The Masters’ Tools to understanding Classical Homoeopathy

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Introduction

A lot of confusion is prevalent these days in regards to Classical Homoeopathy. Prejudices are ranging from any kind of phytotherapy to combination remedies from the health food store, etc. as being homoeopathy. These preparations might contain homeopathically prepared low-potency substances (e.g. 6C, 12C, etc.) in combination, however, Hahnemann established clearly in his 6th and last edition of the Organon that only one substance should be administered at a time; else the practitioner loses clarity on which substance had what impact on the organism.

Prejudices exist also as to the higher potencies, such as 1M and beyond being dangerous or too strong. However, we need to consider what plane we are trying to address. In order to establish order in the organism on all planes: mental/emotional, spiritual and physical we need to be able to match that plane. Where the mental plane is affected a spirit-like potency will best match the plane of disturbance; any crude potency will mainly have an effect on the physical plane.

In that context one has to view the strict dietary recommendations Hahnemann established as a rule in his earlier versions of the Organon. Clients today are still confused about peppermint, coffee, toothpaste, etc. interfering with their treatment or not.

Some of the prejudices might be a result of the Swedenborgian point of view that anything higher than 6-12D or 6-12C would mean interfering with the God-force. Now if we understand that Life Force Energy (LFE) is nothing else but an aspect of the God-force or an expression thereof (the etheric), that the vital energy animating a body is spirit-like, dynamic and has its origin in Source-energy, we understand that anything affecting this vital principal will always incite a reaction – hence, “interfere” with it. It is just a matter of plane: more physical, emotional, mental, spiritual. The fact that this same God-force/Source-energy has established a means of affecting the human organism through the simillimum signature in nature is a creation of its own intelligence. God-force or Source-energy cannot be seen separate from Life but it is this same Force that creates and animates any expression of it.

Hahnemann believed very strongly in God-force, and held it in high respect, however, as he expresses in his letter to one of his friends (Haehl) it is obvious that he didn’t believe in a way the cleric had established conventional believe. Exploring LFE-potential in his endeavors to develop the most gentle, rapid and permanent way to cure a dis-eased organism, he constantly was faced with the tremendous power and potential Life held, equaling it with the God-force.

The following information is put together in the aim to provide some basic background knowledge for the interested in homoeopathy. It is by no means complete, however, addresses questions, which I have found to be of value even for the layperson. It is a work in progress, so if anyone would care to give feedback and therefore add to the enhancement and understanding, I would greatly appreciate it.

I. Hahnemann’s 9 Principles

1. The Life Force Energy (LFE)

The LFE is a spirit like dynamic force (etheric), which animates the material body. Its function is to preserve, maintain and restore balance. In order to achieve this goal, the LFE will produce symptoms to express a disturbance. E.g. if one goes out in the winter with not enough clothes the LFE will make one feel cold saying, “Hey, I need more covering in order to maintain balance.” If one does not follow that the LFE might express the undue exposure in a cold.

Homoeopathy considers symptoms as being curative, because the LFE produces symptoms to regain health, to reestablish balance. It is constantly attempting to vent any disturbance. Symptoms are the language of the LFE and in their totality the indication to the remedy, which is needed for an individual at a particular point of time for a particular state.

1. Susceptibility

Susceptibility is the capability to react and adapt to internal or external impressions. In order to assess the degree of susceptibility in an individual, we have to look at the degree of derangement the individual experienced due to an internal/external impression. Injury, trauma, diet, temperature, reactions to love, loss, offense, life circumstances etc. cause different reactions in different individuals. The degree is what matters. Susceptibility is responsible for the degree of reaction. Susceptibility is also the base line for how the homoeopathic remedy is received.

1. Miasms

In homoeopathy miasms represent the underlying cause, the individual’s inherited predisposition to be susceptible to certain impressions (dis-eases). Hahnemann defined three different miasms: the psoric one (representing inhibition/underproduction), the syphilitic one (representing destruction), the sycotic one (representing overproduction). The tubercular one (representing a wasting, self-consuming tendency) was added later. Past and family medical history of an individual, indicate the miasmatic dispositions. Understanding miasmatic tendencies can be helpful when differentiating between remedies in order to match the individual’s miasmatic predisposition.

Life Force Energy, Susceptibility and Miasms define the individual. The state and degree of each one has to be taken into account for the correct prescription.

1. The Law of Similars

Hippocrates wrote: “That which has the power to harm the healthy, has the power to heal the sick.”

This is the meaning of Homoeopathy: Like cures like.

“In all careful trials, pure experience the sole and infallible oracle of the healing art teaches us that without exception, all medicines cure those diseases whose symptoms most nearly resemble their own, and leave none of them uncured.” (Hahnemann, Organon of Medicine, 6th edition, § 25) Through the process of dynamization, remedies are rendered more energetic and therefore can match the energetic state of the LFE. The LFE addresses the slightly stronger artificial disturbance and thereby becomes stronger itself and rises its potential to overcome the artificial and at the same time, because of its similarity, the natural disturbance to reinstall balance.

[Anyone interested in Quantum physics or who would like a more scientific approach, is welcome to read up on Dr. Popp’s theory on how homoeopathy works in Lynne McTaggart’s book: “The Field”.]

1. Provings

Provings provide the database for the range of symptoms a medicine has the power to induce in a healthy organism. Hahnemann’s provings were carried out in the most meticulous form. His background as a physician and pharmacist guaranteed for his scientific approach and recording of everything he discovered and developed. He established a scientific protocol about how to proceed and data was collected carefully and documented thoroughly under this protocol. The provers had to be in healthy condition, they had to follow a certain diet and mode of living with adequate exercise and rest. Any symptoms they ever experienced in their lives before were also recorded prior to starting the proving. Repeated doses of a medicine in a 30C potency were given to them until they would experience symptoms. These symptoms were collected in the homoeopathic materia medica.

1. Succussion and Dilution

Describes the process of homoeopathic remedy preparation. Succussion, which could be replaced by dynamization, renders the medicine more energetic and dilution helps breaking down the substance to make it less dense, less material. Both procedures are necessary in order to alter the availability of the substance, develop its medicinal potential, and to be able to match the different states of susceptibility of any Life Force Energy. Again, here applies the homoeopathic motto of similarity: The Life Force Energy being an energetic, spirit like form is most likely stimulated by a like form of medicine. Succussion and dilution transform crude substance into energetic remedies.

1. Minimum Dose

Only the minimum dose is required, according to Hahnemann’s teachings and experience, to rouse the vital force towards to reestablishing balance. This includes also potential repetition of a remedy. One single remedy is given at one moment for one single state of disorder.

Classical homoeopathy does not prescribe two or more remedies at the same time or combinations, nor are remedies repeated routinely without letting the last prescription exhaust its power. (E.g. when an accident has interrupted the curative response to the current constitutional prescription, after dealing with the accident, one would observe the chronic symptom image come through more pronouncedly and in that case repeat the last constitutional remedy and potency as given prior. The LFE needs to be allowed to fully express the potential of one potency.)

It is important that the remedy potency and dosage match the susceptibility of the deranged life force. Wrong judgment here could cause more suffering or weaken the already distressed life force energy even more, or cause death.

1. Direction of Cure

For the homoeopath to be able to assess a remedy action it is important to know what he is looking for. Cure is perceived as taking place from the innermost to the outermost. Symptoms disappear from above downward, from a vital organ to a less vital organ and in reverse order of their appearance. Also, complaints, which have been experienced the longest, disappear last, as more recent complaints will disappear first. Thus, a rheumatic heart condition will resolve in cure and bring on rheumatic complaints perhaps in the joints again, or an asthmatic condition resolves and brings back a suppressed eczema on the skin. But first of all: the client will feel better in themselves.

1. Totality

The totality of the symptoms the distressed life force energy expresses is to be taken into account in order to find the single remedy matching this presenting case - the totality of the individual’s mental, emotional and physical symptoms. If not, the practitioner is most likely going to prescribe a partial remedy and if lucky address a facet of the disturbance, maybe remove a layer. In the worst-case scenario he might confuse the original picture and render the case more complicated. Cure, or as a result health, can only be achieved if all the symptoms of the disturbed vital force are removed.

II. Understanding Cure

a. Understanding incurable states

[Organon p. 16, 43, 62, 65 §§41, 58, 60, 74, 75, 162, 172-206, 210, 215]

A disease is called incurable by the Masters when e.g. tissue changes (e.g. through OP or through the progressing chronic disturbance) that have reached a point of destruction, decomposition or else which cannot be reversed.

Another aspect is rendering a case more complex through long-term medication, or prolonged homoeopathic symptomatic treatment with repetitive dosing – especially on low potencies. Depending on the susceptibility of the individual the artificial agents can alter the miasmatic pre-disposition, meaning it can add symptoms to the natural picture which cannot be removed anymore, since homoeopathy addresses the natural disease not an artificial one. It is as if the person were constantly proving the artificial agents without any means to exteriorize it completely and rid itself of it. [Kent’s example of the wasp case.]

In this context incurable translates into: not being able to return to the original state of perfect health. This does not exclude an adaptation to the current situation. Homoeopathy can still support a most preferable adapting to the circumstances, balancing what there is left to balance. However, the road to this state of balance is a long, trying, tedious, strenuous one, often accompanied by a lot of suffering.

The only chance to approach a severely messed up case is to go back to the origin, to the time before the suppression started and find the constitutional remedy the person would have needed as a child. And in that way try to coax the exhausted LFE into a curative response to whatever balance is possible. [Kent’s Lectures p. 57 last paragraph].

b. Direction of Cure (DoC)

Since the LFE is constantly striving to maintain balance in the least life-threatening way, there are rules by which disease progresses:

- from less life-threatening to more vital organs

- from innermost to outermost

- from above downward

Therefore, in cure we can observe the opposite - symptoms are subsiding in reverse order:

- the innermost is getting better first

- old symptoms are recurring which are less life-threatening than the presenting

condition

- if there has been a symptom on the upper body e.g., one might observe a

recurrence in a lower part of the body

- also there is a tendency for the symptoms which have arisen last to subside

first

This means from the classical perspective one would expect symptoms that have been part of the case to return, even if they were not showing at the intake. In general, one will find those symptoms to be more like a shadow of the original one. They usually will be of shorter duration and/or less intensity and are expected to come and go again.

Lack of understanding what DoC means and that on a constitutional homoeopathic treatment old symptom are bound to be coming back (functioning as a vent for the LFE whilst re-establishing balance), will induce the practitioner to address and treat that symptom and therefore interrupt the curative response of the LFE to the first prescription. This way of treating can severely cloud the picture and instead of curing produce the opposite.

III. Understanding Dry Doses versus LM-Potencies

At the end of his life, after having reinvented the wheel several times over where potencies, succussions and dilutions were concerned, Samuel Hahnemann possessed a range of potencies and ways to administer remedies that were not generally known. Especially the knowledge about the LM-potencies, which he presents in his 6th edition of the Organon for the first time, has long been hidden because after his death the manuscript was not published right away.

The potency scale for dry doses presents as follows:

6C - 12C – 20C are considered low potencies

(from 24C on there is no more traceable matter in the preparation)

30C – 200C are considered medium potencies

(Hahnemann used the 30C exclusively for his provings)

1M, 10M, 50M, CM, MM are considered high potencies

The C stands for 100 and refers to the base of a dilution with 100 drops liquid.

The higher the potency the less is in it, especially from the 24C up on it is the energetic imprint of the substance rendered more and more spirit-like.

Here again one can apply the law of similars as one is aiming to match the plane of the disease present. The more crude a potency the more is its range of action on the physical plane. The higher the potency the more it will affect the mental/emotional plane and penetrate deeper into the organism.

Not satisfied with certain results Hahnemann observed in his patients, he constantly aimed at making the dosage even smaller. Out of that he developed the LM scale (LM = 50.000), which has as a base a dilution with 500 drops liquid and an additional 100 strokes per potency.

This preparation he found sufficiently subtle to be given to the patient on a daily basis. In his experience cure therefore would ensue more rapidly and more gently.

Due to their subtleness LMs are also more conducive in conditions where e.g. massive suppression has occurred, where patients are on any kind of medication, very sensitive individuals, etc.

In a case with allergies/hay fever, e.g. the LMs might be more suitable during the individual’s allergy season because there is less likeliness of a homoeopathic first aggravation, which could be more pronounced on a dry dose.

IV. Understanding Suppression

Suppression is anything that inhibits or prevents the natural expression of the LFE. Antibiotics, Steroids and Cortisone are the most severe medical suppressants to an extend that homoeopathy can often not induce a curative response in the individual when exposed to those agents. But also acupuncture, certain forms of psychotherapy or other healing modalities, surgeries, hormone treatment, vaccination, recreational drugs, herbs, stimulants, anti-depressants, etc. can act as a suppressant as well as simple and very common things such as deodorants, over-the-counter pain relieve, or external applications for fungus. The list is longer than one would think.

The most important aspect to understand about suppression is, that the LFE when it is not allowed its natural way of expression in order to get the message across that it is not in balance, will choose more severe and life-threatening places of dis-ease. E.g. one can observe in a child with a skin condition (psoriasis) that has been massively treated with cortisone, that it will develop an asthmatic condition. The disease is progressing from less vital = skin, to more vital = lungs.

On a homoeopathic simillimum the asthmatic condition will subside and the skin situation resurface, according to the law of Direction of Cure.

In general, the more suppressive means have been or are currently being undertaken the longer the LFE will need to rebalance. Also, for clients on traditional medication, which they cannot stop or reduce right away when presenting for homoeopathic treatment, the road to cure will be a longer and at times more strenuous one.

V. Understanding Timeline

In order to get the chronology and totality of the symptom image a timeline is a helpful tool. DoC can be more easily traced. The practitioner has an overview about how the client was affected by various life circumstances and when. The origin of the disease and its progression with or without suppression is readily available and supports the practitioner’s assessment when observing and evaluating the response to a prescription.

VI. Understanding Hahnemann’s dietary recommendations

[s. letter in Haehl “Hahnemann’s Life]

In a letter to Boenninghausen March 6th, 1831, Hahnemann wrote:

“[…] The instructions on diet want more discussion, since the same things are not equally harmful to everybody; though there are some things which each one must avoid. […] the very high 30C potencies of medicines given in our small doses […] accomplish what is required, without hindrance, penetrating with all their power and with incredible completeness, strength and purity, whilst they are not affected by any kind of food (except perhaps vegetable acids, spirits, coffee and tea). Foodstuffs really contain no antidotes except those above named (in brackets). […]”

For Hahnemann at that time the 30C was one of the highest potencies and the one he used in provings.

One has to bear in mind that Hahnemann originally experimented solely with potencies in the crudest form: 3C, 6C, 12C, and the like. Potencies that still contain matter, hence primarily affect the physical plane and in that aspect, crude materials such as coffee, peppermint etc. in a sensitive individual could potentially interrupt the remedy action. At the same time higher potencies such as 30C, 200C, 1M, 10M, etc. and LMs do affect the mental-spiritual plane which is beyond the realm of crude interference. (Having said that there are, of course, individuals who have a naturally high susceptibility and sensitivity to coffee for example and who when exposed to this medicinal substance even in its crude form might experience an interruption of their remedy action; a similar situation can be observed for Puls with vinegar.) [-> Kent’s minor writings - find page ]

Since he originally started out treating with lower, cruder potencies such as 6C and 12C, the fact that those act more on the physical plane might explain why the “foodstuffs” had a potential for interrupting the curative response to the remedy. Both being of the same plane, meaning crude, and could therefore interfere with each other. Whereas a 30C not containing any crude substance anymore will address a different, more subtle plane in cure and is hence less likely to be affected by crude “foodstuffs”.

VII. Understanding Acute versus Chronic

Why is it important to understand if the presenting state is an acute, a chronic or the acute of a chronic one? E.g. remedy and potency selection depend on that understanding.

In an Acute situation, especially if a life-threatening one, the practitioner might choose higher potencies to start with or a more frequent dosing regimen. One might also prefer a dry dose versus LM-potencies in order to better match the severity of the presenting state.

Chronic treatment is most beneficial when the LFE is not being hit over the head with too high/strong doses from the get go. The aim is to gradually raise the energy level, overall wellbeing and adaptability of the individual whilst reducing and overcoming susceptibilities to external stimuli. Since the classical approach always addresses the person as a whole and not only single symptoms, the physically experienced imbalances will subside as the innermost is improving again according to the law of Direction of Cure from the innermost to the outermost, etc.

An Acute of the Chronic means e.g. a recurring cold situation, throat inflammation, bronchitis, migraines, ear infections or something along those lines. It is a more acute situation, which the client has been experiencing repeatedly or at regular intervals over the past years or throughout his life so that it can be regarded as a part of his chronic picture. Usually when addressing the chronic symptom image totality, aspects of these acutes will be covered by the constitutional remedy choice. On the constitutional treatment one would expect to see these acutes subside gradually as the susceptibility changes and the LFE is gaining strength.

To differentiate between an acute and an acute of the chronic and the question if the situation needs to be addressed separately with an acute homoeopathic remedy, one would have to look at the severity of the situation. Also, a marked change in the mental state during the acute would be an indication for separate treatment.

VIII. Understanding Maintaining or Exciting Causes

Maintaining causes act like a splinter that is not removed from a wound – it will keep the wound festering. Common sense would suggest removing the splinter in order for healing to take place naturally.

In a similar way life situation can act as maintaining causes such as a non-conducive work situation, relationships, or unhealthy living circumstances (e.g. damp, moldy, cold, dark, imbalanced or insufficient nutrition, etc.)

Ideally in order for the remedy to act best these conditions should be removed. If that is not possible, homoeopathy might still be able to help the suffering LFE adjust as best as possible to the circumstances. It might even rouse the person’s pro-active willpower and self-preserving spirit to entice them to a change of circumstances, e.g. looking for a better job, realizing one’s life purpose and going after it (“I always wanted to be a painter and I started taking art classes recently.”).

Exciting causes could be the death of a loved one, an accident - any event, which would have a profound impact on the individual’s state of affairs. Also, any agent, which can offset a person’s balance, in severe cases even cause an anaphylactic shock for example. Sometimes it could be something as simple as coffee in a highly sensitive and susceptible individual which might then react with a state of tearful over-joy.

Depending on how well if at all the client is able himself to overcome the situation, one might consider treatment or handholding or both.

IX. Understanding when to change a remedy

“Never forsake a remedy that has acted curatively”, (even if from the current symptom image picture, you wouldn’t prescribe the same remedy as when the client first presented). James Tyler Kent kept repeating this motto.

As long as there is still a curative response to be observed to the chosen remedy and even if the potency scale is exhausted, do not change it but start over again or switch to LM-potencies (or vice versa); as long as a correct DoC can be observed there is no reason for a change.

Indications for changing the remedy would be e.g. new symptoms that have come up for a while and not gone away again. Symptoms the client has not as yet experienced and which are not part of the range of the remedy currently prescribed. Or there might be symptoms the client did experience way in the past, which were not part of the presenting image and the current prescription has no effect on them. Sometimes it could just be a remainder of a more superficial, physical symptom that is persistent and might be well addressed with a more superficial smaller remedy.

However, even if perceiving the above-mentioned situations, Kent recommends still trying one or two higher potencies and only giving up on the current substance if no amelioration or change can be observed.

A complete change in the mental/emotional sphere as e.g. in an acute or due to an exciting cause, might warrant a change of remedy.

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