



## homeopathy

### A practitioners view

As we look at our individual situation within society and what provisions we make for ourselves, then we may indeed have felt reassured in 1940, for we began upon an enlightened path with regard to health – we established a national health service. We made it available for all including visitors, based, if we were resident, upon monthly contributions of employer or were we self employed by monthly contributions by ourselves. It was fair. It was misnamed though, because in reality it was a national disease service in that it promoted not health but disease management. This legacy, while based upon high moral principles, defeated freedom of choice because it promoted only one view of medicine. This view is based upon the use of pharmaceuticals. Drugs are manufactured under patent laws and for astronomical profits. The morals of commercial manufacturing companies are dubious. They hold the doctor at ransom, providing her with a pharmacopoeia and tempting her with rewards, not all of which are directly connected with patient wellbeing! Bribes are common business practice and worse, optimistic promises of health benefits based upon inadequate trials were and still are not uncommon. At best the 'magical bullet' approach of drug intervention blocks a specific pathway of disease manifestation, while causing innumerable side effects many of which are more severe than the original condition. At worst it does no more than obscure the whole disease which continues to wreck havoc within the system. This is because the conventional approach to disease management does not regard the whole person and does not aim to cure, merely to palliate.

The menace to our wellbeing is that we believe that the short-term answer to a problem is to make war with it rather than understanding it. War against disease, war against terrorism! We should be in a mood of reconciliation with our perceived enemy. Let's find a way of communicating. If we're worried that disease is going to come and smash our body or our sanity, let's communicate with the disease. This may sound screwy, 'how can we communicate with a disease – it's not a person, is it?', however, this is exactly how healing comes about, and it is how homeopathy works. The cure is like the disease, it mimics it. The idea, in homeopathy is to match the medicine to the disease, or rather, to the symptoms of the disease. The symptoms are understood to be the organisms best response to the invasion of the disease. The cure is the result of the disease communicating with the medicine, which because it is similar, speaks the same language and can be understood.

There is a totally irrational horror and fear directed towards practices like homeopathy by many segments of the 'so called' scientific community. I refer here to 'so called' scientific community because it is often the technologists who disparage homeopathy. The standard of science is to keep an open mind in order that the new and extraordinary may enter in.

Where does fear come from? It comes from the fact that you believe yourself to be separated from the thing you are afraid of. So if we can bring people together to realise that it isn't a war, it isn't a battle, it isn't

separated, then we may succeed in turning around a potentially destructive situation. As in the practice of homeopathy, the way is through listening, understanding in the spirit of compassion (not judgment) and prescribing a similar remedy or remedies that reconnect us to our source in nature.

Homeopathic healing results through reestablishing the relationship between our inner selves and outer nature through the application of remedies (medicines) which are derived from the natural world and which mimic (speak the same language as) the disease.

What we believe to be true or untrue begins in the home and then continues with formal education. Education has become increasingly concerned with doing, as distinct from being, with technology as distinct from understanding. It has become clear in the last 1000's of years that we in the West have come to believe we have the right to own the land, to own animals, oceans and so on. I suppose that this is a consequence of having progressed from nomadic hunter-gatherers to agricultural settlers. We have strayed onto a path of gross materialism. And technology is the servant of that attitude and that's where I have a problem. You have to look at WHO you are serving. My issue really is about the altar at which we pray and for the most part we pray at an altar that I don't honour. Education has been driven by values that strike me as being catastrophic because they will lead to our destruction. As I walk through many a university campus I see that what's being taught there has no bearing upon our survival in the future. We need to be teaching other things in other ways. You could say, it should be a spiritual understanding of which homeopathy is a prime example, because its practice reconnects not only the patient, but also the practitioner, with nature.

### **Homeopathy**

Homeopathy applies scientific principles of observation, recording and experimentation to the art of healing. It functions by the application of the law of similars. Simply put: the 'symptom picture' (i.e. a recognisable and characteristic set of symptoms) of the healing agent (the medicine) has to match the disease 'symptom picture' of the patient. This statement of a primary principle of healing was stated, amongst others, by the ancient Greek, Hippocrates (still today many medical students the world over promise to abide by the Hippocratic oath). It waited 2000 years to be put into practice, extended and systematised by Samuel Hahnemann.

To put this healing principle into its even more ancient context: a similar idea is at the root of the Chinese Yin/Yang symbol, which expresses that any force or manifestation has its equal opposite and that this one force will inevitably change into the other. That which can cause illness can cure it provided it is similar to it. It has to mimic the state of the illness and by so doing it enables the organism that has become encumbered by an illness to expel it.

To return to the Yin/Yang symbol. This, as you probably are aware, depicts a circle in which there are two identical interlocking forms, like two whales – one is white, Yang; the other is black, Yin. In the dark of Yin there is a little spot of light, much as in the darkest night there are still stars to be seen. In the light of Yang there is a spot of darkness, like a solar spot on the surface of the sun or a black hole at the centre of a galaxy. These spots convey that each state contains the opposite state in seed or potential form.

In homeopathy, the polarity principle is expressed in Hahnemann's term, as primary and secondary action. An understanding of this principle is crucial to homeopathic case-taking and analysis of case material, as well as interpreting the actions of medicines. This is because the diseased states of mind and body manifest in qualities whose opposites are always present, even if as yet unmanifest. They express as primary, uncompensated and secondary, compensated states. The uncompensated state is the one in which the disease first expresses itself. It is simple and child-like. An example of a primary, uncompensated state might be the sudden conviction that

death is imminent with tingling sensations. A compensated state involves the organism adapting in whatever way is necessary to ensure continued survival, such as, and with reference to the example just offered, withdrawal of full consciousness of the sudden conviction of death with tingling sensations into a numbed state in which feelings are removed behind a safety net of insensitivity.

Medical science uses the concept of compensation to describe pathology. The terms 'uncompensated', 'compensated' and 'decompensated' are applied to heart disease. The uncompensated heart is operating well. An example of compensation might be the enlarged heart, which still fulfils its function, although the strategy is precarious. The decompensated heart is failing.

Homeopaths use these concepts to describe the development of pathology in remedies. For example: the uncompensated state of Nux Vomica (an often prescribed homeopathic medicine) is zealous, friendly, industrious and determined although cramped. While in this situation, the person needing Nux vomica would be unlikely to visit the doctor, because he would be getting positive feedback from those around him. This individual, feeding off praise and innately driven, naturally tends to overstep his capacity. In order to sustain his over-zealous endeavour, he may compensate by resorting to stimulants (for instance, wine, women and song, late nights and too much coffee and cocaine). At this stage of developing pathology, he may present with cramps, spasms or stomach ulcers. In the final stage, he decompensates; the flak of failure hits him in the face, and all he wants to do is find a quiet place for repose, to heal his mind and body. However, he believes that he can't because somebody has sold his bed. This latter symptom has been expressed in just these terms by a Nux vomica prover. We will write about provings later on.

In clinical practice, conscious and subconscious states seen in patients may also be interpreted as a complementary pair of opposites. This often plays out in dreams. For example, a dream of being a powerful giant may be an unconscious compensation for innate feelings of inadequacy. A dream of a grand house with ornate interiors might be a compensation for feelings of being despised and rejected.

It was pointed out by the 19th century homeopath J T Kent, that perversions of the affections, represented by the opposites of love and hate, are fundamental to a case. We would agree that fixity, or lack of fluency, at this formative level leads to disease. Aversion should be allowed to mutate to desire, and desire to aversion, in fluidic momentum to maintain psychological integrity. To put this into experiential terms, a healthy relationship between siblings, children and parents, and, indeed, life partners, allows for changing emotions. From a therapeutic angle, discerning any 'stuckness' at this energetic level is of maximum importance because it denotes the foundation of psychological as well as physical sickness. A stuck place is experienced by the patient in the body as a sensation (by one or more of the five senses), and in the mind as a memory and an image. This is the primary uncompensated state from which all later compensations generate. Recognising the gestalt or shape of this primary state is the key by which we unlock the case.

The originator of homeopathy, Samuel Hahnemann, was born in Germany about two hundred and fifty years ago. At this time the old world-view was being revolutionised by the ideas of the new wave of the latterly named 'age of enlightenment'. Traditional beliefs, many flimsily based upon superstition, were being increasingly subjected to empirical inquiry. Experimentation and new theory based upon results was what Hahnemann brought to the old notion of "let likes be cured by likes". This is of particular relevance to our era because we live in a time of questioning standards and hallowed beliefs. New healing forms are being sought, because we are questioning the results of medical procedures with their interventions: cutting, burning, drugging and inoculating. These methods are seen to be failing to bring about long-term improvements in health in chronic disease. Indeed the results of medical procedures are themselves seen to cause long-term ill

health, although they are of undoubted service in the short-term. Therefore, individuals on the healer's path are seeking to find ways in which a humane system of medicine can be integrated with the clearly beneficial attributes of a science rooted in empirical methodology involving experimentation, observation, theory and review.

Let us take a look at two co-existent methodologies and worldviews which prevail in the work. The world may be understood as a collection of objects (by applying the senses and logic to the enquiry). Each object may be assessed, weighed and measured. In this manner the symptoms of diseases and the healing properties of their corresponding remedies are categorised and catalogued. The world may also be encountered as a communion of subjects. These subjects are interrelated and informed of each other's existence and of their participation in the whole by allowing feeling and intuition to enter into the experience. This gives birth to an appreciation of the world as sacred and is best expressed by art – it is sung into being, danced, sculpted and painted. The impulse to practice the art of healing also ensues from this perception of the world. It is to the first world view that reductionism owes allegiance and by the second that imagination is inspired.

The sacred view maintains that we regard all expressions of creation (whether mineral, viral, bacterial, fungal, plant, animal, human, no matter what race or creed) as intrinsically equal in value. We are all connected as well as dependant upon each other. No one is better or worse than another one. No creature or plant or stone or water or air or fire is higher or lower than its counterpart. No things can be owned or possessed (except in the most temporary manner), nor can humans lay claim upon them, for they belong only to themselves and are related to others only through love – a love which is given unconditionally, just as parent to child, mineral to plant, plant to animal, prey to predator. Our DNA has been passed over eons, evolving through successive life forms. We are the sum of all that has been and is now and is yet to be for the seeds of the future are in the present. This is a description of a living experience of the natural world of which we are participant and caretaker as well as exploiter and destroyer. This description is given here because as homeopathic practitioners, we are devotees of nature, for it is the natural world which provides for our sustenance and our healing. Nor is reductionism an outmoded concept for us because we view, not the world, but its attributes in this manner: we name the parts, catalogue the symptoms and we use computers to help us in our analysis.

## **HOMEOPATHY – WHAT WE DO**

### **The concept of the Vital Force**

The formulation by Hahnemann given below, would have been familiar to his readers – they would have tacitly agreed with it. However, within the context of a purely materialistic and modern medical point of view, it is often viewed at best as an article of faith and at worst as unadulterated bunk.

“In the healthy condition of man, the spiritual vital force is the dynamis that animates the material body, which rules with unbounded sway and retains all the parts of the organism in admirable, harmonious, vital operation, as regards both sensations and functions, so that our indwelling, reason gifted mind can freely employ this living, healthy instrument for the higher purposes of our existence. The material body, without the vital force, is capable of no sensation, no function, no self preservation; it is dead and now only subject to the power of the external physical world; it decays and is again resolved into its chemical constituents.” – translated from the original German – Hahnemann, the Organon, paragraphs 9 and 10

So, the vital force is the agency of life itself – it is that very quality which can be destroyed by us yet never be created by us. It is the mystery, the miracle, the engine of life which drives us from conception to death and which maintains us in good enough working order for the duration of our days. From the point of view of

homeopaths, it is the vital force which directs all operations of health and all evolution of symptoms of ill health.

### **What is Homeopathy?**

Homeopathy means healing diseases by the application of the law of similars. As we stated before: the 'symptom picture' (i.e. a recognisable and characteristic set of symptoms) of the healing agent (the medicine) has to match the disease 'symptom picture' of the patient. It is by analogical thought processes that homeopathy operates. This is its genius. By way of example, let us see how easy it is to work with analogy and group by similars: a lemon is most similar to a lime, an orange, a grapefruit. And now, by way of contrast, let us note how impossible is to find an opposite: a lemon is most opposite to ....

The symptom picture of the medicine is established by testing it upon healthy volunteers – this procedure was established by Hahnemann and was called a proving. The symptom picture of the disease is established through the detailed receiving of the patient's case. The disease and the medicine which is similar to it, contains not only the actual hell of the illness but also a glimpse of the heaven that will heal.

### **How does healing happen?**

Healing happens quite naturally, because life has the impulse to maintain its integrity, to see-saw into a new balance, to self heal and regenerate. This is an automatic function of our vital force. Any adverse influence upon life will be met with a response designed to counteract that influence, to maintain equilibrium and restore health – turn hell into heaven. These counteractions to adverse influences are expressed as symptoms. These are our best defenses, our best efforts. We are wise to go with them rather than look for interventions. An intervention is any action that prevents the symptoms being expressed, but does not deal with the causes. An analogy for this could be a situation in which a warning light in a car, indicating a sudden increase in engine temperature, was responded to by the driver smashing that indicator!

When a patient is given the similar remedy, an initial intensification of presenting symptoms occurs because the symptoms of the disease are added to by the symptoms of the matching remedy. This is the primary action. Subsequently, an equal and opposite reaction to that stimulus is initiated by the vital force – that which was up may go down, as with a see-saw. This is the secondary action and preludes a move into the opposite state of advancing cure. This new dynamically balanced state offers greater potential for change than was previously possible because it is a healthier, less stuck and less complicated, state than before.

Let us look at this dynamic from another point of view. The vision we have from Hahnemann, is that disease is an entity, a demon, if you will, that takes us over and then we and the demon live in the body together and we develop our lives together. What we do in homeopathy is, we attempt to distinguish the demon from the personality. We describe the demon by virtue of the symptoms that are produced as a conjunction of the influences of both the personality – the indwelling soul of the being plus the demon. Naturally, we attempt to cure the disease – to rid us of the unwanted influence. The way we do this is to find something in nature that has lived the life of the demon as perfectly as only nature can have it happen. Over millions of years of selective development, that thing in nature (which will become the selected remedy for the disease) has survived in its niche, becoming perfectly adapted to it. During this process of adapting and perfecting itself, it has, so to speak, become attuned to nature in a manner which is analogous to the attunement of a disease within the organism. By identifying that thing in nature with that thing in disease we enable the organism to separate from it and to expel it.

Homeopathy is a holistic method of cure, which takes into account not just the physical, but also the mental and emotional symptoms. Homeopaths seek to understand diseases 'holistically'. If we lose our ability to rebalance and stay healthy, then our whole being responds by evolving symptoms. When the 'symptom picture' of the healing agent matches our diseased 'symptom picture', it enormously stimulates our capacity for re-balancing, helping us to do the work of 'venting' the symptoms and returning to health. This is the true life-preserving function of symptoms, that when unhindered, they are the means whereby disease is eliminated. This principle is understood in the field of everyday psychology. We know that grief (inner disturbance) is eased by tears (outward expression – symptoms), that sadness when vented does not play out as chronic brooding over the past or develop into say, anorexia, insidious weakness or MS; that anger when it is expressed does not fester and turn to hatred or develop into, say heart disease or cancer.

Acute diseases are most readily treated by homeopathic means because the initial intensification of symptoms, due to our dynamic response to the similar healing agent, is rapidly followed by the total elimination of the disease. For instance, recent grief with chest oppression, spasmodic sighing, hiccuping and acute stomach pain is cured after potentised Ignatia is given because the symptom pictures match. Then, after a brief intensification of presenting symptoms, flowing tears and sobbing ensue, giving way to returning calm and acceptance.

Chronic diseases are also amenable to homeopathic cures, indeed most of our cases are of this kind, but they take longer to resolve. The principle of cure in chronic illness is the same. We self-heal. It is only when this inclination for self-healing becomes perverted that we get stranded in a diseased state. This usually happens because of inherited disease predisposition's, past traumas, past and present toxic overload or psychological and environmental stress, poor nutrition due to non-organic farming relying upon the use of agricultural chemicals and pesticides.

The disease, also being a manifestation of life, albeit a distorted one, behaves as if it were a separate entity that also wishes to express itself. It does so by the development of chronic symptoms. These symptoms are a compound of the disease and our unique individuality – they are the outward expression of our internal state. Just as in the case of the treatment of acute disease, they indicate what needs to be cured. We can read this information as we may read a book. In order to bring about a resolution of chronic disease, we require a return to natural living and eating as well as the thrust that the 'intelligence' of the healing agent confers. Then, as in the acute situation described above, the disease is eliminated from the inside towards the outside via established 'venting' routes. It does this in a reverse time frame (last symptoms to appear are first to disappear, first symptoms to appear are last to disappear) and from the most important organs for survival to the least important. This means that as health is reestablished, deep distress is supplanted by temporary superficial disturbances. To put this another way, we would expect to see transient acute manifestations in place of chronic degeneration. For instance, these disturbances could range from tears to temper tantrums, from skin eruptions to diarrhea.

#### **How do we recognise healing agents?**

Substances are selected from either past experience of a medicine's healing powers or intuition as to their potential healing properties. The details are then worked out experimentally. Homeopaths call this proving. This is how it works. A group of stable volunteers comprising of both sexes are given a potentised dose of the substance under enquiry. They usually do not know what that substance is. Over a period of time (usually about two months) and while under supervision, they keep a detailed daily log of their altered state. They examine not only new and/or changed physical symptoms, they also scrutinize their mental and psychological state. This information is gathered from all the volunteers and collated. During this process it is established which

symptoms are most frequently experienced, which moderately and which least. This organisation of symptoms constitutes the 'picture' of the healing agent. It is verified and enlarged upon, given its therapeutic range, by clinical trial. As we have written, in homeopathy the remedy and the disease are similar. The remedy assists what the disease symptoms were unsuccessfully trying to do.

Because homeopathy is now more than two hundred years old, we work with many medicines that are well tested in clinical settings. Thus their healing characteristics and depth of action are well established.

#### **What does potentised mean?**

First let us examine how healing proceeds. Healing agent's work by harnessing the life preserving power within us. This power is invisible, indeed it is immaterial. We know of its existence by the result of its actions. We certainly know when it is absent, for then death ensues. Without its influence only the material constituents of the body remain, unanimated and lifeless. In order that healing should commence a subtle, immaterial, life-empowering force needs to be applied and recognised by the life preserving power within us. Healing agents are said to be potentised when they have been prepared in a particular manner so as to increase their healing properties.

#### **What are homeopathic healing agents – remedies, as they are termed – and how are they prepared?**

Healing agents, remedies as they are called, are derived from the natural world. Most typically they are of mineral, plant, animal or human origin. Examples of these are: salt (sodium chloride), club moss (*lycopodium clavatum*), venom of surukuku snake (*lachesis muta*), cancerous tissue (*carcinosis*). They can also be derived from energy sources, for instance electro-magnetic sources, such as x-rays. When soluble these substances are dissolved in water and alcohol, while if they are insoluble, they are ground in a mortar and pestle. If electro-magnetic, then the rays are concentrated and permitted to pass through water where their influence is 'recorded' by the water. A process of serial (successive) dilution and agitation is then applied. By these means the material is reduced, within the bulk of the dilutant, while at the same time, the medicinal potency is increased. This achieves maximum effect for minimum stimulus. This process is also called dynamisation. This refers to the dynamic (as opposed to static) nature of the potentised (now potent) dose. It is the subtle, dynamised state of remedies which have resonance to the dynamic life-preserving function of the living organism. In other words, homeopathic practice rests upon the similarity of the remedy to disease and resonance of the remedy potency with an organisms life-preserving force.

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