

Homeopaths

Does it matter?

or health



by Carol Boyce MCH CCH RSHom (NA)

Carol Boyce is a homeopath, teacher, writer, activist and filmmaker who graduated from The College of Homeopathy in 1985. She has set up homeopathy projects from Calcutta to Cairo, did aid work in Iraq and has taught in medical schools in Cuba. She documents the work of homeopathy projects around the world, has made several short films and produced the 50-minute film *Making a Difference*. She is co-founder of *Vitality TV* and her *Organon*-based philosophy course for students is available online.

In the allopathic search for a diagnostic label the impact of lifestyle choices is almost entirely ignored. With the average six-year medical training allocating one day to conventional nutrition, doctors can't be expected to give good advice to their patients. Adjunct therapies are usually absent from their toolbox and the concept of offering simple solutions to the patient's needs is rarely exercised. In a seven-minute consultation there is only time to reach for the prescription pad and write a script for one of the 'Big Five' (antibiotics, steroids, painkillers, anti-inflammatories, anti-depressants) or to refer to a specialist where there is even less incentive to investigate the potential of a simple solution. We know all this, of course.

We also know that within the medical profession there is not even a basic understanding of susceptibility. The closest they get is the blanket vaccination programme with all its attendant problems. In the allopathic paradigm patients are taught not to trust their body but to take it to the doctor for fixing. In many cases patients are actively discouraged from taking personal initiative in relation to their health. It's a paradigm that disempowers the patient and fosters dependency, producing a population of fearful and dependent patients that serves the pharmaceutical industry well. If we're honest we can take perverse enjoyment in highlighting the absurdity of them

prescribing some £60 million worth of laxatives (in 2009 alone) while ignoring the patient's diet.

It's easy to rationalise this as pressure from the pharmaceutical industry coupled with a lack of consultation time and in the comparison find ourselves feeling smug. But what if we take a closer look at our own work? Are we at risk of focusing on the simillimum and posology, while ignoring the wider aspects of the patient's lifestyle if they are not a 'relevant' part of the case analysis? Do we bother with general lifestyle questions when the remedy seems obvious, or paradoxically when the case is complex and requires much in-depth enquiry? Do we go down

the road of the 'Strange, Rare and Peculiar' while ignoring the obvious? It's possible for us not to see the wood for the trees and for our patients to surrender to our expertise and wait passively for the homeopathic medicine to do the job.

There are rare cases where this might be absolutely appropriate, but for the vast majority of our work it's much easier and more effective if we have proactive patients. In practice we all have experience – whether as practitioners, or patients, or both – of the increased speed and deeper healing possible when the patient is consciously working WITH their homeopathic medicine.

Does it matter if we are a homeopath or a health practitioner?

Hahnemann was many things but one thing he was not was ambivalent about what it takes to create health. He was clear and specific about what it took for the practitioner to truly heal and what it took for the patient to do their part.

As early as Aphorism 3 he draws attention to the potential '... obstacles to recovery in each case ...' and the need to know how to '... clear them away so that the restoration of



Homeopathic practitioners?

health might be permanent ...' In Aphorism 4 he talks about the need to know, '... the things that disturb health and cause disease ...' and to be 'aware of how to remove them from healthy people'.

Throughout the *Organon* he gives clear guidance on the identification of maintaining causes and the need to support the patient in making the changes required to remove them. And more than that, Hahnemann advocates the necessity of good food, clean air and exercise, a clear mind and calm emotions – aspects of health that are only now slowly entering into the practice of Western medicine.

Many of our patients, perhaps most in some locations, are eating highly processed foods, taking little exercise and using the television as their main form of 'relaxation'. They come to the homeopath looking for a way to solve their problems. Many find their way to us because conventional medicine has failed them, yet they arrive nonetheless still looking for a 'quick fix' or 'magic bullet' and without any understanding of health, what it is and how to create it. If we are obsessed with finding the

simillimum and neglect their lifestyle, can we call ourselves holistic? Are we failing them if we deliver the homeopathic prescription but ignore the specifics of the rest of their lives? Are we reducing the potential for their healing because

Are we homeopaths or health practitioners?

we do not help increase their awareness of how they live, how to create health and prevent disease?

A patient who understands the fundamentals of homeopathic philosophy, how and what health and cure really are, who appreciates that dis-ease is a process and that we can take action to reduce our individual susceptibility, can bring patience to the situation when required and, more importantly, can identify and work on removing the maintaining causes in their own lives. The homeopathic medicine can initiate a true curative action, but when the patient is simultaneously working on their own health, the prognosis for the long-term health of the patient is radically improved and the speed of cure increased. We have all had experience of this as practitioners, patients or both.

As practitioners with a busy practice, or as practitioners with a small practice in a busy life, how can we ensure that our patients understand the very different way that homeopaths look at health and dis-ease? At our worst we might simply insert homeopathy as a therapeutic option into the dominant (allopathic) system. Even if it doesn't sit well with >

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SAVE THE DATE

The 4Homeopathy collaboration will be hosting a unique workshop event on the 7th March 2015 for homeopaths throughout the UK.

This is an invitation for you to:

- learn about the work of 4H – what has been achieved for homeopaths and homeopathy to date
- take part in a lively and exciting discussion, and network with fellow homeopaths
- have the opportunity to participate in planning the future activities of 4H

This unique event will help to inspire and energise us. It is a profession-wide call for action! Let's brainstorm together, and find new ways in which to tell the public that homeopathy works!

Save the date and be part of the action! More information to follow in the coming months. We look forward to working with you.



www.findahomeopath.org.uk

As busy practitioners we don't always even practise what we preach

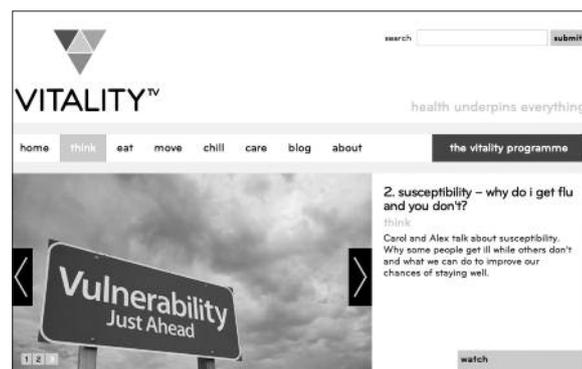
us and we'd love to educate our patients, we don't have the time or easily accessible resources to which we can direct them and it's the thing we sacrifice when time is tight and we're duty bound to come up with the simillimum.

Epigenetics now explains what Hahnemann knew 200 years ago with his miasmatic theory and the value and effect of lifestyle changes. As homeopaths we work with the miasms but have not always been proactive ourselves in the education of our patients. Furthermore, as busy practitioners we don't always even practise what we preach!

Science continues to 'discover' the energetic basis of dis-ease, and the questions about the shortfalls of conventional medicine are getting louder and more incisive. Baby boomers are reaping the benefits or suffering the consequences of the last 50 years and are looking for help. We are working with a population just waking up to the possibility of creating health for themselves and understanding that they have power in the equation. The concept of integrative medicine is gaining ground within the allopathic model, albeit still restricted in its scope. As CAM practitioners we understand the potential of this and have the ability to deliver true integrative medicine – but are we?

Do we need other tools in our own toolbox?

It was with this in mind that *Vitality TV* was created as a free, video-based, website that addresses this very issue. Our decision to build an information hub providing health education based on the homeopathic



A screen shot of the *Vitality TV* website



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understanding of health and how to create it, and of dis-ease and how to prevent it, came out of a desire to play our part in shifting the paradigm of health, whatever therapeutic option a patient might choose. It enables patients to take better care of themselves, to understand their homeopathic process and to make them a more patient patient! As importantly, it ultimately makes our job as practitioners easier.

Co-founded by myself, my daughter Lucia Williams and fellow homeopath Alex Heffron, *Vitality TV* offers patient education in one place. The Eat, Move and Chill sections introduce viewers to the essentials of nutrition, exercise and relaxation. The Care section answers the question why we should care about our environment (and the Feel section is under construction). But the Think section is what makes *Vitality TV* different and more interesting, for any CAM practitioner and for homeopaths in particular.

In a series of short videos, we discuss dis-ease as a process, we look at susceptibility and what prevention and cure really mean. We talk about how amazing our bodies are and how much healing and repair they are constantly doing. We look at the mind-body connection and encourage the viewer to trust their body more. Above all the emphasis is on inspiring and empowering patients to take increasing responsibility for their own health, one small step at a time. Used in conjunction with a therapeutic option like homeopathy,

We invite readers to comment on Vitality TV (www.VitalityTV.com). Please send your comments to editor@a-r-h.org or carol@vitalitytv.com. Readers interested in The Vitality Programme™ can find out more here: www.VitalityTV.com/tvp-homeopaths.

Baby boomers are reaping the benefits – or paying the price – for the last 50 years

patients are in the best possible place to utilise their treatment to its greatest potential and to build a sustainable healthy future for themselves. Patients begin to look differently at their own health and how they live – they see the connections between their behaviour and the results of their actions, and can work with conscious awareness with their practitioner to take maximum advantage of their homeopathic treatment.

It's not enough to simply practise our modality – we need to be more

***Vitality TV* offers patient education in one place**

It's not enough to simply practise our modality – we need to be more than homeopaths

than homeopaths or acupuncturists or whatever our specific therapeutic modality is, we need to be health practitioners. *Vitality TV* makes it easier to be exactly that. It's also a great resource for students learning how to talk to patients about the homeopathic process.

We've recently launched The Vitality Programme™, a holistic 12-week structured programme that addresses the issue of achieving and maintaining a healthy weight and have had some great feedback from the homeopaths who have taken a test drive. We invite you to use these resources for the benefit of your patients and therefore your practice. Together we really do have an opportunity to shift the paradigm of health.

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