

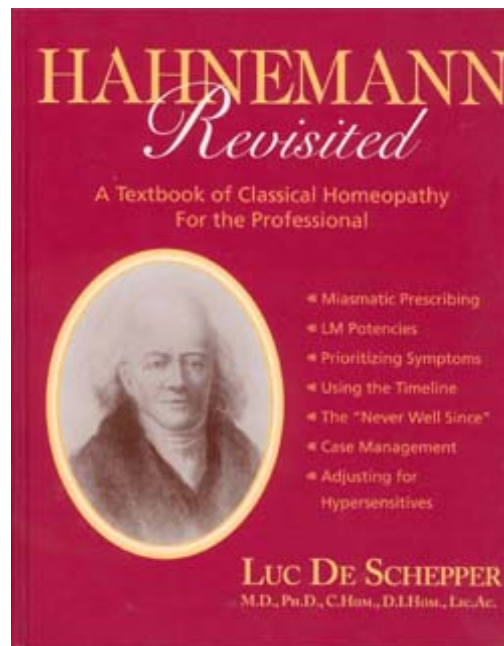
# Luc De Schepper Hahnemann Revisited

Reading excerpt

[Hahnemann Revisited](#)

of [Luc De Schepper](#)

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Narayana Verlag GmbH, Blumenplatz 2, D-79400 Kandern, Germany

Tel. +49 7626 9749 700

Email [info@narayana-verlag.com](mailto:info@narayana-verlag.com)

<http://www.narayana-verlag.com>



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## *Introduction*

When an allopathic physician converts to homeopathy, there is usually an interesting story behind it. Mine begins on my first day in practice—a disaster from beginning to end.

When I graduated from medical school in Belgium 27 years ago, I felt like Dr. Schweitzer and Superman combined: my black bag was filled with pills and injections, my heart full of good intentions, and my enthusiasm was at its zenith. The day I opened my office, I instructed my wife (I could not afford a receptionist) that in case a patient showed up, to tell her or him that the doctor was very busy and let the patient wait a little. It never looks good for the doctor to sit around waiting for a patient. When the doorbell finally rang, hopes were high for the first catch of the day. My wife rushed down the stairs while I tried to hide. Having been well instructed, she said to the man at the door, “My husband will be right with you. He is talking on the phone with a patient.” The man looked puzzled and then replied, “That’s very strange, I am from the phone company and I came to install the phone.”

What an embarrassment! However, my painful journey was not finished yet. My first real patient was a young girl of 15 with a complaint of chronic headaches. Her headaches were triggered by a change of weather, which was unfortunate as the weather in Belgium changes four times a day. She had tried all the existing headache medications from her previous doctors, but she thought this new young gun fresh from medical school would have some new weapons in his arsenal. Of course I had none.

After the telephone and headache debacle, I took an aspirin for my own headache and decided there and then that there must be life beyond allopathic medicine. That was 27 years ago, and I have never stopped studying since then. I discarded all my medical textbooks and replaced them with acupuncture and homeopathy books. Since then I have learned and practiced a number of different holistic modalities, also including natural foods nutrition, vitamins, supplements, and herbs. For the last eight years I have practiced only homeopathy, because it is more powerful, goes deeper, acts more quickly, and benefits the patient more than any other modality. To this day I have not regretted this change. On the contrary, I feel that I have earned far more gratitude and appreciation from my patients and derived far more satisfaction than I ever could have dreamed of if I had remained an allopathic practitioner.

Of all the healing modalities I have studied, I have found homeopathy the most fulfilling. Homeopathy *individualizes* to the patient. The remedies are tailored not only to the patients’ symptoms but also to their personality types and to the reason they became ill. If a patient feels ill even when her lab tests are normal, we take her seriously and listen carefully. As a result, we spend time really getting to know our patients, and the patients often say they feel

better just from being listened to non-judgementally. Homeopathy is interested in the *why* of our patients: why did they fall sick? why do they react to particular life situations in a particular way? why do they experience certain emotions? It involves plumbing the depths of human nature, and the *mental/emotional makeup* of the patient takes high priority in our prescribing. Homeopathy works with the body's own *natural healing energy*, the Vital Force. And it *empowers the patient*: the practitioner listens to the patient for guidance in prescribing and assessing the patient's reaction to the remedy, encouraging the patient to listen to her body. The dynamic between practitioner and patient is more evenly balanced in homeopathy than in most other forms of healing, to the benefit of both.

Homeopathy has unchanging *laws and principles*, which once mastered, will unfailingly guide the prescription and the management of the case. Unfortunately the information has not been easily available, and the homeopathic tradition has largely been lost, at least in the United States. Ideally homeopathy would be learned best in a clinic, as an apprentice to a master who had learned from earlier masters, but this is not possible in this country. In this book I hope to make available to a wider audience the information I have gleaned from an extensive study of old books and journals, many of which are out of print.

In particular I have been fortunate enough to study Hahnemann's casebooks from his last years in Paris.<sup>1</sup> The more I read of Hahnemann's writings, the more I am convinced of his genius. On every page of his casebooks are brilliant observations and cures. I call this book Hahnemann Revisited because I believe he has answers and guidance highly relevant for us today, although sometimes inaccessible because they are couched in his old-fashioned language. I have also been greatly inspired by the master homeopaths of the past, like von Boenninghausen, Hering, Lippe, Kent, Dunham, Grimmer, Tyler, Wright-Hubbard, and Schmidt; their wisdom fills these pages. I have attempted to elucidate their teachings with examples from my own practice as well as theirs.

Certain aspects of this book may seem to depart from the mainstream of modern homeopathy—in particular the emphasis on miasmatic prescribing and LM potencies—but these were an integral part of Hahnemann's great teaching and I believe they deserve to hold a central position in homeopathy today. I like to believe that they are not widely used simply for lack of sufficient training. It would give me great joy and fulfillment if this book could serve to spread the knowledge of these powerful healing tools of homeopathy.

This book is meant for the serious student of homeopathy, for the practicing professional homeopath, and for the health care practitioner interested in learning more about it. For the student, I hope that it fulfills a need for a thorough introduction to homeopathic therapeutics and methodology. I hope that my fellow homeopaths will find something of value in it, and that allopathic practitioners will gain a window on a different way of viewing health and

healing. This book is not intended for laypeople, for whom there are a number of excellent books on family and first aid health care with homeopathy. Many medical terms and abbreviations appear in the text without explanation, since professional homeopaths need a solid knowledge base in anatomy, physiology, and pathology comparable to that of our colleagues in medicine, chiropractic, acupuncture, and the other healing professions.

I would like to share a few words, if I may, with the students who read this book. Healing is a gift, and your presence as a healer can be a gift in itself, if you give your patients your attention, your respect and your love. As Mother Theresa said, "From the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. If your heart is full of love, you will speak of love." And you will help your patient heal even before you give a remedy. Don't be discouraged if you make a mistake. I have made many mistakes along the way, and I have always learned from them. I have been practicing alternative medicine for nearly 30 years and I have never stopped learning. I wish for all those who read this book the same enthusiasm for life-long learning. I have never placed any priority on financial rewards; instead, I have been more than rewarded by the love and gratitude of my patients. I would hope that all my readers would share the same values. Just as in tennis (my favorite game), it is better to serve than to receive.

## *Suppression*

### **Hahnemann's Warning Two Hundred Years Ago**

According to homeopathy's understanding of disease and healing, symptoms are relatively exterior manifestations of an underlying disorder; in fact, they are the expressions of the Vital Force reacting *against* a disease and not the disease itself. When the patient is treated so that some (not all) of the symptoms disappear while the underlying disorder is not addressed, the result is *suppression*, i.e. the *illusion* of cure while actually intensifying the internal disease by blocking some of its natural outlets. Hahnemann followed Nature's Laws when he warned against his colleagues' methods of driving symptoms deeper, in the false belief that a cure has been established. In Aphorism 201 he writes:

When the human life force is burdened with a chronic disease that it cannot overwhelm with its own powers, it obviously decides (in an instinctual way) to form a local malady on a given external part ... not indispensable to life ... to allay the internal malady that threatens to annihilate vital organs and rob the patient of life ... The local malady always remains nothing more than a part of the total disease ... shifted onto a more harmless (outer) location of the body in order to allay the internal suffering.

What a wise observation—the same one made more than 5,000 years ago in Traditional Chinese Medicine, which makes “symptoms going from the interior to the exterior” part of its diagnosis of the Eight Conditions. Naturally, the body in its wisdom tries to alleviate the internal stress on the Vital Force caused by the disease or imbalance by pushing it to the exterior. Hahnemann says that although exteriorizing the symptoms does not cure the disease, at least it subdues it or makes it latent so that the individual can function. The same aphorism states:

In this way, the presence of the external malady reduces the internal disease to silence for the present, however without being able to cure it or to essentially curtail it.

But, he says, at least it can do less harm because it is on the exterior part of the body. Hahnemann continues in Aphorism 202:

If the local symptom is topically annihilated (by a physician ... who is of the opinion that he has thereby cured the whole disease) nature makes up for this by awakening the internal suffering and the rest of the symptoms that already existed and... *heightening the disease.*

The stronger the suppressive treatments, the more the internal symptoms will be aroused. This should be a lesson to the practitioner and patient alike not to mix allopathic and homeopathic prescriptions, mistakenly believing that this will provide “the best of both worlds.” Unfortunately suppression in our era is far worse than in Hahnemann’s time, when lack of hygiene and sanitation were the major factors causing disease. Today suppression is the major cause because it is so widespread and allopathic methods have become so “effective.” Much stronger methods are now used, such as radiation, chemotherapy and powerful broad-spectrum antibiotics. The result is to make the homeopath’s job more difficult. Most patients come to us with a history of lifelong suppression, beginning with antibiotics in infancy; the symptom picture is muddled by the lack of symptoms due to suppression; and the patient has to maintain faith in the homeopath while enduring the return of the suppressed symptoms following Hering’s Law.

### **Natural and Artificial Suppression**

*Natural or Accidental Suppression:* Suppression of the body’s *normal* functions sometimes happens, not from medications but from the influence of an external factor. This can be a mental or emotional trauma such as fright, anger, vexation, sudden emotional shock, disappointment, grief, mental overwork, anticipation anxiety, hearing bad news, embarrassment, or humiliation; or a climate factor such as wet or excessive cold or heat. The *Repertory* is full of these rubrics like “Sleeplessness from grief” (or excitement), “Abdominal pain after vexation,” “Menses suppressed, from grief” (or wet feet), “Perspiration, suppressed by chilling,” and “Milk, suppressed by chilling.”

We must not underestimate the power of suppression after an emotional shock in particular. As Kent used to say: “An emotional shock is equal in its suppressive powers to a thousand cups of coffee.” The homeopath can resolve these conditions by prescribing for the totality, beginning with the Never Well Since. If he only addresses the symptoms, he will palliate at best, and at worst wake up a sleeping miasm. The patient will then need anti-miasmatic remedies for a full cure.



Another form of natural suppression can happen when one disease suppresses another *dissimilar* one, as Hahnemann observes in the *Organon*. An acute disease may suppress another acute one until the first one is cured; or it may suspend a chronic until the acute has run its course. For example, a chronic knee pain may be temporarily overshadowed by an acute, intense toothache.

These forms of natural suppression are fairly common and are amenable to homeopathic treatment, which will restore the suppressed natural function. They are not well treated by allopathic medicine because they do not fit its paradigm. Emotional triggers may be treated with a referral for psychotherapy (which is the next best referral besides homeopathy). But unfortunately, all too often, they are treated with neurotransmitter modulators such as Prozac and Zoloft, which only lead to further emotional suppression (as I have often heard from my patients, who complain of feeling emotionally “dead” or “flat” on these medications). As for suppression from a physical trigger, allopathic medicine does not recognize it or treat it. (The ICD-9 standard diagnostic manual does not list “suppressed menses from wet feet”!)

*Artificial Suppression:* Unfortunately, most doctors and patients alike look to removal of the symptoms as the goal of treatment. Recently I saw a TV ad for a herpes medication that actually boasted, “It is all about suppression!” But the most visible symptoms, the ones for which patients first request treatment, are also the Vital Force’s attempts to keep the disease force on the least important external parts of the body, usually the skin. Look at the relatively innocuous initial manifestations of herpes zoster or shingles, syphilis and gonorrhea (before suppression leads to their more destructive secondary and tertiary stages).

Fifty years ago children’s runny noses were treated with a quick wipe of the sleeve (efficient, cheap, and a horror for the Arsenicum mother!). Nowadays we push nasal sprays on our children and we suppress an innocuous outlet, resulting in many children suffering from asthma because their nose and cough symptoms were suppressed. Aggressive allopathic treatment tends to move the disease inward to the more important vital organs such as the lungs in this case, or the brain, heart, liver, or pelvic organs. Under homeopathic treatment correctly addressing the underlying miasm, the original suppressed manifestation should undoubtedly reappear. A homeopath with no understanding of miasms could unknowingly keep treating the surface symptoms and palliating the disease with superficial remedies rather than curing. Patients who were originally curable can thus become incurable through successive palliative treatments, whether homeopathic or allopathic. Indeed, unfortunately, the inexperienced homeopath can contribute to the phenomenon of artificial suppression by prescribing non-miasmatic remedies. If the real cause is not addressed, the disease keeps on getting worse, in spite of a few superficial symptoms being cured. This is a type of suppression since the centripetal evolution of the disease is not halted.

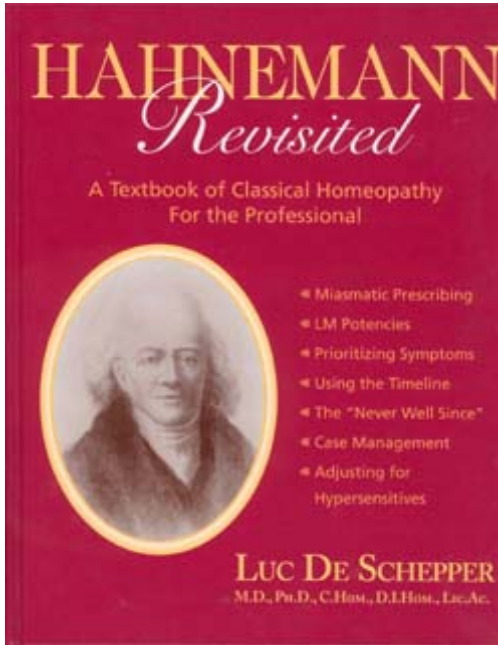
### Some Specific Methods of Suppression

*Medications of Contrary Action:* We know that *all* allopathic drugs, in whatever form, assault the Vital Force, disharmonize it and add a drug picture to the disease picture (because of their primary and secondary action, as explained in Chapter Three, Laws and Principles). Different results are possible from giving an allopathic drug. If the symptoms caused by the drug (i.e. the side effects) are stronger than the natural symptoms of the disease, the symptoms of the patient will disappear (which illustrates the principle of one dissimilar disease suppressing the other). The suppression is then considered “successful” and the physician will claim to have *controlled* the disease (she never will claim to *cure* a chronic disease, as a cure is impossible without following the Law of Similars). However, if the patient’s Vital Force is strong and intact, the symptoms of the patient will *reappear with the same or greater intensity* than before. The allopathic physician will call the patient *resistant to the drug*. The patient does not realize how lucky he is! Unfortunately, the physician will then resort to stronger suppressive measures.

The unfortunate soul whose Vital Force is weakened will respond to the drug with a worsened disease state which the physician will call *complications* or *side effects*. This case is different from the first scenario, which also had side effects, because in this case the original disease symptoms coexist with the new drug symptoms.

Dermatology and gynecology are responsible for more suppression than other specialties, because of their *local treatments* with creams, lotions, cauterizing and lasering. Rashes, itches, eczema and psoriasis, discharges, vaginitis, candidiasis, foot sweats and warts can all cause problems if suppressed. Western medicine recognizes genital warts in women as a risk factor for PID and infertility or cervical cancer, but it fails to recognize that *removal* of the warts *leads* to these other conditions.

The newest development in dermatology is a zinc spray for psoriasis, the most common skin ailment. I have seen many times in my own practice how skin conditions suppressed with zinc can lead to mental and emotional symptoms such as anxiety and depression. (The proof of this statement is in the cure: following the Laws of Hering, as the anxiety or depression is treated the skin condition returns temporarily, and then all the symptoms are gone for good. One of my patients suppressed his reappearing psoriasis with zinc ointment, with the inevitable result: his depression came back.) And the famous homeopath Compton Burnett, in *The Best of Burnett*, describes many cases of suppression. One was the case of an 8-month-old infant, the grandson of a physician who in spite of Burnett’s protests treated the baby with zinc ointment for eczema of the scalp. Fourteen days later the suppression resulted in convulsions and death of the baby, and the grandfather shed bitter tears, realizing that his treatment had killed his grandson.<sup>1</sup>



Luc De Schepper

[Hahnemann Revisited](#)

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