

Potency Selection – A Dilemma!

ABSTRACT: *Homoeopaths of all times have remained divided over the question of potency selection. Even several years after Hahnemann's death, the question of potency selection is open-ended. A Homoeopath should be open to use the entire range of potencies available to him, from lowest to the highest, depending upon the demand of the case as done by our Masters and Teachers.*



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Stuart Close states, "Different potencies act differently in different cases and individuals at different times under different conditions. All may be needed. No one potency, high or low, will meet the requirement of all cases at all times." The choice of potency would depend upon each individual case. The certainty in potency selection grows with experience.

Kent states, "When a remedy is correct, it will always work, whatever the potency. How deep and how long the remedy will work, depends on the potency."

The homoeopath should not be satisfied only with selection of the similimum but also the right potency. He must see that the (potential) action of the remedy must meet the requisite susceptibility. If the potency is not matched properly, one is likely to get a partial response. When the patient exhibits maximum susceptibility to the similimum, it will evoke the response of cure.

The issue of potency selection is not simple. It re-

quires the consideration of various components that make up the totality. Science demands logical interpretation of the components and an accurate application of these components in clinical practice. The potency of a drug has to be selected on the basis of various components and not on a single factor. Though there are no fixed laws for the selection of the potency but certain guidelines have been laid down. In spite of differences in the guidelines for potency selection, most Homoeopaths have some agreement on the factors which influence the selection of potency.

FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN POTENCY SELECTION ARE:

1) **DISEASE POTENTIAL:** The consideration of disease-potential in homoeopathy involves various factors: Value of symptoms (Characteristic or pathological general symptoms involved),

a) Nature and seat of disease (Acute or chronic; superficial or deep seated),

b) Pathology involved (Reversible or irreversible changes),



- c) Duration of Pathology and Pace (Pace with which the disease pathology operates, onset and evolution),
- d) Tissue affinity (The affection of organs in the process of disease evolution and consequent understanding of the field of operation of Hering's law of cure.

2) SENSITIVITY AND SUSCEPTIBILITY: Sensitivity and Susceptibility are the two fundamental attributes of living organisms. Hence, without considering these attributes in depth, it is difficult to fathom the problem of potency selection.

Sensitivity denotes the reactivity of an organism. It has to be judged both at the level of mind and body and assessed on the basis of the intensity and availability of expressions at both the level. Susceptibility denotes the capacity of an individual to react when a disease attacks the system. Sensitivity and Susceptibility are denoted as high, moderate and low. High sensitivity shows a high level of reactivity.

3) MIASMATIC INTERPRETATION: Miasms are the morbid constitutions, predisposed to attract the morbid influences and make the system develop certain traits, tendencies, diathesis etc. It is the miasmatic constitution that alters the state of susceptibility and makes it morbid. The concept of miasmatic understanding helps in selection of proper potency.

Eg: The immunological status of a person having a syctic miasmatic expression is better as compared to the tubercular miasm where immunity is low. Hence, the former may be given medium or high potency and the latter low. In the former case, fre-

quent repetitions can be advised, but in the latter one has to repeat doses with great caution.

4) SIMILARITY: DEGREE AND LEVEL: The criteria of potency selection and repetition will differ as per the similarity between a drug and the sick individual. The nature and source of the drug (ie deep acting or superficial acting) too plays an important role.

5) SUPPRESSION: Linkage of the present state of the sick individual with the past gave a new perspective in understanding the disease evolution. Certain drugs are known to alter the sensitivity and susceptibility of the patient. A homoeopathic physician has to carefully observe the way in which the past medical treatment has left its impression on the organism.

6) TYPE OF THE PATIENT: A homoeopathic physician is confronted by a variety of sick individuals. The stages of life (childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age), the nature of occupation (whether the patient is a labourer, a sedentary worker, etc), the level of intellectual (whether he is dull, imbecile, insane, deaf, dumb, crippled etc) or the built of the patient (whether sthenia or asthenia type; obese, lean, thin etc), etc have some role to play in the judgment of susceptibility and consequent potency selection. Generally susceptibility is greatest in children and young vigorous persons and diminishes with age.

The guidelines more or less summarize the clinical approach that one should have for potency selection. Basing on the above discussed criteria's selection or indications of high and low potency are simplified below in a tabular form, for the easy comprehension.

INDICATIONS OF HIGH POTENCY	INDICATIONS OF LOW POTENCY
More characteristic symptoms	Less characteristic symptoms or paucity of symptoms
Higher the similarity	Lower the similarity
High susceptibility	Low susceptibility
High sensitivity	Low vitality
High immunity	Low immunity
Acute diseases	Chronic diseases
Reversible diseases	Irreversible diseases
Functional diseases	Advanced pathological cases

INDICATIONS OF HIGH POTENCY	INDICATIONS OF LOW POTENCY
Mental diseases	Old age diseases
Involvement of cutaneous, mucous tissues or Nervous system	Involvement of Cellular tissue or Muscular system.
Organs of Respiratory and Nervous system	Organs of Locomotive and Circulatory system.
Children and young vigorous persons	Extremely weak, old, or very hypersensitive subjects
Intelligent, sensitive and very sluggish patients	Oversensitive, Idiosyncratic and weak constitution patients
Neurotic patients	Dull, backward, sluggish and unimpressionable patients
Female sex	Male sex
Melancholic, nervous and choleric temperaments	Lymphatic temperaments.
Poor reaction	Oversensitive to drugs
Engaged in mental occupations	Engaged in physical work
	Incurable cases, where only palliation is aimed.
Functional remedies	Nutritive remedies
Psora and sycosis	Tubercular miasm
Acting on Mental level	Acting on Physical level
Nosodes	
Inhabitants of warm climates	In temperate and colder climates.

The problem is that a majority of Homoeopathic practice is with very limited range of potencies. There seems to be some hesitation in using very low potencies like Mother Tinctures and 1x, 2x etc and at the same time most homoeopaths are also not ready to try very high potencies like CM or MM. Due to this reason often a correctly chosen remedy does not give the desired result and instead of changing the potency, the Homoeopath often changes the remedy.

If one is confident about the similimum but the desired action is not aroused, then try changing

the potency to higher or lower, before changing the medicine. While selecting the potency just remember Dr Hahnemann's words, "An ideal cure has to be quick, gentle and permanent. Things will become easier from thereon!"

REFERENCES

- The Potency Dilemma - Tailoring Remedy to Patient by Ajit Kulkarni
- Lectures on Theory and Practice of Hom by Dudgeon R E.
- How to select and administer the indicated remedy by George Royal.
- Principles and art of cure by Roberts.
- The Genius of Homoeopathy. Close
- Patient's guide to Homoeopathy by Farokh J Master
- Bed Side Organon Of Medicine by Farokh J Master



Musharraf calls Bush on 11th Sept:

Musharraf: Mr President, I would like to express my condolences to you. It is a real tragedy. So many people, such great bldgs... I would like to ensure that we had nothing in connection with that..

Bush: What buildings? What people??

Musharraf: Oh, and what time is it in America now?

Bush: It's eight in the morning.

Musharraf: Oops...Will call back in an hour!