

McKenzie's Food for Thought.

HOMOEOPATHY

The infinitesimal

A German physician, Samuel Hahnemann (1755 – 1843) created the basis of the homoeopathic method by carrying out experiments on healthy individuals. He was convinced that one could cure an illness by resorting to a similar illness (the principle of similars). For this he used medicinal substances in infinitesimal doses. Two hundred years later, thanks to these two pharmaceutical specificities, the effectiveness of homoeopathic medicines has been shown but how they work has still not been explained scientifically.

A multidisciplinary physician, passionate about chemistry and pharmacy, and fluent in several languages, Samuel Hahnemann was strongly influenced by Hippocrates' writings. For over ten years he carried out many experiments on healthy subjects, including himself, before publishing, in 1796, his "Essay on a new principle for determining the curative properties of medicinal substances."

The principle of similars, already proposed by Hippocrates, established a link between the therapeutic action of a medicinal substance and its toxicological properties. It consists of giving a patient a medical substance capable of inducing in a healthy person, by intoxication, a collection of symptoms analogous to those he or she presents in his or her illness.

This method is similar to that of vaccination, the result of observations by Jenner in 1796, the year when Hahnemann published his research on the principles of medicinal drugs and developed his therapeutic approach.

Experience shows that, despite very high dilutions of the active substance, the therapeutic effect remains. However the mode of

action of infinitesimal dilutions has not yet been explained scientifically. In the meantime, homoeopathy confirms every day that substances

diluted below known limits for the substance* have biological and physical activities which are detectable, measurable, reproducible and specific to the diluted substance, even though no trace remains. A certain number of hypotheses have been expressed to verify this fact, but the infinitesimal remains a scientific challenge.

*At a certain dilution level, homoeopathic medicines are placed beyond Avogadro's number (6.023×10^{23}), which defines the theoretical limit of molecular presence.

I often allude to the fact that we have always had bacteria but it was not until we humans developed a microscope to look at cells that we understood how bacteria/gangrene etc. occurred. Perhaps we just need to develop better technology to explain some phenomena on this planet. When it works on animals, and often in large numbers, it is obviously more than a placebo effect.

Homoeopathy does not pretend to cure all diseases or to cure everyone. For example: Sinusitis: the physician will choose the remedy corresponding to the symptoms observed, being directly related to the appearance of the nasal discharge. Thus prescribed most often are: Hepar sulphuris calcareum (acute sinusitis with a purulent nasal discharge), Kalium bichromicum (pain in the sinus region and mucopurulent nasal discharge), Hydrastis canadensis (pain in the sinus region and

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nasal obstruction by mucous plugs), Lachesis mutus (intense pain in the sinus region without nasal discharge or pain developing after this discharge has stopped), Silicea (chronic sinusitis with purulent discharge).

Perhaps the most striking examples of homoeopathic medicines working were visible in my work in the slums of Nairobi. I went out there to work with a yogic nun who runs a homoeopathic clinic and teaching school.

African case studies:

Mutinga, 7 skin disease patient: This young boy came to one of the village mobile clinics at Kibwezi. His whole body was encrusted with a painful eruption of unknown origins. HE was shivering with coldness even in the hot tropical sun. He couldn't move very well due to the pain in the skin. The only conventional diagnosis available was the non-specific catch all phrase of "dermatitisA". No doctor had been able to cure him until we came. This case was a good example of how natural medicines and homoeopathy can work, even when the diagnosis is unclear. We took the case in the classical homoeopathic manner and prescribed. One week later he was playing again with his friends. The crusts started to fall off and 6 weeks later the eruptions had all but vanished. His treatment cost 90p!

Leah, 32, HIV patient: Leah first came to the clinic in September 2000. She had been suffering severe joint pains for 4 years. This was always made worse whenever she touched cold water such as stepping in a puddle, washing her clothes or taking a bath. Two weeks after beginning treatment her joint pains had ceased.

Things you should know:

Hair colouring: Tints of Nature is a safe dark hair colouring. It uses natural ingredients including aloe vera, comfrey, orange, grapefruit, and vitamins E and C combined with plant-derived conditioners. It is free of ammonia and resorcinol. It is a permanent hair colour and covers all grey hair. It probably needs doing every six weeks to cover new hair growth.

Genetically engineered crops: Experts has admitted that they can still not guarantee the safety of genetically modified crops, even after 8 months of research. The 25 scientists on the official GM Science Review said the risk to health from eating GM crops was "very low": there had been no proven ill effects on humans or livestock over the past seven years, but there could be unforeseen risks

from some varieties in the future. Dr. Carlo Lefifert, a professor of agriculture at the University of Newcastle, resigned from the panel in disgust saying it had been hijacked by scientists from biotech companies.

Sea Salt: unrefined sea salt has been found to normalise both high and low blood pressure. A Dutch study found that when table salt was replaced with an unrefined salt high in magnesium and potassium, reductions in blood pressure equivalent to that obtained with blood pressure reducing drugs was achieved. A reduction in pulse was also recorded in the group given the mineral salt. The benefits fell off after the study, suggesting that mineral-rich unrefined salt needs to be permanent part of the diet. The facts are as follows: A low salt diet for the treatment of high blood pressure is a national disgrace based on dogma rather than evidence. A salt-restricted diet can raise your blood pressure. Lack of salt can cause accelerated aging and cellular degeneration. Lack of salt can literally cripple your health, cause liver failure, kidney problems and massive adrenal exhaustion. A salt-free diet tires the muscles of your heart and can cause a fatal heart attack.

Flouride: When researchers compared the intelligence levels of children in Chinese villages they found that 'Iqs' went down as levels of fluoride in the environment went up. The average IQ of the least fluoride-exposed children was 25% higher than the average!! Of the most exposed children. Water is the major source of fluoride exposure but there are many hidden, unsuspected sources such as soft drinks and fruit juices reconstituted from juice concentrate.

LEARNING CORNER

NO TIME TO COOK HEALTHY FOOD? Want to loose weight? No more excuses! – Fiona is a master of fast healthy food preparation and is offering a morning of finding out how to do it – can't bear the thought of giving up cakes, use your busy routine as an excuse of unhealthy eating? There are lots of great alternatives – delicious and non fattening! Learn how to avoid spending hours in the kitchen but still have nutritious food. Fiona really understands the pressure of preparing food well – having catered for 30 twice a week whilst training to be a homoeopath she now has three foster boys to manage – and her background doesn't mean she doesn't occasionally resort to baked beans or fish fingers. **January 2004 – contact Fiona for more details.**

For appointments or further information:

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