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HOMEOPATHY

“...Life is a continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations... Living beings maintain a moving equilibrium in harmony with their changing environment by automatically effecting internal changes to counterbalance external ones. The ability to effect such counterbalancing adjustments promptly and adequately constitutes health.”

S. Solis-Cohen –
Pharmacotherapeutics, 1928



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Homeopathy is a medicinal art that was developed in the 18th century by Samuel Hahnemann. It is based on very clear principles that have not changed over the last few centuries. These are:

The law of similars – The law of similars has been used in certain medical systems for 4000 years. Hippocrates wrote about it as well. It is the idea that the substance which can cause symptoms in a healthy person can cure those same symptoms in a sick person. It is often referred to by the phrase ‘like cures like’. The name homeopathy comes from the Greek homoion pathos, similar disease.

The proving of remedies – The symptoms that are associated with any given remedy are determined through a process called a proving (from the German pruefung meaning test or trial). Each substance is systematically given to a group of healthy individuals over a period of time until symptoms are produced in those individuals. All of these symptoms (physical, mental, emotional) are then collated and separated out into categories so that the practitioner can more easily find and match symptoms of the remedy to symptoms of sick person.

The minimum dose – Hahnemann found that by administering medicines according to the law of similars (i.e., mercury for treatment of syphilis) there were often severe aggravations in the patient from the medicine itself. He began to reduce the doses of the medicines and eventually found that, contrary to his expectations, the smaller the dose, the greater the curative action of the remedy. He further strengthened potency by a process called succussion, a vigorous shaking of a diluted preparation.

The single remedy – In what is known as classical homeopathy, only a single remedy is given. The choice of this remedy is based on the knowledge of materia medica (proving) and on the totality of symptoms in any given case. The chosen remedy must match the presenting symptoms.

The totality of symptoms – In homeopathic treatment, it is the totality of the symptoms that is taken into consideration—the whole state of the patient. This includes the mental state, general reactions to weather, cold, pain, light, noise etc., particular symptoms relating to the body and then what are called the strange rare and peculiar symptoms—those symptoms that make this suffering person different from anyone else with similar symptoms.

The law of cure (Hering’s Law) – symptoms appear and disappear in a certain order. On the path of healing, the most recent symptoms go first, followed by longer lasting symptoms. In some instances in homeopathic treatment, old symptoms that had been suppressed in the past will reappear as healing progresses. Symptoms will also move from deeper areas to more superficial ones. For example, as asthma improves, eczema might flare up – this is an example of both the chronology and hierarchy of symptoms. There is a further tendency of symptoms to disappear from the top of the body downwards.

Allopathic and homeopathic systems of thought differ in their assumptions about and approaches towards therapeutic treatment.

Allopathic medicine sees disease as an entity. We are the passive recipients of an attack from this entity – the germ, the cancer, the chronic illness. In the allopathic system, symptoms are viewed not as an expression of the individual person, but an expression of the disease as separate from the person. They are to be got rid of, fought, attacked, killed, cut out, suppressed. There are few underlying principles in allopathic medicine other than this: removal of the symptoms equals cure. It is the disease that is treated, not the individual. In fact, patients will often complain that their doctor says they are well (meaning no symptoms) but they still feel unwell. Symptoms are seen as relevant or irrelevant depending upon what the disease is called. In pneumonia, it is the condition of the lungs that is most important, whereas the general state of the person is of less concern. The more idiosyncratic the symptom, if it does not fall into the group of common symptoms associated with the pathology, the less likely a doctor will pay any attention to it.

Homeopathy, on the other hand, sees symptoms as the expression of the vital force, the reactive power within us. The symptom is seen as an adjustment, a movement towards healing. They are the way in which the individual expresses where healing needs to happen. It is important to know how to read symptoms and to see each person as a unique individual whose particular suffering differs from any other.

“Regardless of how disagreeable or even painful it may be, the symptom is still the visible manifestation of the organism’s reactive power. And since this reactive power always strives for cure, for harmony in the functioning of the organism, and always strives to adjust the balance between the body and its environment, the symptoms are not the sign of a morbidic, but of curative process. They point out...the route taken by the body in coping with some particular stress, hence they are the best guides to treatment.”

– Harris Coulter,
Homeopathic Medicine

AUTHOR

"If we listen with all of who we are and allow a deeper connection with nature, creation, and purpose we could continue the powerful work of integrating ecology, theology, and collective healing as a sacred path to gentle, effective restoration and wholeness for ourselves and for the earth."



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