

A Closer Look:

How Homeopathic Remedies Facilitate Healing

THE LAW OF SIMILARS, OR LIKE CURES LIKE

The word "homeopathy" is a term derived from the Greek meaning "similar suffering". Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, who is considered the Father of Homeopathy, postulated a revolutionary law for the medical community in the late 18th century: the Law of Similars. Later expressed as the doctrine of "like cures like," the Law of Similars states that two similar diseases cannot exist in the human body at the same time.

Hahnemann witnessed this phenomena of two similar diseases being unable to coexist repeatedly in his medical practice (for instance cow pox & measles), which he discussed at length in his exhaustive dissertation, the *Organon*.

Hahnemann later witnessed that certain manifestations of diseases in a human patient would be cured when the patient received a vaccination of a similar disease. Thus the formation of the homeopathic principle, *like cures like*: diseases manifesting certain symptoms in healthy people will cure similar symptoms in the sick. As summarized Hahnemann: "Cure by symptom similarity!" (*Organon*, §50)

This concept was new, but not novel. Hippocrates himself suggested this notion of a Law of Similars (and conversely the Law of Opposites, as used in traditional medicine) in his writings done in the 4th century BC.

The discovery of the Law of Similars was curtailed only by Hahnemann's primary objective, which was the "restoration of health [for patients]... in the shortest, most reliable, and **least harmful way**." (*Organon*, §2) How could one utilize the newly expounded Law if doing so meant subjecting patients to other oftentimes more dangerous diseases? This same issue concerned Hahnemann in his employment of the drugs of the day -- herbs. Even the most effective medicinal herbs can have noxious side-effects.

So commenced another experiment by Hahnemann: what was the minimal dose that would provide healing and yet be completely safe with no side-effects to the patient?

After many years of study, Hahnemann reached the discovery of *potentization*; infinitesimally small doses of **any substance** were found to be of better therapeutic (healing) value yet with no harm to the patient.

PROVINGS

How then, does this infinitesimally small dose become such a powerhouse of healing for certain ailments? Hahnemann claimed the "best opportunity for exercising [the] sense of observation and to perfect it, [was] by proving medicines ourselves." And that is exactly what he did. Once a remedy was potentized, Hahnemann would test the substance himself to find out which symptoms it was capable of producing, and consequently, curing.

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In present day this process, called a "proving", is conducted on healthy volunteers who are unaware of the remedy they are being given. Doses are repeated until symptoms appear reflecting a changed mental, physical and/or emotional state. All details relating to these changes are written down and compared; those with similar "symptoms" are considered signature characteristics of the substance.

Another method of proving comes through the identification of toxic symptoms, i.e. cases of accidental poisoning and the effects as reported by toxicological literature.

THE LAW OF CURE

Homeopathic medicine facilitates healing in a holistic fashion; that is, it seeks to heal the whole person mentally, emotionally and physically rather than just focusing on the physical aspects of disease. Disease pathologies can be unique to a person; the same disease in different people can manifest itself in varying ways.

It logically follows that the healing process varies person to person as well. This is true, yet healing also follows a universal order. Dr. C. Hering, another renowned homeopath, identified this specific healing process and termed it the "Law of Cure" (known also as *Hering's Law*). The Law observes that healing takes place in the following order:

First, from the inside out.

Second, from the top down.

Third, from the most important organs to the least.

Fourth, in reverse order of occurrence.

Thus in homeopathy treatment of an outward manifestation of disease (for example, eczema) will not necessarily be eradicated by a homeopathic remedy *until* inner healing of the disease pathology is complete. Healing on a mental/emotional plane will take place first and *then* the physical will follow. Using this example, a patient may claim a remedy made them feel better "in general" but their eczema is still present. Skin irritations, according to the Law of Cure, will be one of the last symptoms to subside.

As you embark on your homeopathic journey, it's valuable to keep this understanding of the healing process before you. Look first to the broad spectrum of your health when identifying improvements. Mental and emotional issues are just as important as physical. This is the value of true holistic medicine. It's the sound and balanced state of *all three* that define our vitality. And that, as you know, is what we're after.

DOES IT REALLY WORK

If you research homeopathy it's a bit unnerving the hostile and negative results that appear, especially on the internet. The beauty of freedom is that each can share their opinion... the only hitch is that one must have an opinion in the first place. And sometimes a poorly acquired opinion is motivated not by accurate information or personal experience, but by an agenda.

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"There are none so blind as those that will not see." (Matthew Henry)

Here at the Nourishing Herbalist it is our goal to provide quality information to our readers of the three forms of alternative medicine that truly inspire our journey to vitality. And as we've stated before, we highlight herbalism, homeopathy and aromatherapy because they're safe to use, relatively cheap to acquire, and effective for even the novice of practitioners.

Armed with that information, we encourage you to try homeopathy for yourselves. There are none that will argue the safety of homeopathic remedies, so you have the perfect environment for personal experimentation and opinion-forming.

On a scientific level, there recently have been conducted several studies on homeopathy that are definitely worth your time:

- In 2011, the Swiss government produced a comprehensive report on homeopathic medicine entitled **Homeopathy in Healthcare: Effectiveness, Appropriateness, Safety, Costs**. This report concluded that homeopathic treatment is medically effective and should be reimbursed by Switzerland's national health insurance program. Dana Ullman, a well-known homeopathist here in the United States, discusses this report further in his two articles in the *Huffington Post*, found [here](#) and [here](#).
- Six years before the Swiss report was published, the well-respected University of Vienna performed an impressive study on a group of patients with COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) comparing homeopathic treatment with conventional medicine. COPD is the 4th leading cause of death in the United States, so the results from the study are relevant and valuable. The University reported there was substantial improvement in the patients given homeopathic treatment as contrasted by those receiving treatment from conventional methods. If you have time, definitely browse the study, [Influence of Potassium Dichromate on Tracheal Secretions in Critically Ill Patients](#).
- And lastly, what about the popular "drug": [Oscillococcinum](#). Even conventional medical doctors have recommended their patients employ the use of Oscillococcinum to fight the flu. Many may not realize that this is a homeopathic remedy, made from duck liver of all things! It will drastically reduce the duration of the flu when taken within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms. We will talk about this remedy and others invaluable to us during flu season, in the near future. However, there are many studies available online that discuss the benefit of this [award-winning](#) product. Did I mention it was a homeopathic remedy?

Why not give remedies a try for your next acute illness? What is there to lose? And you might discover an effective and inexpensive answer to your health needs!