

Bill Gray

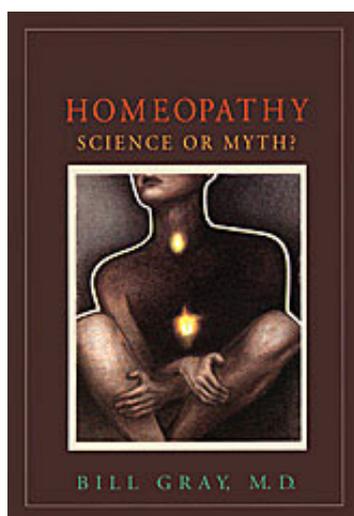
Homeopathy: Science or Myth?

Reading excerpt

[Homeopathy: Science or Myth?](#)

of [Bill Gray](#)

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The Principles

Homeopathy is a 200 year-old medical science based on the fundamental principle of actively and powerfully stimulating the body to heal itself. The basic premise is that the human organism—indeed, all organisms—have unique and complex mechanisms to maintain balance. In the midst of constant stresses on physical, emotional, and mental levels, equilibrium is necessary for survival.

Homeopathy's concept of "vital force" is experienced by everyone as life energy itself. It is difficult to quantify, but it is the very real difference that occurs between life and death. Enzymes still function, nerve cells fire—yet there is an energetic change of state.

We all can identify with life energy when we feel happy, excited, and full of love. We also feel an aspect of it when we develop symptoms. Whenever we are stressed or toxified, we feel more limited, weaker, symptomatic in various ways. That, too, represents vital force struggling to re-order itself.

Whatever can be done to nurture the vital force—relaxation techniques, exercise, sleep, detoxification—helps by rendering the vital force more efficient. Homeopathy, on the other hand, seems to

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directly increase the amount of vital force available. The experience of patients treated with homeopathic remedies is that stresses may come and go as always in life, but the organism's threshold against them raises.

The Principle of Similars

A fundamental difference between homeopathic and allopathic (orthodox) medicine is their attitude toward symptoms. In the homeopathic view—whether on mental, emotional, or physical levels—all symptoms are signs of the body trying to heal. The term "homeopathy" is derived from *homoio-*, which means *similar*, and *-pathos*, which means *suffering*.

The term "allopathy" arises from *allo-*, meaning *other*, and *-pathos* meaning *suffering*. Allopathic medicine considers symptoms as signs of disturbance or alarm. Therefore, the allopathic approach generally manages symptoms by counteracting them—for example, antispasmodics for cramps, antiemetics for vomiting, antidepressants for depression, tranquilizers for anxiety, analgesics for pain. The concept seems to be that disease disappears if symptoms are taken away—a premise that is belied by the emergence of chronic symptoms later.

Homeopaths, on the other hand, observe that mere suppression of symptoms on one level frequently leads to deeper problems in the long run. For example, suppressing eczema with cortisone often leads to asthma. Taking antihypertensives frequently leads to low energy, depression, and sexual dysfunction. These may be considered "side-effects" of drugs, but they frequently persist long after discontinuation. They are not inevitable in the experience of people who are either untreated or treated homeopathically.

The homeopathic approach is to view each person as a whole individual, especially focusing on aspects most unique or peculiar. Correctly prescribed, a homeopathic remedy is designed to strengthen

the person as a whole. Symptoms of disease then fall away naturally as the vital force increases.

Throughout history, even before Hippocrates, physicians considered symptoms from two distinct perspectives—the Law of Contraries and the Law of Similars.

Consider a patient complaining of diarrhea. The allopathic physician, by the Law of Contraries, might give Kaopectate or Paregoric to solidify stool and reduce spasm. The homeopathic Law of Similars (*Similia* Principle) would give small amounts of a substance known to cause diarrhea in an otherwise healthy person—thus enabling the process to more efficiently complete itself.

As a further example in chronic disease, the allopathic treatment for colitis is steroids and antispasmodics—to suppress inflammation and counteract spasms. These provide relief and initial remission of symptoms, but do not address the underlying cause. All too frequently, therefore, the disease becomes more chronic and intense, requiring higher doses and more powerful medications.

The homeopathic approach, is to prescribe a substance in small doses which has been proven to stimulate similar symptoms in healthy volunteers on all levels of the organism—not only the cramps and diarrhea, but also mental/emotional symptoms, temperature intolerance, sleep patterns, food cravings, etc. Such remedies might be minute amounts of *Arsenic*, *Mercury*, *Cinchona* (from a tree bark), *Lycopodium* (a moss). Each case would get a different remedy, since they are individualized to the whole person. Typically this approach leads to gradual but permanent cure after a short course of treatment.

Thus, the homeopathic *Similia* Principle states: *A substance which can produce a spectrum of symptoms in a healthy person will cure that same spectrum of symptoms in a sick person.* This may seem counterintuitive to the approach taken by doctors, seen all-too-often on TV commercials, and taught even in grammar schools. It makes more sense, however, when symptoms are viewed as attempts on the part of the body to heal itself.

The homeopathic approach presupposes that the organism is already doing its best, given its limitations of genetics, susceptibility, and stress or toxicity. Somehow, the homeopathic remedy renders that process stronger or more efficient.

Consider the following: All healers, in any culture, survey their universe for substances to aid healing. How is one to know what curative properties belong to, say, aspirin, or penicillin, or herbs from the rain forest?

This quandary was addressed by Samuel Hahnemann in Germany two centuries ago. [Hahnemann S, 1842] Reasoning from the Rational scientific era to which he belonged, he systematically tested suspected medicinal substances by performing *provings* in which healthy volunteers took small doses and recorded in writing every minute change—physical, emotional, and mental/spiritual. These writings were compiled into books, cross-referenced by symptom, and now form massive computer databases. The resulting symptom pictures became the basis for matching with the patient's symptom picture.

To this date, homeopathy has a repertoire of over 2500 remedy pictures from provings and cured cases.

Provings can be viewed as a kind of "bioassay" of the healing properties of a substance. Healthy volunteers take a remedy with unknown properties (or placebo in a randomized fashion) and record any symptoms noticed from a previously recorded baseline. The remedy then has subtle effects on the nervous system, immune system, digestive processes, heart, etc. If described in great detail and with an eye to whatever is most peculiar and unique, a picture of the remedy gradually emerges.

Interestingly, some provers in the test group are more sensitive to a given remedy than others. The sensitive one produces very particular and striking symptoms, most especially on the plane of emotions, dreams, and mental perceptions. Other provers produce mostly physical symptoms of a more vague nature.

The proving phenomenon can be seen as an example of

resonance. If a given prover resonates very sensitively to the remedy, the symptom picture that emerges is richer and more individualized. (The concept of resonance will be considered more elaborately in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.)

Consider the patient's side of the Similia equation. Under whatever genetic susceptibility and environmental stress, the patient's system reacts in a unique fashion. Under the same conditions, one patient gets migraines, another hypertension, and third panic attacks. Each has a unique "resonant frequency" or potential which is brought out by causative stresses in life. The full and peculiar picture of the resulting symptoms is what must be "covered" by the remedy picture in order to produce a cure.

In homeopathy, we often talk about matching the remedy picture to the patient's symptom picture. In actual fact, what is being matched is not the "remedy picture" but the picture described by provers under the influence of the remedy. (Figure 1.) I like this way

Provers

Patients with Migraines —

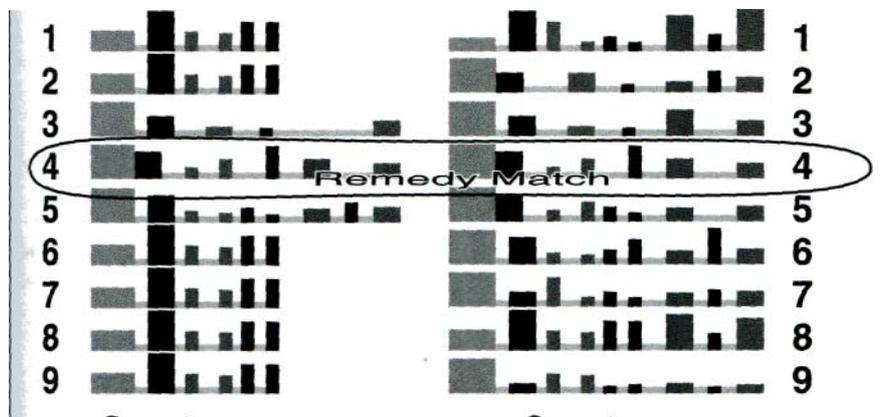


FIGURE 1 Matching "remedy" to patient is really matching the pattern of symptoms (shown as bars here) stimulated in a very sensitive prover (prover #4 of the 9 provers on the left) to a similar pattern in a patient (patient #4 on the right) suffering from migraines. The sensitive *prover resonates* with the patient needing the same remedy. The others match less well.

of describing the process—homeopathy is matching people (provers) to people (patients). The resonance is really between people. By contrast, allopathy frequently relies upon animal studies to determine the effects of drugs, which in the end can only be a crude approximation.

Potentization

The next problem for Samuel Hahnemann was: How can one test poisonous or powerful substances on healthy people—much less administer them to the sick?

After ten years of experimentation, Hahnemann developed a process described as *potentization*—serial dilutions of the original substance interspersed with vigorous shaking. Specifically, an alcohol tincture of the original substance (plant, mineral, animal product) is diluted 1:100. The vial is vigorously shaken (with the force of pounding a leather-bound book) for 40 or so *succussions*. This then is further diluted 1:100 and shaken. And the process continues in kind.

Hahnemann and subsequent homeopaths found empirically an amazing fact—the more a remedy is shaken and diluted, the

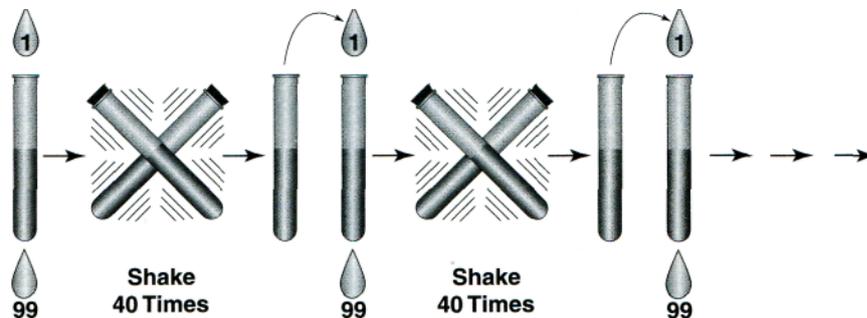


FIGURE 2 The process of "potentization." One drop of original substance is diluted in 99 drops of water. The vial is shaken ("succussed") 40 times. Then one drop of that solution is diluted in another 99 drops of water, the resulting solution is shaken.... And the process continues.

more the curative power is increased (provided the choice of remedy is matched accurately by the Similia Principle)—while simultaneously decreasing toxicity. [Hahnemann S, 1842]

This observation is truly astonishing when one considers that methods of increasing cure while reducing toxicity have been the Holy Grail of all forms of medicine throughout history! Hahnemann himself probably did not understand *how* this worked. Indeed, the actual mechanism has become clear only in recent years with the advent of quantum electrodynamic research.

Even more astounding is the fact that there seems to be no limit to this. Diluting past the point at which there is no molecule of the original substance left continues to enhance curative power without toxicity! Until now, this seems to defy known laws of chemistry. Chapter 3 will reveal the true mechanism of creation of coherent clusters in water, which does not actually require presence of the original substance.

The Evidence in Cases

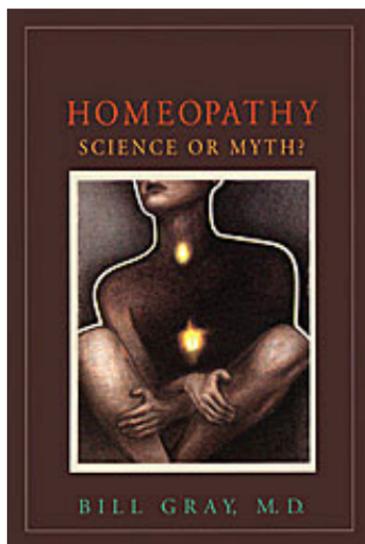
Any red-blooded confirmed skeptic has to ask, "How do we know this actually works?"

This is a valid question. The first obvious answer lies in the cases themselves. Classic double-blind controlled studies do exist and are enumerated in the next chapter. For the true clinician—and for most people looking for help—a few cases that cannot be explained by any other means bring the point home more directly than all studies.

Let me describe a few cases from my own experience. Admittedly these are simple, unsophisticated prescriptions, but they illustrate the phenomenon well. More cases, both acute and chronic, are sprinkled throughout the book in sidebars.

A Drowning Victim

Alec [all case names are invented], an energetic seven year-old boy, was diving for something in a school swimming pool. He caught his hand in a faulty drain and drowned. He was pulled



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