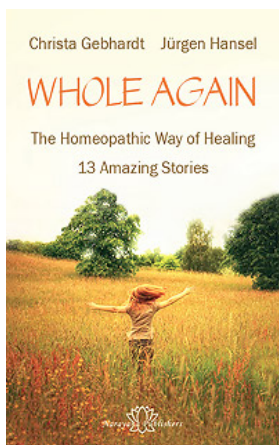




Gebhardt / Hansel Whole Again

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Introduction

*Everything is possible in this universe,
provided enough is irrational.*

Niels Bohr

Everything began more than twenty years ago with a little finger. It happened during my daily rounds as a staff physician in the Hospital for Natural Healing in Munich. A female patient had suffered a severe stroke with subsequent paralysis of half of her body. Six weeks of intensive physical therapy in a renowned rehabilitation clinic had not brought any progress. Homeopathic treatment was her last hope. Back then I couldn't share this hope.

Still relatively new to homeopathy, I found it hard to believe that the small globules of endlessly diluted substances could have any effect on such a severe clinical picture. Nevertheless I had prescribed a homeopathic remedy for her in accordance with the Law of Similars, based on her particular symptoms. Now, one day after the dose of a high potency of the remedy *Nux vomica*, she gave me a contented smile: "Look here, Doctor." She was moving the little finger of her paralyzed hand.

That little finger hasn't let go of me since. My scientific-medical picture of the world was permanently shattered by it. How was it possible that a plant extract diluted past the limit of detection could trigger such a reaction? And, moreover, in a case for which even the modern pharmaceutical industry held no cure. I still can't answer this question today. As yet there is no conclusive

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scientific explanation for the astonishing effects of homeopathy. The reawakening of the little finger and then of the entire paralyzed half of the body, which soon followed, was the beginning of an adventure for me. Through this experience, I learned as a young doctor to marvel at the miracles of homeopathy, and I haven't stopped marvelling to this day. After many years in my own practice and as the organizer of training seminars in homeopathy, I have felt a growing desire to tell people about at least some of these amazing things and thereby perhaps infect others with my enthusiasm.

My wife also shared this enthusiasm. When I met her, she was a dedicated journalist following all of the paths and channels offered by her chosen profession to pursue her great passion: people. What they think, what they say, how they feel and why they do what they do. She soon became interested in homeopathy, for it was clear to her that both of us are seeking something very similar in our very different professions: an understanding of the inner, sometimes hidden stories of people, their unique view of the world, their very own truths and behavior patterns. In the seminars she attended whenever her work schedule allowed, she learned through homeopathic case studies about the different methods and the subtleties of this art of leading a person so close to himself through sensitive questioning that the center of his suffering comes to light and can be translated into a homeopathic remedy prescription. Amazing and sometimes even breathtaking for her was the extent of the transformation that patients can undergo after a particularly successful prescription. She knows that this is not an everyday occurrence in homeopathy and that such cases often take years and some unsuccessful prescriptions before they finally make such satisfactory progress. Nevertheless, she felt that if something like this is at all possible, even if only seldom, then people need to know about it. Definitely! Not just homeopaths.

Thus evolved the idea of putting our experiences together, writing true stories of "strokes of luck" like these and describing the method which can sometimes give luck a helping hand.

It took another few years until our partnership bore fruit in a form which in retrospect seems completely logical - this book, in which two circles touch at one point and connect harmoniously. At the beginning, however, there were challenging experiences which took a lot of courage to deal with. For a doctor of medicine, for whom science has become the measure of all things over the course of years of study, it is not so easy to deal with phenomena that contradict the basic assumptions he has learned. That our readers too might face such challenging experiences is our declared intention. They should be surprised, and it is all right if the world view of some is shaken a bit. Many similar stories have come along since that patient moved her little finger so surprisingly and was finally able to walk out of the hospital on her own, and they have continued to call into question my previous medical concepts.

One of the first patients in my own practice was a particularly challenging case. Six weeks after the young man had received a very high potency, 10 M or C 10,000 of *Sepia*, the ink of the cuttlefish, for a chronic infection of the prostate, he reported astonishing changes in his life: he had broken off his unhappy relationship, looked for a new apartment, quit his job and gone into business for himself. A sensation of congestion and blockage, which he had felt for years, was suddenly gone and he had a completely new outlook on life. He mentioned only in passing that his physical complaints had completely disappeared.

A healing reaction like this was unknown to me from my studies and my previous medical experience. Perhaps something like this happens after years of psychoanalysis. But six weeks after a dose of three tiny globules? That sounds like magic. Or coincidence. After all, it is possible that it all would have happened without the *Sepia* globules. When similar reactions occur in totally different people, however, one notices that it is more than just a coincidence. The patients describe the special effect of homeopathy on their entire being in different words: "As if I had come home," is

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a typical phrase, “I feel totally different,” or “I have never been so calm and balanced.” And from friends and acquaintances, they hear, “You have become a different person.” In the process of sickness and healing, they have left something behind and taken a new step, a step further toward themselves. They have also achieved a degree of freedom that they never knew before or that they had lost. This “quantum leap” to a new level of their being sometimes comes so suddenly and unexpectedly that it is seen as a miracle.

In such experiences, we recognize a dimension of healing that does not exist in conventional medicine. It is that which is truly exceptional about homeopathy, which is not about repairing a defect, eliminating a local malady or fighting a pathogen. It is about the whole, about triggering a reaction of the self-healing forces of the organism on all levels. Only when the prevailing mood of a person, his vitality and his outlook on life change for the better, when he feels more balanced overall, are we satisfied with the effect of a homeopathic remedy. The cure of the physical illness is then virtually a side-effect of the main effect on the vital force of a person. The criteria for such an ideal development – feelings, mood, energy – seem rather vague, however, and extremely subjective. They can hardly be standardized, statistically recorded or even objectified.

If one wants to evaluate the effect of homeopathy with the instruments of scientific research, with statistics and double-blind studies, there is an even greater problem. The method developed by Samuel Hahnemann over 200 years ago still demands today that a remedy be chosen which matches the individual symptoms of the patient in every case. More important than the clinical diagnosis are – according to Hahnemann – “the strange, rare and peculiar signs and symptoms” of a patient, his characteristic subjective suffering, his personal individuality. The treatment thus orients itself more strongly towards the person than towards the disease. And therefore it is entirely possible that ten people with the same disease diagnosis can receive ten different homeopathic remedies. Studies which evaluate the effect of Medication A on Disease B cannot do justice to the homeopathic method.

While scientific-medical research consistently tries to extrapolate from the individual in order to make generally valid, objective statements, homeopathy proceeds in the opposite direction. Here the focus of attention is directed toward the individual as an incomparably unique being. The key to successful homeopathic treatment lies in the personal story of each patient. The case history therefore ranks above statistics in importance in homeopathy; this experiential approach to medicine can best be understood and explained through the portrayal of individual cases. It is not enough here to report on a case of rheumatism or tuberculosis in the style of classical medical reports with the typical symptoms. It is also not enough to record data and facts from the patient's life. In normal medical case histories, the subjective world of the patient with his survival strategies and behavior patterns, with his sensitivity and his special way of reacting to stress and illness is missing. To reach this level of the inner workings of a human being, we must expand the case history into a life story, the portrait of a totally unique person.

That is the basic idea behind this book. We want to make the individual approach of homeopathy and its special way of working apparent through very personal life stories. In the center of every story is the fate of a person, the development of physical and emotional suffering in the context of his biography and the process of transformation which is initiated through his encounter with the homeopathic remedy. Just as we were touched, moved and shattered by the outer and inner lives of each person as we worked on this book, we want to pass our experience on – in a way that reaches the heart as well as the mind, similar to the holistic effect of a well-selected remedy on the spirit and mind. This is why the form and language of the short stories reflect the personality of the main figures and their special way of expressing themselves. How a person speaks, how he or she moves, the overall impression he or she makes on us are important criteria for a homeopathic prescription. The unusual form of this book, the combination of literary narrative and expert commentary, is

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a synthesis of both of our professional backgrounds as a journalist and writer on the one side and as a homeopathic physician on the other.

The biographies that we portray may seem unusual and often dramatic. In medical practice, such circumstances are certainly not the exception. Many people have had similar experiences and many will recognize their own experiences and problems in the narratives.

What is special and what all of the stories have in common is “a real and extraordinary event,” as in a novel. Fate takes a completely unexpected turn, a knot comes untied, psychologically or physically, sometimes decades after an unresolved trauma. A meningioma disappears, burned skin regains sensation, a new outlook on life develops. One cannot simply prescribe such quantum leaps. A person must be ready for them and the time must be right. Even when experienced homeopaths witness this wonderful phenomenon of deep healing again and again, it is not a daily occurrence even for the best of them, but rather the highest ideal of this medicine. It often takes years – in our examples as well – for a remedy to be found that can turn someone’s life around.

Usually the transformation does not take place suddenly and abruptly like a quantum leap. It develops more often in a continuous healing process, which must be followed attentively and consistently. Of course we would be happiest if all of our suffering could be extinguished with a few globules. In acute illnesses this is entirely possible. But for deeply rooted personal problems and the illnesses connected with them, miracles take a bit longer. With adequate homeopathic stimulation, movement is introduced where there is a fixed pattern, a rigid posture. As if the organism has simultaneously received more energy and a new idea and can now deal with its old problems with new vigor. Often the entire system first enters a state of upheaval. Physical symptoms can become worse and sometimes the scarred soul also suffers in this watershed phase. When a new balance on a higher level of health has gradually established itself after such a crisis, it does not mean that one is automatically protected from future illness. Our self-

healing powers in this new state can, however, cope much better with external and internal stresses.

Homeopathic treatment, just like the healing process, follows certain principles. Nevertheless, no case is like another. This inevitably results from the method, which – as previously mentioned – emphasizes the individual characteristics of the disease and the patient. We must therefore warn against transferring symptoms and problems from the case stories in this book directly to a personal situation and taking the same homeopathic remedy because of similarities to a certain story or even because of the same diagnosis. The flood of guidebooks on the homeopathic book market suggests that one can treat oneself with globules very well. This may be the case for certain standard situations or minor illnesses, but not for chronic conditions and severe pathologies. In such cases, even a trained homeopath would not treat himself, because he does not have the necessary distance to view his reaction pattern objectively.

The peculiarity of each individual case history is not only determined by the patient and his disease, but also by the personality of the therapist. The doctor-patient relationship, a central element of every treatment, plays a special role in homeopathy. Without a stable, trusting relationship, a patient is highly unlikely to reveal the deeply personal pains of his inner experience which so often give decisive indications to the optimal remedy. Every homeopath proceeds here somewhat differently and develops his own working method. It was therefore important for us to add the patients of several colleagues from different countries to our own case histories in this collection in order to present a broad spectrum of methods. The homeopathic repertoire has been expanded in the last 20 years to include many more remedies, and also new methods of approach. Two especially renowned protagonists of these developments, Rajan Sankaran from Bombay and Jan Scholten from Utrecht, have contributed case histories from their practices to this book.

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The contact with Dr. Sankaran and his colleagues at the Bombay School of Homeopaths enabled us to speak with several patients in India and to add their stories to our book. We had a special reason for the long journey: homeopathy is more strongly integrated in the health system in India than it is in Europe. Since it was given equal status with other forms of medicine in 1973, it has received unrestricted government support. In this country, more homeopaths practise than in any other country in the world and they also frequently treat severe organic disturbances. The potential of Hahnemann's form of medicine can thus best be studied today in India.

In Bombay as in Holland, Austria and Germany, patients, their parents and their partners have met us with trust and great openness and have told us in detail about their lives, their suffering and their healing process. They have taken a great deal of their time to do so, because they want to express their thanks in this way for their healing and help other people learn more about the amazing possibilities of homeopathy. For many of them it was not easy to recount painful experiences or to read their own story of suffering later as a narrative. From some we have heard that this encounter with the shadows of the past has brought them a bit farther along on their journey to themselves. Their willingness to become involved in this venture deserves great respect and we thank them all sincerely for this. Their contribution is the soul of this book.

The spirit of this book radiates from the therapists who have treated these people so successfully. We were very fortunate to be connected with these colleagues through years of seminar activities together. They also gave us a great deal of trust and time, established contact with their patients for us, gave us insights into their work and examined the results of our work. And they entertained us often and looked after us in foreign surroundings. For this we thank our friends and colleagues Divya Chhabra, Sujit Chatterjee, Jutta Gnaiger-Rathmanner, Rajan Sankaran, Anne Schadde, Jan Scholten, Jayesh Shah, Annette Sneevliet, Rienk Stuut, Franz Swoboda and Ulrich Welte. After consulting with

the patients, we have given the names of the homeopaths in some stories, while in others we have not. To ensure the anonymity of the main people in the stories, their names were changed, as were their places of residence and their professions. In the three cases from my practice, we have also covered our tracks, since here a patient would be especially easy to identify. Should one reader or another still recognize a story, we ask that he preserve the anonymity of the people involved.

We also thank friends and colleagues who helped to make a book out of our texts. We thank the translator Jochen Lehner and his actress wife Gabriele, the author and editor Stephan Schumacher, the editors from *Süddeutsche Zeitung* Cathrin Kahlweit and Stephanie Schwaderer, the homeopathic pediatrician Dr. Andreas Richter, the Sinologist and TCM expert Prof. Stephan Pàlos and our daughter Johanna. They advised us well, encouraged us, read the manuscript critically and gave us valuable suggestions. Thanks are also due to Jennifer Buhl and Sue Elwen for their outstanding English translation, to Gill Zukovskis for doing an excellent job as editor and to the publishers Katrin and Herbert Sigwart, as well as Ulrich Welte, who have paved the way for our book to reach a wider audience with this translated version.

It was our goal to write a book about people and their lives in which one could learn in passing about various aspects of the homeopathic method and its special holistic effect. Readers with a homeopathic background will surely encounter unusual remedies and perhaps new approaches to case analysis. The commentaries should, however, also be understandable for lay readers and reveal to them from one chapter to the next the secrets of homeopathy. We have defined basic terms of this medicine in a glossary at the end of the book and recommend that those who are not familiar with the method read these short explanations in advance.

Munich, October 2008

Christa Gebhardt Jürgen Hansel

9. Savita's Smile

*As soon as you trust yourself, you will know
how to live.*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Ravi was at the end of his rope. The three yards to the toilet right next to his bedroom on the second floor cost him his last ounce of strength. Bracing himself against the wall and on furniture, he pushed himself forwards inch by inch on his numb legs. He needed ten minutes to get there and ten minutes to get back from urinating, before he could fall back on his bed, exhausted. He absolutely refused to use a bedpan, although the doctors had recommended it to him. At least he could still make this decision for himself. A last scrap of human dignity left to him.

Downstairs in the kitchen, Savita heard the toilet flushing. She listened until the sound of feet dragging on the wood floor stopped and then gave him at least fifteen minutes, to be sure he had made it to his bed and recovered a bit. She took the bowl with the vegetable broth, which she had had to prepare for Ravi in the neighbor's kitchen. She was no longer allowed to cook in the house, because he couldn't stand the smell of food. It made him nauseous. And sometimes he vomited. Even though only bile and mucus could be forced out of his empty stomach. He would probably refuse the soup, just like everything else she had served him for many weeks. Nonetheless she didn't want to give up hope.

But she was afraid to go upstairs and see him in his misery. His sunken cheeks, the dark rings around his eyes. He would refuse to eat again. She forced herself to go upstairs to him anyway, then put on her smile and went into the bedroom. He was sleeping. And the smile vanished from her face.

His lower jaw hung down. He breathed heavily. Even when sleeping, he suffered from shortness of breath. She noticed the thick tongue twisted to the side. It hung out of his mouth, inflamed, covered with a thick white coating. A fungus had spread throughout his entire mouth. It had to be torture for him to sip water or tea. For weeks it had grown harder and harder for him to utter words. When he tried anyway, they came painfully and with incredible difficulty from his lips. One understood only fragments of what he babbled. Of course he knew that, and became more and more silent. The words also took away his air. Air that he needed to survive.

Everything was endlessly difficult for him: breathing, eating, excreting.

Savita crept out to the veranda which was attached to the bedroom. A giant banyan tree protected her there, with its thick roof of adventitious roots. From there she could observe Ravi's bed. Her husband had been suffering for six months from this terrible disease, whose name she had never heard before and could never remember. A rare autoimmune disease which could attack all the organs. So far only Ravi's nerves were affected. Only. His arms and legs felt dull and numb, he had such unbearable, splitting headaches, and he saw double. He would die soon, the doctors had told her, if he didn't take the poisonous medications. He would probably never be able to work again - that was their prognosis. And without the poison he had absolutely no chance. Savita would have to spend her last rupee on this costly treatment if she wanted to keep her husband alive. But what kind of a life was this? How long would he lie there like that?

Because his immune system turned against his own body and attacked it, it had to be suppressed with medications normally used in chemotherapy to fight tumors. The doctors in the hospital

had explained this to her. The undesirable side effects – like these terrible headaches, the fungal infection and the insurmountable nausea – had to be accepted. There was no alternative. After he had been treated at the clinic twice as an inpatient, it was hoped that the medications would finally take effect. But his condition did not improve. Her already slender husband had lost almost fifty pounds. He looked pitiful. Savita dug the fingernails of her right hand into the palm of her left. She wasn't allowed to cry. She had to be strong. She had to give Ravi hope with her confidence and her smile. Again and again she reassured him, "Everything will be fine." She didn't tell him what she knew from the doctors about his illness and the prognosis. Everything was up to her. She had to find a way. She had to preserve the illusion of recovery for him, and at the same time pay for the expensive medical treatment and care for his mother, who lived with them, and for Raoul.

In two years their son would finish school. Going on to college, however, was now out of the question for Raoul, for he would be forced to work and support the family. Until then, Savita calculated, their savings could last. After that, there would probably be no choice but to sell Ravi's warehouse. She did not understand enough about the purchase and sale of gemstones to continue running the business alone, although he involved her in all of his business decisions and always asked for her advice. Ravi exported rough stones for jewelry-making to the USA, England and Central Europe. The diamond and gemstone trade held great risks and required a great deal of experience. Ravi had grown into his father's business, which the family had run for generations, but it still presented him again and again with financial worries. Although he had a sure touch for quality goods, fears plagued him constantly. He spent most of his time in the office, checking the quality of the stones, comparing the prices of his competitors, attending to long-standing customers and trying to win new ones. He could brood about business matters 24 hours a day, just as he now slept 24 hours a day.

While his father was alive, she understood his worries. It was not easy to work with the old man. And it was better to keep your mouth shut. Ravi tried incessantly to do everything the way he wanted. Sunil was the absolute ruler of the extended family. In business as well as in private life. He decided. With strictness and discipline. There was only one way to handle things. His. Ravi never argued with him. He was afraid of how his father would react. Ravi was most affected by the indifferent way his father could treat him. A certain amount of tension could not be completely avoided in the business or at home. Then he didn't speak to his son. He simply didn't acknowledge him. Ravi never knew what he was thinking, and he never asked him. Even though it hurt him that his father did not accept him, that he even rejected him, it was never brought out into the open. He couldn't discuss things with his father - Savita knew that. He put up with his father's moods as long as they lasted and then went on as before.

Her husband had had trouble making decisions during his entire life. But then his father had never encouraged him in any way. He didn't have any confidence in his quiet and gentle son. It had been that way since Ravi was a child. His father would like to have seen him roughhousing with other boys, playing wild games and doing sports, like boys were supposed to do. Instead Ravi drew a lot and read English literature. He was shy, reserved and taciturn. As a teenager, he had only one close friend he trusted. This friend had since moved to America and Ravi still missed him now. The second person he had been close to since childhood, his older sister, also no longer lived in Bombay. Savita was now his only support. With a happy smile, he sometimes told her how he had walked with his friend on stilts. As long and as far as possible. As soon as he stood up on the wooden slats he had carved himself, which extended his thin legs by yards like sturdy prostheses, he felt proud and exalted.

Ravi also conducted business in his quiet way. He never expressed his opinion; even if he was in favor of something, he never fought for it. Savita thought of the year when, on the advice of

a business friend, Ravi wanted to deal more in emeralds, as the beautiful, green, velvety gemstones were becoming more and more rare and valuable. But his father didn't think much of the idea of specializing, and refused even to examine Ravi's selection of emeralds more closely. The two of them could not even reach a general agreement on the value of the largest and purest stone in the collection, although there were clear criteria for this. Ravi had given in as always, and he didn't even speak of the matter again when he found out that the business associate had become rich from the emerald trade. Such a reaction was typical for her husband. Not the least bit self-confident. She knew him intimately. And she loved him very much. That was why she stayed out of it. If she were Ravi, she would certainly have laid the numbers out on the table for Sunil.

One single time, Ravi summoned up his courage and argued with his father. Even though he had to pay for it for months by enduring his father's silent but obvious show of contempt, he didn't give in. Finally Sunil gave his son an ultimatum. He gave him a maximum of six months to leave the house and to run the company on his own account. He himself refused to continue working together with his son and no longer attended to the business matters he had previously managed single-handedly. He only took care of the old customers and turned them against his son. Ravi could soon feel their disapproval. He had to become acquainted with bookkeeping, administration and tax matters - areas he had no idea about, since he had been primarily responsible for sales and consulting. His father's brothers gave him tips from time to time. But this didn't really help him to manage the situation. The whole load was now on his shoulders. He could no longer concentrate on his work, although he thought of nothing else. The job made him sick. All of a sudden, he caught every infection and cold that was going around. On Savita's advice, he finally hired a qualified employee for the bookkeeping, which, as expected, caused more trouble with his father. For him it was clear once again that his son was a failure and never made any good decisions.

The ultimatum hung over Ravi like Damocles' sword. At times it seemed as though the entire matter had been forgotten, but still the threat loomed large in his mind. Where should he go? Why couldn't his father understand how impossible it was for him to leave his parents' house at 43 years of age? He was so attached to it. He was the only son. He belonged in this house. Sometimes his father appeared in his room in the middle of the night and icily demanded that he leave, preferably immediately.

A person denied support could end up having a complete breakdown. Ravi had met people who considered suicide when they missed a close relationship with their family. He would never go that far himself. He would do his best as long as it was somehow possible. He told himself that again and again. And he told Savita that too. As much as he tried, though, he couldn't oblige her by viewing the entire matter purely rationally. To have to leave his childhood home with his wife and son would have been a catastrophe for him. It wouldn't have meant just moving out, like any other adult finding an apartment and setting up home. Ravi absolutely could not imagine living and existing anywhere else. If his father threw him out of the house, there was no longer a safe place for him.

The cause of the dispute had to do directly with this house. Sunil swore by *Vastu Shastra*, the Indian form of *Feng Shui*, a 7000-year-old Vedic view of architecture in harmony with nature, the cosmos and energy fields. The four points of the compass play an important role in *Vastu*. Each direction supposedly carries and reinforces a certain potential for creativity, love and marriage, the health and finances of the house occupants. Sunil had various Swamis come into the house and make long lists of changes which were supposed to allow more energies, especially in the form of wealth, to flow into the rooms. The sticking point was Ravi's and Savita's bedroom in the southwestern section of the house. That was where his office should be in the future. But Savita absolutely did not want to give up this room. She loved the veranda and the mighty old banyan tree in front of it. It was her favorite place in

the house. She loved to sit there with her husband. So Ravi said no. For the very first time. A reconciliation never did take place. He began halfheartedly to prepare for a possible move to the house of some distant relatives. Then his father died unexpectedly of a heart attack. Ravi could stay. But his health was affected. Maybe his severe illness had begun back then. In any case, his greatest fear after the death of his father was to become ill and bedridden, completely dependent on the help of others.

Savita! When Ravi awoke, he saw her through his half-opened eyes and thick lashes sitting on his bed. She was looking out of the window, where the evening sun sent its last ruby-colored rays into his bedroom. There was no smile on her face. The very smile that gave him hope of recovering. As long as Savita believed in him, nothing would happen. He remembered exactly how she had looked as a schoolgirl. He already loved her then, though it took him six whole years to propose to her. She was the only person he felt deeply attached to. She was his guardian angel. Besides her, there was no one else he could talk to. If Savita didn't smile anymore, it was over for him.

When she told him what she had decided, he consented immediately. Two young men from the neighborhood helped Savita carry her husband to the clinic of Dr. Jayesh Shah. They brought him into the small examining room and set him on a chair with sturdy armrests, so he wouldn't fall sideways. Ravi struggled to understand the doctor's questions. Between the few words he managed to utter, he had to gasp for air. When he didn't know an answer or was too exhausted, Savita spoke for him. This arduous procedure lasted for over two hours before Dr. Shah finally said, "I think I can help you." His assistant gave Savita a small envelope full of globules and exact instructions as to how she should dispense them. It was also her job to record every change in her husband's condition and report to Dr. Shah. Every day she phoned the doctor, and once a week she took Ravi to the clinic. On these occasions he announced, as always sparing with words, that he felt better. Yet it was his wife who observed in the many small aspects

of daily life what enormous progress her husband was making. With her help, Dr. Shah was able to record an exact protocol of the healing process.

One week after beginning the homeopathic treatment, Ravi feels fresher, gets up in the mornings and even works briefly. After a temporary aggravation, the headaches have subsided. For the first time in months, he has a bit of an appetite. He eats rice with lentils and – Savita can hardly believe it – asks what there will be for dinner tomorrow. He would like pizza, and ice cream for dessert. He talks with visitors, watches television, walks around the house a few times. His mood is better. He takes his medicine himself, bathes alone and needs no help. Dr. Shah reduces by more than half the dosage of the medications which suppress Ravi's immune reaction.

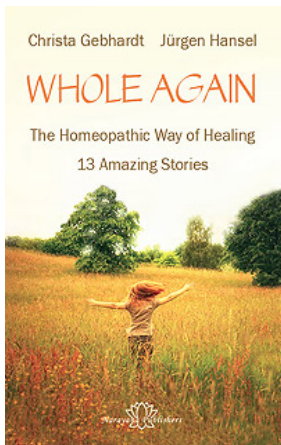
A week later, Ravi takes part in family life again, goes out of the house and even drives the car himself. For the first time in a year. He now eats four small meals a day. He asks Savita to use plenty of condiments in her cooking, for he now likes his meals much spicier than before. He doesn't complain of pains anymore and Dr. Shah dares to stop one of the immune suppressants completely. The neurologist who examines Ravi regularly does not agree at all with this. He feels it is irresponsible to leave off the chemical medications and warns of the danger of brain or kidney damage. But Ravi relies completely on the intuition of his wife and on her doctor.

Another two weeks later, he feels fit and lively. Savita laughs when she tells Dr. Shah about him, because a few days before, Ravi had told her how he felt before the homeopathic treatment: "Like a wilted, withered vegetable." She tells him how happy she is to see her husband sitting on the veranda in the mornings, eating his breakfast and reading his business mail. He wants to start working more again and is feeling more adventurous. Yesterday they went on an outing for ten hours and he had no discomfort. His neurological test results have improved by 80 to 90 percent. The specialist still thinks it is a mistake to reduce or even stop his med-

ications. He doesn't say a word about the homeopathy. One month later he feels vindicated, for Ravi suffers a relapse. He has severe headaches and sees double; the numbness in his legs has returned. Yet the specific laboratory test for this autoimmune disease shows no new disease activity.

The relapse remains a temporary setback in the healing process. Three months after beginning the homeopathic treatment, Ravi is stable again, and three months after that, he is almost completely healthy, except for a slight feeling of numbness in his right foot. He can work again, has more self-confidence, takes everything much more in his stride. The illness is behind him and he has the feeling that nothing more can happen to him. He reached his normal weight again some time ago. Nevertheless, he has bought himself some new clothes, fashionable and colorful. He doesn't feel like wearing black suits all the time anymore. And lately he has even been listening to loud music. Yes, he has really changed, says Savita; he has become more talkative and open and is not as diplomatic as he used to be. He knows what he wants and doesn't want, and he says so. He is now learning to enjoy life. Even though he still shares all of his thoughts and worries with her, he seems more independent and self-assured.

His new feeling in life is reflected in his dreams. After his death, his father had often appeared to him in his sleep, calming him and reassuring him that he would continue to support him in every way. Then he had laid his hand on the head of the son who bowed before him, and blessed him. Ravi had told Dr. Shah about this at the beginning of the treatment. Now he dreams again of his father. A large snake coils itself around his legs and has a stranglehold on him. Ravi jumps resolutely into action and sets his foot on the head of the snake. It uncoils itself immediately and slithers away. He is completely in control. This secure feeling of fearless determination accompanies him into the day upon awakening. He now knows that he can cope with even the most difficult situations. Now Dr. Shah finally tells him how terrible his illness really was, so dangerous that he could have died from it. And Savita smiles.



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