



1. It costs too much; I can't afford to belong to an association.
2. I don't have the time.
3. Associations don't do anything for me.
4. I don't agree with the association's views.
5. Things are fine in my state; what do I have to worry about?

My answers to those reasons are:

1. Actually, you can't afford not to belong. Some associations have discounted fees for certain practitioners; some even have free membership categories.
2. You say you don't have the time? Make the time.
3. If you don't belong to an association, how do you know what it does (or doesn't do) for you?
4. You won't change an association's position by sitting around and complaining about it. Become a member and let the rest of the membership know how you feel. If nothing else, it will give the association a different perspective.
5. Things may be fine now, but that doesn't mean things always will be fine. Don't be reactive - be proactive. Go out and make a change in our profession before someone else decides to change things for you.

If you need help creating an association or improving an existing association, call myself or Michael Devitt; we'll do whatever we can to help you.

Back to Illinois: Just recently I was in Chicago, and spoke with a practitioner who stated she had tried to get a group together to start an organization. She experienced apathy on the part of most of the other providers, however; the reason most commonly given was that no one wanted to get involved in politics.

The acupuncturist I spoke to in Chicago gets it. She understood the importance of having an association, but sadly, it appears that most of her colleagues don't.

Acupuncturists practice acupuncture, but they don't get to decide what they can practice or how they can practice it. Legislators make those decisions. They make the laws that regulate the issuing of licenses and the rules and regulations for the practice of acupuncture and Oriental medicine. Without a strong association, who will legislators turn to?

The time to act is now. Contact your state association and ask about joining. If your state doesn't have an association, call the other acupuncturists in your area and discuss creating one. The sooner you get organized, the better your chances of preventing what happened in Illinois from happening in your state.

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