



## ***Year of the Osteopathic Spirit***

Dear Academy Member:

I write to you today to begin a series of presidential notes in this “*year of the osteopathic spirit*”.

We begin with the word itself “spirit”. The spirit that I am talking about is not a ghost or a specific person, but rather the essence of life or the breath of life as Still, Sutherland, and Fulford constantly talked to us about; this breath that emanates from God. This living and active vitality that is within each human being, that makes them uniquely human. This “spirit”, the “breath of life”, we see manifest in the cranial rhythmic impulse, the primary respiratory movement. This ability that we have through palpation, to perceive, feel and experience the “breath of life” can be transformative to both the patient and the DO.

We as osteopathic physicians have the unique ability to diagnose and treat the person in a scientific manner as well as an energetic manner. Our ability to diagnose and treat using our hands makes us unique amongst those physicians and surgeons in America that have unlimited licensure. To be able to better treat the whole person our training combines high tech and high touch.

We in the osteopathic profession share a common philosophy, a rich tradition handed down to us from A.T. Still, of looking at the patient in all its manifestations of life from a scientific physiological perspective to an energetic, psychological perspective. This spirit, the “breath of life”, provides that essence, that vitality that is difficult to measure but noticeable when deficient.

The osteopathic spirit can be a perceived essence of life that we identify within the profession and makes us unique in the American healthcare field. As we go about our work today, let us recognize the uniqueness of the osteopathic heritage that we have, our gifts, and the spirit of life, the breath of life within each one of us and our patients.

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AAO President

