

Mo Morrish

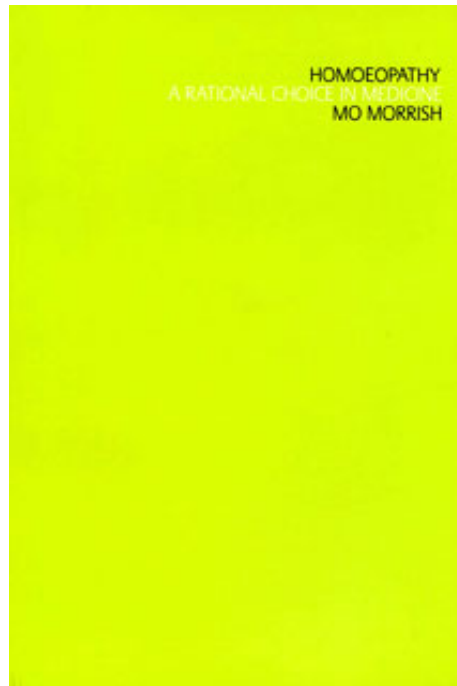
Homeopathy - A Rational Choice in Medicine

Reading excerpt

[Homeopathy - A Rational Choice in Medicine](#)

of [Mo Morrish](#)

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PLACEBO

This is an 'inactive' drug or sham treatment given to placate or 'please' the patient. The patient trusts the practitioner and believes that an active or genuine drug or treatment has been given. Orthodox medical thinking suggests that this belief may induce a psychosomatic benefit within the patient. How this happens is not understood and the placebo effect remains something of a mystery. (Ironically in the Randomised Controlled Trial (see 'Evidence') placebo is supposed to represent the known. It is the 'blank' or baseline against which active drugs and treatments are tested. This is clearly not a safe assumption.)

Any medical practitioner, of any kind, who does not acknowledge the potential power of placebo is a fool. It has been observed for centuries. To suggest that homoeopathic medicine works purely because of the placebo effect is also foolish. A scenario commonly encountered in homoeopathic medical practice makes my point:

A man develops a health problem. Sooner or later he takes his problem to his GP for diagnosis and treatment. Like most people in twenty-first century Western culture he has an inherent belief that this is the best, indeed only, course of action. He has started out with the belief that 'scientific medicine' will cure him. He has no reason to doubt this.

After several diagnoses, several visits to a consultant, and maybe half a dozen prescriptions of variously coloured 'state of the art' drugs (it is well known that coloured capsules induce a greater placebo response than white tablets) he is no better. He begins to feel disillusioned. He

says things like 'I can't believe that in this day and age they can't find out what's wrong and sort me out!' His belief in 'scientific medicine' has been undermined, usually over quite some time because it was a strong belief. In desperation he visits a homoeopath and, after an hour or so of conversation, is given a single plain white tablet. The measure of his faith in the treatment is expressed through his exclamation: 'Is that it?'

Reluctantly, yet still desperate for relief, he decides to 'give it a go'. On his follow-up visit he declares that nothing has changed: 'I am no better'. After yet another conversation the homoeopath agrees that nothing has changed and decides, on the basis of some further information elicited from the patient, to prescribe a different plain white tablet. The patient agrees to give it 'one last shot'.

Two weeks later he calls to say 'I don't know what you gave me this time but my symptoms got a little worse for a few days and have now all gone. I can't believe it!' His improvement is apparently due to the placebo effect. Doesn't make a great deal of sense, does it?

It seems to me that the CP had the best chance to make use of the placebo effect, the consultant the next best chance and the homoeopath the least. And the frequently observed reaction of babies, unconscious people and animals (8) to homoeopathic medicines is unlikely to be due to any placebo effect either.

For over 200 years medical orthodoxy has dismissed the curative effects of homoeopathy as being due to 'mere placebo', 'just placebo', 'only placebo'. Three things are striking here:

- 1 If a patient cures him/herself because of their belief in the practitioner or treatment then there is clearly a profound connection between mind and body, psyche and soma. There are no molecules of 'active ingredient' involved.
- 2 To belittle this connection, this innate ability of a person to heal himself or herself, suggests arrogance.
- 3 To not invest time and money into the investigation of such ability for self-healing suggests negligence.

To dismiss the ability of humans to heal themselves through any means other than pharmaceutical drugs is disrespectful. It is incorrect, a delusion.



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