

HOMEOTHERAPEUTICS AND HOLISTIC HEALTH*

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First, may I present my growing concepts of the meaning of holistic health and then proceed to examine how well Homeotherapeutics fits into the holistic health model. The term holism was apparently first employed by Jan Christian Smuts, premier of South Africa in the 1920's, when he wrote the book entitled *Holism and Evolution*. The Funk and Wagnall's dictionary reveals the fact that the words health, whole and holy all come from the same Anglo-Saxon root, *Hāl*. When we speak of a person as being hale (hal(e) and hearty, we think of him as being in a state of really sound health.

In my own research into ancient world wide systems of medical practice, I find this holistic concept of health to be prevalent through all the major cultures that I have examined. I see very little remnant of these concepts in current medical practice. The emphasis is on ridding the mind and body of specific illnesses, frequently without relating them to the person seen as a whole in his surroundings.

In Chinese history, one is able to go back the furthest and view something of the theories of health and disease as understood by three early Chinese emperors who lived approximately four to five thousand years ago. It is apparent that they visualized the life of man as inseparably connected to every other form of life, whether animal, plant or even mineral. Health was considered to be due to the balance or imbalance of the living forces that make up the universe. These energies were referred to as Ch'i (or Qi) which was considered to be the very breath of life.

In the human body, the pathways of Ch'i were the meridians of acupuncture, and today they are also being given consideration in Shiatsu, polarity therapy, Kenesiology and reflexology. The role of the physician or acupuncturist is to remove areas of resistance in the body and promote the flow of Ch'i. It was held that when Ch'i condenses, it becomes visible and takes form; when it disperses, the appearance is no longer evident; in other words, in its spirit-like vital form it is the life principle: dynamic, radiant, warm, giving and selfless, while in its more material form it is indrawing, cooling, self-centered and tending toward paralysis.

It is of considerable interest to note the similarity of these concepts to those of relativity and unified field theory as so ably pointed out in the modern writings of such physicists as Fritjof Capra: "In quantum field theory, the field of the Ch'i is not only the underlying essence of all material objects, it also carries their mutual interactions in the form of waves." "Modern theoretical physics removes one's gaze from the visible

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particles and instead becomes involved with the underlying field. It has described the presence of matter as a disturbance of the perfect state of the field at that place."

Similar concepts held by modern physicists are by no means infrequent. John Wheeler claims that the "physical universe does not exist independent of the thought of the participator". Sir Arthur Eddington claims that "atoms are formed by interactions between vibrational patterns..." E. Sudarshan tells us that "matter is gravitationally trapped light..."

In Chinese medicine, Ch'i, as it operated in the human being, was felt to have a dual aspect, that is, a positive or Yang nature and negative or Yin nature. Yang was identified with sunshine, warmth, dryness, spring and summer, strength and maleness, whereas Yin was seen as darkness, cold, moisture and femaleness. Health was seen as the balance between these opposites. It was believed that there were five fundamental forces symbolized as wood, fire, water, earth and metal constantly moving in relation to Yang and Yin. Doctors Amber and Babey-Brooke, who have made a profound study of eastern systems of medicine, feel that in the taking of the pulse, the Chinese and the Ayurvedic (Indian) physicians were in truth interpreting the electrical field forces of the body and of the cosmos. They consider that the physician of the East who is truly versed in these areas of medical practice is viewing the total organism and man as seen in a holistic environment, with the inner and outer creating a fluctuating hierarchical relationship of kinetic and potential energies.

In India, we find consideration of this basic Ch'i referred to as PRANA. Once again, reference is made to five elemental aspects of this force: Akasha (ether), Vayu (air), Pit (fire), Kaf (water) and Prithvi (earth). Again, the duty of the physician is to bring these elements into balance. Dr. B. Bhattacharyya, a modern physician trained in homeopathic medicine and the ancient ayurvedic concepts of medicine, has examined the interrelationship of the two and analyzed the three cosmic elements of air, fire and water in relationship to their symbolic presence in various diseases, foods and homeopathic remedies. He feels that the space occupied by human life is in reality an electro-dynamic field. Researchers Burr and Northrop of Yale University have considered this field the "electric architect". Accordingly, a "fire" disease would be aggravated by a "fire" food or remedy and must be handled with an element that would be soothing as water. Appropriate foods would thus include cabbage, lettuce, avocados and rice, all of which have a relationship to an abundance of water. These elements were also seen in relationship to particular organs.

Turning now for a moment to the Shaman healer of central Africa, Victor Turner tells us that the task of the Shaman is to restore harmony in his patient and his environment. Thus, a person is not felt to be well until he appears well and all the tensions and aggressions in the tribe's group relationships have been brought to light and exposed to manipulation in a ceremony, usually in the form of a ceremonial dance.

Looking back 2,500 years to the origins of Western concepts of healing, Sir William Osler admonishes us to examine the Greek school of Asclepius, the writings of Hippocrates in particular, and the dialogues of Plato. A current theory of health at this time was that it was due to the harmony of the elements within the body. Disease was the result of discord. Once again, we find the elements: fire, air, water and earth. Coldness

and warmth, dryness and moisture were also considered in relation to these elements. The four elements as seen in the body were referred to as four "humors": blood, phlegm, light bile and dark bile. When one element predominated in a person, he was correspondingly considered to be sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric or melancholic, or a combination of these. Today, these same types are recognized by the modern morphologists in this country, notably Sheldon, and are referred to as ectomorphs, mesomorphs or endomorphs.

With Hippocrates, we recognize the beginnings of a rational system of medical practice in which disease was seen as a natural phenomenon due to disordered body processes. He felt that the duty of the physician was to aid the patient by helping him remove the disturbing influences and thus allow the body to heal itself.

A contemporary of Hippocrates, Plato gave considerable thought to the subject of health and its ramifications in his *Symposium*, and *Dialogues of Timaeus and Charmides*. In the latter, when the young athletic Charmides enters the forum, holding his head apparently suffering from a headache, Socrates comments:

"You ought not to attempt to cure the eyes without the head, or the head without the body, so neither ought you to attempt to cure the body without the soul; and this is the reason why the cure of so many diseases is unknown to the physicians of Hellas, because they are ignorant of the whole, which ought to be studied also; for the part can never be well unless the whole is well."

He then went on to explain that good and evil originate in the soul and overflow, so to speak, from the head into the eyes—so you must begin with the soul. Finally, he pointed out that "this is the great error of our day in the treatment of the human body, that physicians separate the soul from the body."

Returning now to North America, we find vestiges of the Hippocratic humoral theories still being practiced by many Puerto Ricans with emphasis on the hot (*caliente*) and cold (*frio*) elements, but including an intermediate cool (*fresco*) position. Illnesses classified as cold are treated with hot medication and foods, while hot illnesses are treated with cool substances. The actual thermal state of foods and herbal remedies is not relevant to the classification. For example cold beer, because of its alcohol content, is considered hot.

Looking further into the ancient medicine of North America, let us briefly examine some of the concepts employed by the Indian medicine man. With this in mind, I refer to notes recorded by Doug Boyd during the year he spent with Rolling Thunder in and about his remote Nevada home:

"The earth is a living organism, the body of a higher individual who has a will and wants to be well. . . ."

"Every day in every action, in all his interrelations with the sun, the earth, clouds, mosquitos, plants, animals and people, he practices the understanding that there is a right time and place for everything. He does not gather herbs after sundown and he only gathers what he needs . . . he never kills for sport. . . there are no dangerous plants nor animals. For him there is no fear . . . the wind, the rain, the mosquitos and the snakes are all within him. His consciousness extends to include them all within its very being. . . ."

From our discussions thus far, it is quite evident that there is really nothing new about the concept of healing the whole person. However, medicine as we see it practiced today

has strayed far away from the basic concepts indigenous to the historic cultures of all the continents. Because of the tendency of modern medicine to learn more about the disease process, the person has frequently been fragmented and studied merely in relation to some isolated portion of his body, which is seen as a separately functioning unit. Holistic science challenges physicians primarily to turn their attention back to the patient seen as a whole in his full physical, mental and spiritual stature, and secondly, to see him in relation to his environment; that is to say, with regard to the air he breathes, the water he drinks, the food he eats and the thoughts he thinks. The latter include his belief in himself, his relationships to those about him and his ability to feel his oneness with the Creator.

Modern Science In Relation To Homeotherapeutics

How truly does Homeotherapeutics follow these natural systems of healing that have been under discussion? As we have already observed, the earliest references to a methodology of healing date back about four to five thousand years, at which time we have seen that man could only be considered an integral part of the world in the context of his surroundings. It is interesting that this seems to be the direction in which modern science is moving, especially the field of physics with the advent of Einstein's Unified Field Theory.

Physicist J. Benjamen Beal relates that "energy field patterns are an integral part of all forms of organic life, and determine the beating of the heart and the activity of the brain". Kuo P'o, an ancient Taoist philosopher, saw health as the harmonizing of the local currents of cosmic breath (Ch'i). (Amber). Samuel Hahnemann, the father of homeopathic medicine, describes the healthy condition of man in the following words:

"In the healthy condition of man the spirit-like 'vital force', the dynamis that animates the material body, rules unbounded sway and retains all the parts of the organism in admirable, harmonious operation as regards both sensation and functions. . ."

"No organ, no tissue, no cell, no molecule is independent of the activities of the others, but the life of each one of these elements is merged into the life of the whole."

Having briefly discussed the dynamic or energizing aspect of healing, let us turn next to the principle of polarity which girds the physical universe. The Yang and Yin of ancient China is possibly the earliest reference to the all-important principle of polarity. In modern physics, we recognize the positive and negative aspects of the flow of electricity; in chemistry, the positively charged cation and the negative anion. In biology, we find the polarities of sex. In homeopathic medicine, one considers the significance of polarity in relation to the left or right sides of the body, as the treatment may vary.

If we look at the metabolism of the human body, again we find this polarity in the circadian rhythms: the diurnal phase, with its maximal catabolic activity which might be seen as a Yang function, and the nocturnal anabolic phase as Yin. Similar patterns of change are to be observed in all aspects of evolution, whether of solar systems, planets, minerals, plants, animals or man. If we look at this planet earth, we see the operation of

these rhythms in the nucleus of the atom—if we are ready to accept the theory of the transmutation of elements as suggested by Louis Kervan. If his ideas are too radical, we can readily admit that this takes place on a smaller scale during the life cycles of the radioactive elements, for example, in the breakdown of radium to lead.

Looking at the world at large, where these minerals find their home, we observe the seasons: the warm and the cold predominating in certain areas, the wet and the dry in others. There are, also, the movements of the tides which, according to the physiologist D. Chowdbury, have a direct relation to the maximum and minimum exchange of fluids between the intra and extracellular compartments of the body.

In the plant kingdom, too, one finds circadian rhythms. The father of biological classification, Carolus Linnaeus, noted the various circadian rhythms of different flowers, for example: spotted cat's ear opens its blossoms at 6 a.m., the passion flower at noon, while the evening primrose opens at 6 p.m. If we consider human beings, we know that there are those who are awake and ready to go by five or six in the morning, and those whose eyes are barely open at ten. The various physical and psychological effects of the monthly rhythm on women have frequently been noted.

At this point, one may well ask, why all this prelude to the discussion of homeopathic medicine? My answer is that a true practitioner of Homeotherapeutics must be a keen observer of his patients. The appropriate remedy cannot be ascertained with any regularity by having the patient fill out a form and doing a group of laboratory tests. The history, in very considerable detail, is all-important. There is no substitute for spending time and observing the patient. In my thirty years of purely allopathic medical practice, I could see up to forty patients a day, while in the last six years since I have gone into homeopathic medicine, I can see somewhere between ten and twenty patients, with an average of fifteen.

A brief glance at the life of Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of the homeopathic system of medicine, reveals a physician of note born in Germany in 1755. He was well known as a chemist, linguist and translator of medical works and the author of a comprehensive lexicon for apothecaries, and was made a member of the Academy of Science. The all important observation that changed his medical career was at the time when by chance the Countess of Cinchon, wife of the Spanish Viceroy, was relieved of malaria with an infusion of bark from a local tree which produced symptoms in her identical with those of malaria. Following this incident, Hahnemann embarked upon a methodical search of plants, herbs, minerals and extracts relating to animals for other possible clues to treatments of disease. He noted, among other observations, that Belladonna (deadly nightshade) was a remedy for scarletina, and that Gelsemium (yellow jasmine) could cure flu. He noted also that the greater the dilution of these substances, the more potent they became. Thus he came upon the all important Law of Similars which is basic in homeopathic practice. It states, simply, that "like cures like". The natural substance, undiluted, caused the symptoms of disease, and could be very toxic; the dilutions were curative. Later he observed that if he succeeded each dilution a number of times, it increased the effectiveness of the remedy.

Following this discovery, Hahnemann set up a system of dilutions on the basis of tens. Thus, one part of crude substance in ten parts of diluent (usually sugar or alcohol) would

be referred to as 1x. One part of that similarly diluted was a 2x potency. The commonly employed strengths include the following: 3x, 6x, 12x, 30, 200, M, XM, and CM. It is a general observation that the lower dilutions are of greatest use where the physical aspects predominate in an illness, as in the case of acute tonsillitis or a recent injury. The higher dilutions are more useful where there is a predominance of psychosomatic or mental symptoms and in chronic illnesses. In the higher potencies, that is above 30x, there should not be even one atom of the substance present. There are those not familiar with Homeopathy who would argue that the effects are purely those of a placebo. However, an allopathically trained physician who has later taken up Homeopathy will quickly realize that this cannot be the case, once he has seen the dramatic effect of these remedies. Symptoms that had previously resisted drug therapy, such as small tumors, now begin to be cured and disappear, sweaty feet become dry, chronic herpes zoster may clear up in a relatively short space of time, body odors disappear, hot flashes are easily controlled without estrogens, allergies can be handled without a prolonged desensitization program, severe stress incontinence or cases of troublesome menopausal bleeding with or without fibroid tumors are cured without hormones or surgery.

It would seem that this "vital force", described by Hahnemann, Kent and the other early homeopathic physicians, still largely defies detection by modern instrumentation, but the results of its action quickly become evident both to the practitioner of this form of medicine and to his patients as they begin to experience an improved quality of life in a more vibrant state of health. It is evident that each homeopathic remedy possesses some

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free active principle, part of the cosmic network that can act in its own individual way to restore homeostasis in the individual to whom it is administered.

In the laboratory, the chemist William Mosher has taken any solution of a chemical and repeatedly diluted it (shaking each time to maintain the strength of the field characteristics of the solution) and studied the result after a long series of dilutions. Contrary to the expectations of physicists and chemists, delicate laboratory tests with nuclear magnetic resonance spectra (Rudolf Smith and Garth Boericke), tests of resistance to high voltage to thus diluted solutions (James Brucato and Stephenson) and tests of plant response (Anna Wannamaker) all demonstrate the continuation of some characteristics of the original concentrated solution even after the last molecules or atoms of the dissolved chemical had ceased to be present. (JAIH Vol. 65 No. 1.) The four dimensional world of relativistic physicists is the world where force and matter are unified. Here matter can appear as discontinuous particles or as a continuous field.

Since Hahnemann's discovery, hundreds of physicians have tested crude materials by oral ingestion and catalogued the symptoms that followed. These observations have formed the basis of extensive symptom catalogues referred to as repertories. Between one and two thousand substances tested in this way have been carefully described in homeopathic materia medicas. A singularly significant distinction between allopathic drugs and homeopathic remedies, particularly evident in the treatment of chronic illness, is that in the former case, the drugs tend to suppress symptoms and drive the disease process into the depths of the body, while in homeopathic therapy the remedy tends to bring out the suppressed effects of illness in the form of a gradual temporary return of symptoms of the past in reverse order of their occurrence, thereby purifying the body.

Allow me to illustrate. A patient suffering from the effects of poison ivy is treated with a cortisone derivative and the skin lesions clear up. As we know, cortisone is very helpful in the temporary management of allergic states and arthritis. Now if that same patient were to be treated homeopathically, it is very possible that one might use Rhus tox (a homeopathic extract of poison ivy). In this case there would be relief of symptoms but at the same time, the patient, if again exposed, would show less of a reaction as his overall immunity would have been enhanced. Recently I had occasion to treat a patient for arthritis of the fingers that was very troublesome, and the appropriate remedy turned out to be Rhus tox.XM. Within a matter of hours he had a return of severe itching and the characteristic eruption of poison ivy similar to a very severe case that he had in childhood. This lasted for a day or so and then cleared, and along with it his arthritis showed improvement. This temporary return of symptoms of the past that often appear for a short space of time is referred to as a "proving" and is evidence that the correct remedy is being used. It is of interest that this same sequence of events will be observed with the use of fasting, acupuncture or polarity therapy.

Some of the most frequently used remedies from the mineral world include the principal elements found in the human body—in the form of such compounds as Nat. mur. (sodium chloride), Kali car. (potassium carbonate), Sulphur, Phosphorus, Calcarea carbonica (from oyster shells), Mag. mur (magnesium carbonate), Ferrum phos. (iron phosphate) etc. A second, large group of homeopathic remedies are to be found in the plant kingdom. These include such flowering plants as Aconite (monkshood), Arnica

(leopard's bane), Belladonna (deadly nightshade) and Pulsatilla (wind flower). These plants have an internal clock much like the human clock. These various remedies will have similar rhythms to those of the individuals to whom they will be given. That is to say that the time of the blossoming of the flowers will correspond to the time the symptoms occurred just as their need of heat or their response to dryness or humidity will match the patient's needs. For example, in the mineral kingdom, Arsenicum album has 2 a.m. as a time of its particular therapeutic activity. It is extremely useful in the management of the heart patient with nocturnal dyspnea who must get out of bed and sit in a chair for some hours at this time of night. More than once this remedy has relieved my patients and restored their night's sleep.

So too, in homeopathic prescribing, the reaction of the patient to air, fire (hot weather) and water (dampness or bathing and coldness) has real significance. Accordingly, the arthritic patient who finds relief in the warmth of the desert might receive Rhus tox. or Sulphur, whereas the patient who feels better at the seashore with the moist cool sea breezes might do well with Nat. mur. or Causticum. On the other hand, the arthritic that can feel a weather change a day ahead, the human barometer, will likely benefit from Rhododendron (snow rose).

Further illustrations of environmental symptomatology can be illustrated from the animal kingdom. Prominent in the progress of the common cold is the stage of a very runny nose and then nasal obstruction. What could be more symbolic of this series of events than the marine sponge? Thus homeopathic Spongia frequently handles this problem.

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As I already mentioned, not only is the history of the patient a major factor in prescribing, but also the observation of the actions of the patient while eliciting the history. Is restlessness and obvious anxiety prominent? If so, one might consider the all important remedy Aconite which finds a particular role in this area, and in the early phase of many illnesses which are heralded by such a state with little specific symptomatology. Then there is the flushed face, throbbing headache patient who will be helped with Belladonna. Can one feel tears just below the surface or even more in evidence during the history taking? Here three remedies have particular significance: Pulsatilla, Nat. mur. and Sepia. When depression is particularly prominent, many remedies have an important role. One of these is Sepia, (the ink of the cuttlefish), appropriate for the quiet, rather spineless individual, seemingly groping around in a world devoid of light and not having the needed spine to meet the attacking forces. On the other hand, there is the angry, forked tongued, overly aggressive personality who may respond to the remedy Lachesis, derived from the venom of the bushmaster snake.

I hope this brief outline of Homeotherapeutics may arouse interest in a most fascinating and satisfying adventure into a scheme of medical practice which sees the patient in the midst of the world of which he or she is an integral part.

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