

## INTERVIEW April 2017 Misha Norland

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by Vatsala Sperling



Written by Vatsala Sperling

**Renowned homeopath Misha Norland is interviewed by Vatsala and Ehud Sperling.**

Misha Norland is the founder of The School of Homeopathy, UK , where he now teaches. He was a founding member of The Society of Homeopaths and was head of Homeopathic Research at the first UK homeopathic college. Misha has taught many of the world's leading homeopaths. He has been an international clinical facilitator, lecturer and author, well known for his contributions to journals, conferences and new materia medica.

### **Vatsala Sperling**

As a student of the School of Homeopathy, Devon, UK<sup>1</sup> I had always looked forward to my interactions with Misha Norland, the founder of this school and enjoyed learning about his unique and deep perception of homeopathy. Recently, I happened to be on a vacation with my family in the rain forests of Costa Rica and I learned that Misha Norland would be there too on a visit. An invitation from me soon followed that was readily accepted and one fine day, my family and I welcomed my most respected teacher, Misha Norland, as our honored guest. For the first few moments, it was hard for me to believe that Misha was with us, in flesh and blood, but soon the reality of this situation sunk in and I felt a

profound sense of joy that comes from knowing that for a few precious moments, I am in the company of someone wise.

The rain forests of Costa Rica boast an average of 300 inches of annual rainfall. During Misha's visit, we were treated to a couple of low pressure tropical storms. Rains came down with a blinding fury that required us to respect the downpour and stay indoors in my office till the skies cleared. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise and I felt it would be OK to ask Misha some questions that were on my mind. My husband, Ehud Sperling, a life-long supporter, user of homeopathy and publisher<sup>2</sup> of many books on the subject including Rajan Sankaran's 'Homeopathy For Today's World' showed much interest in hearing Misha speak and quickly, the three of us found ourselves engaged in a deep conversation that flowed with ease, just like the countless rivulets created outside by the relentless rainstorm.

**VS:** Misha, you have been associated with homeopathy ever since your late 20s. With over forty years of study and practice of homeopathy, what is your observation about its current status?

**MN:** Let me cite what is happening outside as an analogy. It is raining heavily and roads are collapsing. The same is true for the current state of homeopathy. It is collapsing. Homeopathy itself is not, for it is as true today as it ever was, but the world's view of it has become obscured, as though a great storm was currently passing overhead. I think this is largely so because of a deepening materialistic vision, and because the mechanism to explain the potentized remedy has not yet been identified. The world of popular science holds on to the Newtonian view which fails to explain homeopathy. It is interesting that Newton in his later years spent much time investigating alchemy and occult science, yet try as he may, was not able to advance beyond calculus (as if that was not enough!). Avant-garde scientists, such as quantum physicists seem to have no problem with the concepts of homeopathy or the mechanism by which a pill may influence the patient but sadly, this is not the view held by most people.

**ES :** That is a dark view. What about the experiments on water memory?

**MN:** Maybe water memory explains some of it. But we know less about water than we know about the surface of the moon. The question, how does the remedy influence the vital force of the patient and how does it direct the vital force – well, memory of water, it seems to me, is insufficient to explain that. Let me amplify with an example. In our proving groups, those who do not take the remedy, but have signed the contract to participate in the proving, even though they may not be present with the other provers, may yet show the influence of the remedy being proved. No water was present during this event.

**ES:** Morphogenic field resonance theory of Rupert Sheldrake – this can explain the phenomenon you describe.

**MN:** Yes, I too think this explanation comes very close, however while describing the phenomenon, it does not offer a mechanism. You know, we love to have a theory of 'how' that should provide us with visibility, as does the picture of an atom with central nucleus and orbiting electrons in ordered shells.

**ES:** Science cannot disprove Sheldrake, though his findings, originally from India, do make scientists uncomfortable.

**MN:** Yes, they certainly do, and he is defiled as pseudo-scientist! I am reminded of Professor Jack Benveniste who found himself at the center of a major controversy in 1988 when he published a paper in the scientific journal Nature describing the action of very high (indeed homeopathically prepared) dilutions of antibody on the de-granulation of human basophils. These findings seemed to support

the concept of potentization in homeopathy. He was debunked in what seemed more like a witch-hunt than the efforts of serious science to discover truth.

*During the editing of this interview I received notification of a related and current research paper. Those of you with a scientific background may be interested to take a look at Steve Olsen's paper <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.homp.2017.01.003>*

**VS:** In the western countries, for most people, homeopathy is a second career. They have done a lot of different things and raised their kids before they step into homeopathy. In this stage of life, many of them are wondering about the spiritual significance of health. What do you have to say to them as a homeopath? In other words, does homeopathy have a spiritual angle that people can explore?

**MN:** Hahnemann was strict about keeping theorizing and spirituality out of homeopathy. However, I do feel spirit and matter belong together, and should never be separated. Einstein's famous and beautifully elegant formula has it. After all, the concept of the vital force is absolutely central to the understanding of homeopathy, and what is that, if not a phenomenon of spirit working within matter?

**ES:** I do see a spiritual component in the patient/practitioner engagement. There is a communication and interaction happening between two individuals about one's suffering and pain. Homeopathy is trying to relieve it by reaching the vital force with remedies, because, in homeopathic understanding, the vital force is blocked or has deviated from its true course. We can understand the homeopath as an initiator, asking the patient to move past the blockage.

**MN:** Yes, just so! Also, homeopathy, when it lessens the disease, allows the person the better to reach their individual higher purpose of existence. This is an aspect of spiritual aspiration working within the physical being. Or, put another way, it is the soul's journey revealing itself. As you say, in homeopathy, an essential component is the relationship between the homeopath and the patient even if that relationship lasts just an hour. It begins, as far as I am concerned, with an initial view of the person in their perfection. Or put another way, we get see the light manifest within us. Some people describe this as love. This exchange of light makes the whole process worthwhile and, by the way, is the reason why we do not burn out. Being touched by light enlightens you, it does not tire you. This exchange of light is transformative because it transcends transitory form. And of course, light being in the session, the blockage begins to reveal itself.

In my view this process initiates the unfolding of the soul-nature of the person. The result of the discrepancy between the soul-nature of the person and the blockage which causes resistance and turbulence, gives rise to and generates symptoms. The presenting symptoms are the suffering that arises from the discord between the soul's purpose and the present, erroneous life that is being led.

**ES:** Beautifully put!

**VS:** You have been teaching the Organon at the school of homeopathy for half your lifetime. On thinking about the Organon and observing life in the present time, do you find that the Organon holds its ground word for word?

**MN:** The Organon holds true in my opinion. I might have different narratives that arise out of my personal experience with which to explain certain things. Yet the Organon is relevant to homeopathy today as it was when Hahnemann wrote it. I think it is like playing Bach. Would you like to rearrange the notes?

**VS:** Modern life is full of stress for most people. Life has become quite complicated. Do people need different remedies just to be able to cope with life in the present times and the complicated lives they live? Do they require different constitutional remedies for different stages of life or will one constitutional remedy see them through most ups and downs?

**MN:** Of course I agree, we live in fast-paced times. People are under increasing pressure. In the past, say in the times of Shakespeare (so well documented by the bard), people had the same issues, but the pace was different, and the stresses were fewer. The term constitutional remedy may itself be a problem. What is a constitutional remedy? It implies that it matches, and is the simillimum for the constitution of a person. Constitution is set at birth, even before birth. Therefore, there are just a few constitutional remedies for the few archetypal pathways of expression. We find in our experience that remedies change in a person's lifetime. So, it would be more accurate to drop the word constitutional remedy. Let us just talk about a matching remedy. It would be much easier. People change. Remedies change.

**ES:** Misha, do you imply that you find the remedy for the person in a given moment in time when they seek your help? It does not matter what you call it. Life is dynamic. Even at the level of DNA and at the epigenetic level, changes happen. People are changing daily even at the biochemical level as they are constantly subjected to an influx of man-made chemicals via food and environment. People live among a sea of radiations. So, people require the remedy most suited for the blockage they happen to be experiencing in a given moment in time?

**MN:** Yes, that's it, as you say, there is a constant flux and adaptation by the individual. The simillimum comes in to help the individual do the job of responding effectively. Each of us is different, and therefore the homeopath actively searches for individualizing features upon which to base the prescription – calling this a constitutional remedy can create confusion. Rather it is a personalized remedy. The basic idea in the treatment of chronic disease is to match the remedy to the person, that is, to that which makes them uniquely who they are.

**VS:** Many consumers come to homeopaths while they are using other modalities like acupuncture, chiropractic, herbal medicine, and so on. Is it necessary to stop everything else and pursue only homeopathy to see if it works for them?

**MN:** This judgment depends on the practitioner. I do not impose an inflexible set of rules, yet obviously I would prefer they just use homeopathy, if for no other reason than that I can learn more clearly about their response to the remedy untainted by other influences. Obviously I would prefer that they do not rely upon agents, drugs, or therapeutic procedures that are aimed at alleviation or suppression of symptoms without consideration of the entire picture, which is a reflection of the symptom creating individual – the patient herself. Some of my colleagues impose a rigorous list of do's and don'ts while they take charge of their patients. They claim that this get's much better results and that Hahnemann was right, that a strict lifestyle is necessary while taking homeopathic remedies. I feel I cannot impose that on my patients. Also, patients suffering from long-term sickness, who have become dependent, need to discover slowly that health can be reestablished, discover they can survive without taking whatever brings them instant relief. Homeopaths, it seems to me, have to be educators, and 'hold' their patients in what they should experience as very safe hands. They also have to advise about diet and exercise. Slowly, carefully they catch their monkey!

Your question however, was about multiple therapies being used. This happens when patients feel desperate, and most commonly in degenerative diseases such as cancer. In the latter case, I have found

that soft therapies can be blended, but not hard-core allopathic treatments. They always have a deleterious effect.

**VS:** What are your thoughts about handling homeopathic remedies and nullifying them?

**MN:** I have found that we do not have to be over careful about handling homeopathic remedies, and they can survive, coffee, X-rays, pharmaceuticals... nothing much harms them. There is nothing in those pills and 'nothing' cannot be damaged. Specifically, there is talk about airport X-ray machines causing mischief, but I have no evidence of it. My remedy kit being regularly exposed, yet still fully effective. I have only one case of confirmed nullification of remedies that came about when they had been stored in a tin alongside camphor ointment. The contents of each bottle reeked of camphor. They lost their effect. I believe that this had come about because, as Hahnemann had pointed out, camphor acts as a universal antidote.

**ES:** How about the instructions 'take the remedy on a clean palette'?

**MN:** I was in Greece not long ago, talking with my peers. They explained that their patients swallow the pills, washed down with water, tea, coffee. They do not take the pills under the tongue and allow them to dissolve slowly as Hahnemann had suggested. And it works for them.

**VS:** What is your advice for students and young practitioners who are trying to make sense of the modern developments in homeopathy?

**MN:** For the first two years of homeopathy schooling, we teach our student's classical homeopathy, Hahnemann and Boenninghausen. But at the same time, the newer developments and research results are allowed to trickle in. While teaching Nat mur, for instance, we will teach all that Kent and Vithoulkas wrote, and we allow Jan scholten's views on Nat mur to inform them too. Thus they learn that Nat mur comprises of anion and cation, and because of the ease of the dissociation, is the most readily soluble of salts. It experiences a yes- no, no-yes 'dance' of opposing tendencies, alternately wanting (the Natrum aspect) and rejecting relationships (the Muriatic aspect). We also lay the foundations for the more speculative interpretations of periodic table and of Sankaran's sensation method.

**VS:** Lovely. Hahnemann laid the foundations of homeopathy and exactly as he described, our vision should be about continuation of our education and understanding of homeopathy, of human nature and of the remedies so that our knowledge never suffers any blockage. It has to grow continuously.

**ES:** The idea of 'like cures like' predates Hahnemann and homeopathic potentisation had been hinted at before Hahnemann. He applied his genius and practical understanding in creating remedies from potentized natural substances and unlocking their healing and curative potentials.

**VS:** Many people who have received impossible cures using homeopathy, use the word 'miracle' to describe their experience of homeopathy. How would you describe the experience of healing and curing? In your forty plus years of being a homeopath, you must have encountered several in your own practice.

**MN:** Miracles – sure, we do witness them. Rajan Sankaran says, 'Every day I go to my practice unsure of homeopathy and I come back home sure that it works.' We agree. We enter our practice unsure, not knowing what the outcome is going to be. People get better, sometimes better to a degree – on one remedy – that is beyond belief. Yes, that is a miracle. But often paths to cure are not a straight line. Yet from severe ill health to robust, glowing good health – this miracle does occur, even if on a crooked path, and when it does, I say to them, 'you did it' in the sense that their vital force has responded to the

remedy and aided them to recover their health. Without the vital force nothing can be gained. I give that acknowledgment to my patients because it empowers them and helps them overcome all manner of difficulties in the future.

**VS:** Exchange of light between the client and practitioner, the dynamics that developed between them, what a lovely way to describe the client-practitioner interaction. Recovery of good health, in my view, is nothing but a spiritual experience and it lets a person become free to pursue his highest calling, whatever that might be.

**MN:** I used to believe, just as my teacher had taught me, "Misha, stay outside the consulting room." Only the analytical, problem solving homeopath walks in – he can be the unprejudiced observer that Hahnemann commands him to be. It seemed like a good idea, it also felt protective of myself. But there was no heart-to-heart connection. The process lost its light. I went dead because I was left outside the consulting room.

It is not so in my practice today. I am definitely present. Patients have an interaction with me and I with them. We partake in a flow of energy in both directions that is unbounded by any preconceived idea. It always changes. It is a bit like dancing with light in the form of a flame, a will-o'-the-wisp.

**VS:** So, it is not just the homeopath's knowledge, his grasp of the subject, the art and the science of homeopathy that he has learned and it is not just the impersonal, clinical observer?

**MN:** Of course, it is that too. We do need to keep the session on track and find out those specific things homeopaths need to know. And as well as that, it is personal. And it is unpredictable. And it is an experience of light. It is the light that enables a view to be had in the darkness. The patient cannot do it alone. We do it together. The practitioner helps hold the hand and a torch aloft, allowing the patient to see into the darkness and then return safely from it. It is a very dynamic exchange. It is a bit like a child holding the parent's hand to feel okay about the next step. This exchange is healing in itself. And then there is the remedy. I love homeopathy because it matches the individual with something that has been out there in nature for eons and when given in a potentized form, brings about the miracle of healing. The simillimum in its potentized form is the energy pattern, evolved by the intelligence of the life-form, animal, plant, compound, element, energy from which it is prepared – all being experiences of survival of the one within the wonderfully interactive systems of the many.

**VS :** While we exchanged our views and Misha answered Ehud's and my questions with a generous spirit, we noticed that above the clouds, the sun had indeed set for the day and a thick curtain of darkness had descended over the lush green vegetation outside. Relishing this deep and meaningful human interaction, we walked back to the house for a relaxed supper where the topic of conversation veered off to many other aspects of life besides homeopathy, and for sharing that, perhaps one day I will write a story, but until then, I say, "Thank you Misha, you have been wonderful, as always."

1.School of Homeopathy, UK [www.homeopathyschool.com](http://www.homeopathyschool.com)

2.Ehud Sperling – Publisher [www.innertraditions.com](http://www.innertraditions.com)