

Basic Principles

Philosophies of the Healing Arts

There seems to have always been, at least in documented history, two distinct philosophies of healing. As far back as the fifth century B.C. Hippocrates (considered to be the father of medicine) recorded his observations to that effect. One method he referred to as healing by the use of 'similars' and the other method as the use of 'contraries'. He certainly favored the use of similars but his philosophies and writings on this method was, for the most part, ignored by the main stream medical profession over the next 1000 years.

From time to time over the centuries there would be a man espousing philosophies similar to that of Hippocrates and similar to homeopathic thought today. Paracelsus, (1493-1541) a flamboyant and free-thinking German doctor whose full name was Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, is considered the father of chemistry. He based his work on the observation and accurate recording of practical experiences, and on experiments with plants, animals and minerals. He postulated the idea of minerals, or the lack thereof, being the cause of goiter and other diseases. He was way ahead of his time in many other areas, also. Some of his writings can only be interpreted as predicting the germ theory of disease. He also appears, from his writings and observations, to have been highly intelligent, arrogant, and more than a bit of a rebel.

The doctors of the time were steeped in the occult and beliefs that disease was caused by spirits. Blood letting and purging were the norm and patients died more often than not! It was sometimes hard to determine whether the patient had died of the disease or as result of the treatment. Science was mostly concerned with alchemy—searching for the elixir of life or trying to transmute one substance into another. German folk medicine in the early 1500's, however, was very much based on a like cures like philosophy in regard to plants.

Paracelsus took this belief one step further and postulated that the substance, even if it were a poison, that caused a disease should be looked to as a possible cure. In his experiments and in his practise he noted that a very small dose could overcome a great disease. He was often openly critical of those who believed that contraries cure.

The medical community of his day accused him of advocating the internal consumption of lethal poisons and caused him much grief. It is interesting that within a few years of his death and, certainly, today the established medical model is nearly always **high-dose** consumption of lethal poisons. His observations in many areas, including the law of similars, was ignored for another 200 plus years.

What are we referring to when we use the terms healing by contraries or healing by similars?

Contraries as Medicines

An example of healing by contraries—antidotes as they are known in today's terminology—would be the giving of a laxative to correct constipation. The underlying problem with this form of healing is three-fold. First, most of the substances prescribed, then and now, are toxic and must be given in un-healthy doses in order to bring about a result. In other words, all drugs have side effects. The second problem lies in stopping the action at the desired level without over-doing it (example: stopping the diarrhea that has ensued because of the medicine taken for constipation). The third difficulty, of course, is the development of dependency by the body on the drug in order to accomplish a normal bodily function.

Similars as Medicines

The law of similars on which homeopathy is based states that when an imbalanced state exists (given a dis-ease name today), we seek, as a cure, a remedy that would create the same symptoms of distress in a healthy body. How can this postulation possibly make sense? Put **very simply**, the remedy given, because of its similarity to the disease, brings that particular symptom pattern to the attention of the energy system (or immune system, if you prefer). The body then focuses on the imbalance and handles it in the most efficient manner possible. The result is often the return of the body to normal functioning, instead of just masking the symptom without any rebalancing or correcting of the underlying causes.

Brief History of the Origins of Homeopathic Thought

Dr. Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), of Germany, is considered to be the father of homeopathic thought and treatment. Hahnemann was a physician and chemist. In 1790, at the age of 35, he was working on a translation into German of a report about the treatment of malaria with china bark. The report claimed that the healing effect of this bark was due to its stomach strengthening power. Dr. Hahnemann became curious and decided to test the medicine on himself. He soon realized that shortly after taking the medicine, every time, he would experience symptoms that were similar to those experienced by people with malaria. He would experience extreme thirst, intolerable anxiety, dizziness, a feeling of numbness over the whole body, and overwhelming weakness. These symptoms would last for only a short period of time and then go away. After several such experiences, he was led to conclude that china bark, when taken by a healthy person, brought about malaria-like symptoms.

Dr. Hahnemann, with his education in medicine, would have been familiar with the writings of Hippocrates on curing with similars. Perhaps this knowledge helped bring him to the conclusion that it was the ***malaria-producing qualities of the china bark that stimulated the defense mechanism of the malaria-suffering patient, thereby setting the process of self-healing in motion.***

From the time of his first discovery, Hahnemann dedicated his energies to the search for new remedies that corresponded to particular diseases and to finding a way to administer them that was gentle, safe and effective. Hahnemann tested substances on himself, his family, friends, students, and colleagues. By his death in 1835, he had scientifically tested nearly one hundred substances. Every reaction and every symptom that these substances activated in healthy people was painstakingly recorded in what he called a materia medica. To this day, nothing of the original protocols have been changed. The materia medicas of today (sometimes called remedy guides) are detailed descriptions of homeopathic remedies, just as they were in Hahnemann's day. These reference books contain his descriptions and follow many of his protocols. All in all, more than 2000 substances, all tested according to the principles Hahnemann established, have been documented and are in use today.

Hahnemann began his search, and research, by testing the medications of his day, most of which were highly toxic. Then he moved on to testing other substances that produced drastic reactions in the subject of his test. Arsenic was one of the early examples. Because the substances were so toxic, the goal was to administer enough of the substance to produce symptoms strong enough to document, without killing the person doing the trial, or proving, as they came to be called. After much trial and error and with, I believe, a bit of inspiration, Hahnemann developed a method of diluting and succussing (rhythmical tapping against a Bible) which not only made the substances less toxic, but also made the healing effect more potent.

Dilution of Remedies

Dilution alone eventually produces a remedy that has no side effects, but neither does it effect a cure. Succussion is a necessary part of the preparation process. This method of dilutions and succussion is still being used around the world today—although without a bible, in most cases. It seems to be equally effective just to shake them (rather than tap them against a surface). Shaking (or tapping) approximately 100 times seems to be about right. (Please see Appendix F.)

The remedies Hahnemann was using to obtain his cures eventually contained no discernible molecules of the original substance, and yet their effects were profound. The same is true of today's remedies. In this day and age, however, we have technologies that can determine the electrical frequency of substances. Theories abound, based on these studies, as to why and how homeopathic remedies work. Perhaps they all have elements of the truth in them.

It is wondrous to me that Samuel Hahnemann made his discoveries without the use of these technologies. He operated very much by the scientific method of experiment, carefully documenting each case and each remedy as he worked. As is often the case with trailblazing discoveries, his work seems to have been a combination of knowledge, intuition, and observation.

In 1828, just seven years before his death, Hahnemann published Chronic Diseases and Their Homeopathic Cure (it ran to five volumes). He discussed the use of higher potency remedies and introduced the concept of miasms, which we will describe briefly later in this section and discuss in more detail in section two of this book.

The fact that homeopathic remedies are effective—even if no molecules of the mother solution are present—is the most difficult principle for the medical profession (and many others) to understand. It is not surprising that homeopathy has often been dismissed with the objection, “There is nothing there; therefore, it cannot possibly work!” The technologies mentioned above, which detect electrical frequencies, prove that something is certainly there. It is interesting to note that skilled kinesiologists (muscle testers) can determine one remedy, and even one potency, from another with great accuracy.

Let's look for a moment at another assumption. People have similarly dismissed the suggestion that plants and people are surrounded by an aura of electrical waves that differ from each other. But, with the invention of Kirlian photography it is now possible to prove to the skeptics that they are wrong about this. (The fact that there are people who can “see” this energy is also of interest.) The most important proof of the effectiveness of homeopathy, however, is in the dramatic results that are obtained. Sometimes the proof is in the dramatic effects the use of the wrong remedy produces.

Studies have shown that when a drop or two of a substance such as an essential oil is added to a bath, the entire volume of water then contains the anti-viral/anti-bacterial properties of the oil. In fact, the effects are heightened. This is much like what happens with homeopathic remedies. Even if the dilution becomes so great that no discernible molecules can be found, the memory of the substance and the frequency of it are still there. Technology today can tell one remedy from another but, at the higher potencies, they often cannot determine what the original substance was.

Basic Principles and Concepts of Homeopathic Treatment

“The highest ideal of therapy is to restore health rapidly, gently, permanently; to remove and destroy the whole disease in the shortest, surest, least harmful way, according to clearly comprehensible principles.” Taken from *The Organon of Medicine*, by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann.

Homeopathic (and herbal) remedies help:

- (1) *Neutralize acute and emergency conditions such as pain, fear, anxiety, burns, bruises, blows and physical traumas, colds, headaches, etc.*
- (2) *Balance elements, temperature, fluids, vital energy, life cycles, sleep cycles, etc.*
- (3) *Vitalize the constitution in general, improving all the organs and systems as to function and efficiency.*
- (4) *Restore health and harmony on mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical levels.*

Like Cures Like— the Law of Similars

This law was explained somewhat previously as we discussed the origins of homeopathy. In review, any substance that can produce symptoms of disease in a healthy person, can aid in the amelioration or cure of those same symptoms in a sick person. The closer a remedy is to the range of symptoms the person is experiencing, the more likely and effective will be the cure. Homeopathic practitioners call this “the totality of symptoms”. The list of symptoms always includes such things as the person’s emotional and mental state, what conditions improve or worsen the symptoms, and how the symptoms are manifesting, to name just a few areas.

Treat the person - not the disease

One of the first principles of homeopathic (or herbal) treatment is that we are ***treating the entire patient, not just the disease***. To do this, we must take into account emotional and mental factors, as well as inherited conditions and predispositions. Each person has his own unique way of reacting to the same illness or disease and the remedies used must reflect that difference. Imagine the whole person as a jigsaw puzzle. Prescribing on one symptom alone is like seeing only a small part of the puzzle. This method does not give enough information to work out what the whole picture is and all that may be needed. If you are able to locate most of the pieces and fit them together, you will be able to make sense of the whole picture and match it to the single most effective remedy.

You should always ask yourself, “How is this person and their symptoms different from others with similar complaints?” Always remember that the pains, and even the diseases, from which the person is suffering often reflect the way in which the person is coping with the stresses of his life in general.

Constitution and Susceptibility

Constitution is defined as “the genetic inheritance modified by our environment,” or “the combination of the state of health and the temperament as it relates to our life-style and environment.” A strong constitution can withstand considerable pressure without falling ill. A weak constitution has an increased susceptibility to disease. This susceptibility can be inherited, created by past and/or current stress (mental, emotional or physical), and by poor nutrition.

Vital Force

Homeopathic people believe there is a balancing mechanism that keeps us in health, provided that the stresses on us are neither too prolonged nor too great. Hahnemann called this balancing mechanism the vital force. Eastern healing philosophies refer to it a chi and various other terms. Familiar expressions such as immune system are a more western way of referring to this vital force. The body continually sends us signals about how it is coping with its environment. Some examples might be shivering when cold, perspiring when overheated, or feeling hungry or thirsty. Homeopathic philosophy, and many other philosophies, believe that disease prevails only when this vital force has been weakened in some way. They believe that pain, itching, anxiety, etc., are signals from the vital force that some action is required.

Symptoms

Symptoms are those things that are going on in our lives that are not (or should not be) considered normal. Symptoms include physical things, such as itching or sneezing. Symptoms also include mental and emotional aspects of our lives as well as the things which make us feel better or worse.

Symptoms, in the mind of homeopathic people, are looked upon as limitations to our freedom to do the things that we want to do when we want to do them. Aches and pains, fever, headache, etc., slow us down, keep us at home, and otherwise limit our lives.

Symptoms are just what the name implies; they are the symptoms of what is really going on in the body physically, mentally, and spiritually. They are never considered to be, or confused with, the actual underlying disturbance to the energy system and body that is the real problem. This underlying energy disturbance is what we need to focus our treatment on repairing or eradicating. Relieving symptoms is wonderful and a marvelous humanitarian gesture, but it is often only the first step and not the cure!

Disease

Disease refers to a combination of symptoms that are occurring together. In traditional homeopathic thought, symptoms are never piled together and given a disease name. A homeopath may speak of diseases as a way of communicating with the rest of the world (those people who think in the western medical model), but he thinks in terms of the *totality of symptoms*. This *totality* always includes physical, mental, emotional, better for, and worse because of, symptoms. A homeopath decides what remedy to suggest to a person based on symptoms in all categories; he does not worry about what disease a person has been labeled as having.

In modern repertories you may find disease names. If you don't take these too literally, they can be helpful in narrowing the field of possible remedy choices. Remember, each disease manifests differently in every person. You must find a remedy that matches both their "disease" and the symptoms that are unique to them.

Acute Disease

Acute disease is self-limiting. This means that usually, given time and a little bit of care, the symptoms will usually clear up on their own. Some acute illnesses, such as pneumonia or meningitis, can become extremely serious very suddenly and need to be watched closely and remedies given. Homeopathic remedies are especially effective in the convalescent stages following the actual illness.

An acute disease has 3 definite stages. They are: 1) The incubation period. In this stage there may be no actual physical symptoms of the disease. 2) The acute phase. Here is where the recognizable symptoms surface and worsen. 3) The convalescent stage. This stage is where the person is supposed to be improving and regaining their strength, but often do not get completely well again. Well-chosen homeopathic remedies will speed up recovery, alleviate pain and ensure that there are no long-term complications.

Chronic Disease

Chronic disease develops slowly over a period of time, often continues indefinitely with little change no matter what is tried, and is often accompanied by a general deterioration in over-all health and vitality. The development of the disease does not take a predictable course, with every person, as to speed or severity of developing symptoms. It is usually not possible to say how long it will last. An acute illness that is followed by complications can develop into a chronic, long-term illness.

Arthritis, heart disease, high blood pressure, and chronic fatigue are examples of chronic illness. These types of illnesses certainly appear to be on the rise today. Perhaps this is due, in part, to the chemical pollution of our environment and food supplies. I believe we must also consider the over-use of orthodox medicines as a major contributing factor in this increase of severe chronic illnesses.

Cure and Palliation

A cure is the complete and permanent removal of both the symptoms and the underlying factors. A cure never relieves a symptom by “chasing” it to another part of the system. A cure should remove the necessity of any further treatments. For example, an underlying disturbance in the immune system may create a lymph drainage problem. This is manifesting in the right foot at the present time. The use of homeopathics, essential oils, etc., may clear the swelling and inflammation in the foot but if the immune system is not strengthened and the lymph fluid cleared, inflammation and swelling will inevitably occur somewhere else in a very short time.

A complete cure should remove the necessity of any further treatments on that issue. A complete cure is always what is being sought for, of course. Anything less is considered palliation. If you have a long standing, chronic, and very debilitating disease and you remove most of the symptoms and dramatically improve your quality of life, you are much better off than before (and, probably, very happy). Nevertheless, by definition, this is palliation rather than cure. Relief of suffering is something to be very grateful for, always. You are now in a better state of health and a better frame of mind to continue searching for the other pieces of the puzzle.

I quite often have people I am working with keep a progress or gratitude journal so that months later when they say to me, “I really haven’t made much progress. I think that I will discontinue treatment,” I can send them back to look at what they have written as they went along and they can remember (and be grateful for) all of the progress that they have made. This almost always gives them enough enthusiasm to get back to work until the problem is completely dealt with.

Suppression

Homeopathic treatment, like any good herbal, energy, etc., treatment, is concerned with the person *as a whole*. All of the symptoms are considered, not just those that involve the one things they are focussing

on at the moment. Treating just one presenting symptom often causes that symptom to go away, only to manifest somewhere else—and even as something else that looks unrelated. This happens because the underlying problem in the energy system has been ignored. Because the actual cause of the problem still exists and needs fixing, the body chooses another symptom somewhere else, usually more serious, in an attempt to get our attention that it still needs assistance with something. This process of only fixing the symptoms is called **suppression** in homeopathic terms.

By the very way that traditional western medicine thinks and functions, it is often suppressive. The medical profession, and people in general, do not usually recognize that the so-called successful treatment of eczema with cortisone often results in the disease being suppressed to a deeper level which will later manifest as asthma, for example. There are medical studies, however, that show a definite link between cortisone treatments and asthma, especially in children.

It is possible to suppress with homeopathic remedies if you treat only one symptom at a time instead of taking the time to make sure that the remedy you give matches the totality of all symptoms. **Incorrect** use of homeopathics chases the symptoms around and around and will never result in a cure. Sometimes, the result isn't even a reasonable amount of palliation.

Always treat the whole person and not just one symptom

Miasms

A miasm is an inherited or acquired predisposition to certain diseases. The *inherited* miasms are the genetic weaknesses within the constitution that have been passed down from generation to generation. A family history of certain disease patterns helps to confirm the presence of a miasm. Just as we inherited our eye or hair color from our ancestors, we can inherit a tendency to temper or particular types of illnesses.

There were three major miasms identified by Hahnemann. These were psora, syphilis, and sycosis. Polio, cancer, and tuberculosis are considered a combination of the original three. Recently published research has developed these six groupings even further. This research makes a fascinating study.

The second section of this book addresses miasms in greater detail.

Miasms can be a complicated topic, but miasms are the best way that I know of to understand and explain the underlying factors relating to our health. No other modality that I know of even attempts an answer to the hardest of these questions. The discussion of miasms in the second section will attempt to help you recognize and eliminate miasms by utilizing high potency remedies.

Deep Impact Issues

Deep impact issues are the traumatic events that have taken place in our lives. These events leave behind discomforts or ailments that are referred to as something from which we have "never been the same since". Often these conditions are referred to in homeopathic literature by the designation NSS (never the same since). Some examples of life events that might create a NSS situation include a serious illness, accident, surgery, or the loss of a loved one through death, estrangement, or divorce. Any traumatic event at all may be the catalyst for a NSS situation. Many chronic illnesses begin in just such a way. Like miasms, deep impact issues are difficult, if not very nearly impossible, to treat effectively with traditional medical practices.

Generational Issues

A generational issue could almost be considered another name for a miasm, although the term is most often used in reference to an emotional state or psychological problem rather than a physical issue. A generational issue is usually quite easy to spot because other family members share the same misperceptions. Working with generational issues, just like any other homeopathic regimen, is based on matching the known symptoms produced by the remedy with the symptoms that the person is displaying at the present time.

Constitutional Remedy

A constitutional remedy is the one remedy whose symptom picture (found in the materia medica/ remedy guide) most closely matches a person on all levels. This remedy matches the person's basic personality type, the way they react to disease, what things make them feel both better or worse when they are ill, their basic body build, inherited tendencies, and emotional and psychological issues.

The constitutional remedy matches who a person was before the occurrence of traumas in their lives. It reflects who they would be if the effects of traumas, miasms, and generational issues could be eliminated.

The constitutional remedy is not the remedy that is needed for every ailment a person is currently suffering from, except in the sense that their constitution has predisposed them to certain types of illnesses. It can appear that you have found the constitutional remedy and it is being effective for most things when what you really have identified is the correct remedy for a miasm, generational, or deep impact issue.

These terms can sometimes be quite confusing. It can be difficult to tell exactly what the symptom you are seeing represent. It doesn't really matter, however, since you are matching the remedy to the presenting symptoms regardless of the classification those symptoms might best fit into.

Miasmatic, chronic disease, deep impact, generational, and constitutional work is usually done using single remedies in the higher potencies. Treating these situations will be covered in more depth in the second section of this book.