

Section 1

INTRODUCTION

Relationships are the bedrock of all interchanges between two people, and in general, involve caring, feeling, trust, power, and a sense of purpose.¹ In a patient centered relationship the purpose is to help the patient. The helping relationship is founded on: empathy, congruence, genuineness, respect, positive regard, caring and concern for the other.¹ Chiropractors offer a patient centered form of clinical care that exhibits these characteristics.²⁻⁴ The partnership arrangement, also characteristic of patient centered care, demands a sharing of power and control between the patient and doctor.¹ The resulting alliance enhances patients' sense of control over themselves. Tools for refining patient centered care in the chiropractic consultation can influence the locus of control in the patient-chiropractor relationship and enhance the patient's sense of congruency.⁵

The shift to patient centered care is reflected in the current trend in terminology, referring to the patient-doctor relationship instead of the doctor-patient relationship.^{1,6-9} Studies have found significantly greater patient satisfaction with chiropractic care over other practitioners treating similar conditions.^{2,10,11} The patient-doctor relationship plays an important part in patient satisfaction.¹