, our capacity for loving ourselves. Then we will be able to help others to heal themselves.

I have also learned lessons along the way through my experiences as an Osteopath and Love has been the touch stone that allowed me to ground my work in what I know rather than what I had been told. Dr. Still was emphatic about the importance of this. He gave us dozens of instructions on this point, among them, "I quote no authors but God and experience"²² and that "Demonstration... is the only method by which truth could be established."²³ So, I would like to share a couple of stories of my experiences as an Osteopath, one as an operator and another as a patient.

My first story concerns V. I. - a slight intense woman who presented with chronic pain throughout her body that had defied every modern medical modality of diagnosis and treatment. She was very polite and always smiled, but she was rigid in her physical

constitution, her intellectual vision, and her psychological horizons. It was a challenge to treat her and I told her more than once that it might be that I was not the best person to help her. But she insisted that she knew that I was one who could help her... all evidence to the contrary. Then one day, she told me that one of my treatments had helped! And she wanted another treatment just like that other treatment, but “Not like the last treatment you gave me, but the one before that.” She then proceeded to review in exquisite detail everything I had done and everywhere I had placed my hands in the “good” and “bad” treatments. Well, I do have a good sense of humor and we discussed how treatment does and does not work. But this did not dissuade V.I. from persistently trying to direct the treatment process, wanting me to adjust my hands even fractions of an inch, to recreate the recipe she remembered. However, what this episode did give me was new compassion for her suffering and a better insight into the depth to which I would need to go to find a doorway to her health. It was only when I totally committed myself to the wholeness of that suffering, to the presence of Love within her that was pure and undamaged, that I was able to help her experience a sustained opportunity for healing.

My second story begins in May of 1998. Ken Graham, DO, invited me to lecture at the SCTF basic course in Texas. When I arrived, I was in tough shape. Earlier in the week I had taken a course in which my system had been “tweaked” during a lab session and, not only was I not recovering, I was feeling progressively worse. So I asked Ken to take a look at me and, to my great dismay, after evaluating me for less than 5 minutes, he bolted off to bring Edna Lay, DO to the rescue. Well, let me tell you, if I ever lose the rest of my hair, I am sure that you will be able to see the imprints of Edna’s finger tips around my right Occipito-Mastoid Suture. She treated me for what seemed like an eternity and, at times, used a tremendous amount of force. But her treatment was never invasive, never unpleasant. In fact, Dr. Lay met me exactly where I was, perfectly matching the level of force and inertia within the tissues. I have rarely felt safer and more lovingly cared for in a moment of need.

A couple of years ago at an SCTF continuing studies course, I was in line buying a snack and, noticing that Dr. Lay was in line behind me, told the cashier that I wanted to pay

for her food and drink. When Edna found out, she initially protested. But when I told her the story and reminded her of her kindness to me, she immediately softened and graciously accepted the gift. This demonstrates another very important, and often overlooked, face of Love. We have been told that it is better to give than to receive. Yet, in my experience, to graciously accept what another person lovingly offers to you is giving of the highest order. Coming to fully appreciate this fact has been a major challenge for me over the years, as it is for many in the helping professions. But this I now know, it is a truly generous and loving act to acknowledge and value the kindness of others with an open heart.

I also want to say something about our perspective regarding Love, as I realize that there are often questions when we are talking about Love that concern its appropriate place in our relationship with our patients and our work as Osteopaths. Fortunately, Dr. Still gave us that valuable insight we spoke of earlier, which we can use as a guideline when we consider this Love, with a capital “L”: It is the act of seeing God in the face and form of our patients.⁷ We seek the presence of the Divine in all people, even those, perhaps especially those, who present us with challenges, and in all manifestations of the handiwork of the God of Nature, although I must admit that I continue to struggle with extending this warm fuzzy feeling to mosquitoes.

This spiritual Love is what supports and informs us and gives meaning to our work and to our lives. To know all of this Love in its entirety would, as with Dr. Still’s knowing all of a bone²⁴, close both ends of an eternity. But the willingness to commit to that challenge is crucial. It is a question of trajectory. An inch off at the start can leave us a mile off at the finish. So in all of our actions, all of our endeavors, starting with Love is what allows us to align our purpose with the intentions of the Mind of Nature. Dr. Still was also clear about this. He said that treatment had but one meaning, “To Know you are right and do your work accordingly.”²⁵ Love is the only way that we can Know. The only way to assure that we are, in fact, “On the wire”²⁶ as we were directed by Rollin Becker, DO in the last lines of his 1965 Sutherland Memorial Lecture.

This Love is a living presence that seeks resolution, balance, and peace. It is not merely an emotion. And the primary requirement for us to be able to sense and communicate with that Love is the willingness to quiet our minds and to become truly patient. Anne Wales once told me, “I find things work better when I’m patient... and then I wait.”²⁷ So patience is different than waiting. Patience is the open hearted embrace of the moment. Waiting always has an object. We wait “for”. We wait “because of”. We wait “until”. Patience is a state of being that is whole unto itself without other needs. It is a state of contented fulfillment that warmly embraces the moment with unconditional Love. We become receptive, so that we don’t just look, we see; we don’t just listen, we hear; we don’t just touch, we feel.

This Love that flows through us and gives our lives meaning and vitality is not ours any more than is the air that we breathe. It is a gift, a blessing, which offers us an opportunity, but also charges us with a responsibility to let that Love fully manifest in the world. If we are quiet and at peace, this Love will find us. And we will be able to help support it manifesting the Creator’s intentions.

CONTEMPLATION OF LOVE - THIRD STEP

So let’s proceed to the last step of our Contemplation. The awareness of your breath and of the stillness within the Sea Around Us is there within you. It is an instinct that already knows, completely and without question, what your intellect is trying to understand. When we are quiet and at peace, we will find ourselves drawn as if by a Divine magnetism, easily and directly to our origin, just as a river flows without thought or intention to the sea. The Tide that breathes within the sea carries us to the heart of that Stillness, to the Love that is the idea at its center, the very presence of the Creator.

In this warm and embracing presence there is no separation within us nor between inside and outside. No boundary between one drop in the sea and another drop. Know that we are all one. Our journey of healing is not for ourselves alone. Nor just for our

patients or our friends and family. It is for the Health of all people and for all of the natural world. All are God's loving creations. All of life is one spiritual substance, one drop being breathed by the presence of Divine Love. We inhale Gratitude. We exhale Kindness.

Is this sensation familiar to you? Something you have known before? A place that feels like home? Let yourself be nurtured and eased by the blessings of this Love that is freely given to us in every moment. It is your birth-right as a "Child of the Mind of God."²⁸

I will make a few closing remarks but there is no reason for you to leave behind this Stillness in the Sea Around Us and the Love at its heart. Let it remain ever with you...

CONCLUSION

It was my intention today to offer a question for your consideration. What role does the living principle of Love play in your life and in your work? If you felt some resonance with this exploration, then I hope that you will allow that question to continue to breathe within you and to unfold its meaning. Although we cannot capture Love's absolute nature, we certainly can allow it to inform and guide us towards what is true. What principles we apply is the essential thing in practice, not the treatment approach we use or the quality of our touch. It is our responsibility to pursue unity not only in form and function but also in our relationships with all people and with all of the Natural World.

Moving forward then, the question is, what role does Love plays in how do we grow? Gandhi told us that, "If you want something really important to be done you must not merely satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also."²⁹ What would happen if we allowed Love to move into the foreground of our consciousness in our daily lives? How might that change what we perceive and the choices that we make?

If we were seeking to practice Osteopathy as Dr. Still and Dr. Sutherland envisioned and to live our lives with all the meaning and integrity and wholeness of which we are capable, then Stillness, although a crucial presence and an important step in our coming to know and to manifest the purposes for which we are intended, is not necessarily where our journey must or should end. We can go deeper. We can allow ourselves to be embraced by the Love at the center of that Stillness and let that Love reveal to us its truths, at its tempo, and for its purposes. Love can then become *the* central factor in what we do and how we do it. Then we can accompany Dr. Still on his aggressive campaign for Love, Truth, and Humanity: in our personal growth as human beings, in our growth as a community of colleagues, and in our growth as an organization devoted to providing care for the Health of all Humanity.

Donald V. Hankinson, DO

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my wife, Joan, whose input was instrumental in developing and refining the final form and content of this lecture. I also want to thank Tim Kingsbury, Christian Sullivan, Kim Tripp and, most especially, Andy Goldman, for their compassionate support and insightful suggestions.

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