

Homeopathy Understanding Vital Force

Contributed by Claudia De Rosa, Classical Homeopath
Saturday, 23 August 2008

Homeopathy Understanding The Vital Force Of This Holistic Treatment

Homeopathic medicine is a system based on natural laws, i.e. fundamental laws of nature. There is an exact relationship between the principles that govern life and the principles that govern the homeopathic system of medicine. Homeopathy is the result of close observation of facts and experimentation. It is formulated by principles of inductive logic.

These are unchangeable as they are based on laws of nature. They are eternal as moon or sun. It is solely on understanding these principles that the capability of homeopathic physician depends in treating the diseases of the mankind and an effort is made to make them simpler so as to make learning easier. The principles at the heart and soul of homeopathy, then, are not grounded in science, or, at least not in the concept of science as it is intended today.

Nevertheless, effective practice of homeopathy is not possible without an understanding of them. Even though in the 'Organon' Hahnemann said that the purpose of medicine is to cure and not to expound theories, those are necessary to clearly define the differences between the homeopathic and the allopathic way of thinking about illness and healing.

Homeopathic thinking is holistic. Homeopathy treats the whole person.

Allopathy treats the patient as a sick organ or a sick tissue.

That's the main difference: to see the person as a collection of parts or to see the person as a whole. Although other forms of alternative medicines call themselves 'holistic', there is a distinction in the meaning of the term. So, while some forms of alternative medicines may address social and emotional problems generally left un-addressed by allopathic medicine, homeopathy considers all the complaints as a single unit.

This is why classical homeopathy gives a single medicine to treat a disease, because it believes that all the symptoms a person suffers reveal a 'single' underlying problem. So what is the underlying problem? In the healthy condition of man the spirit-like vital force, the dynamis that animates the material body, rules with unbounded sway and retains all the parts of the organism in admirable harmonious vital operation as regards both sensations and functions, so that our indwelling, reason-gifted mind can freely employ this living, healthy instrument for the higher purpose of our existence.

This was the first description made in respect of Vital Force for application in the medical field by Hahnemann in the 'Organon'. Life is composed of three parts: - the body- the mind- the spirit This trinity is present in all forms of life, and each component is interdependent.

The spirit is nothing but the Vital Force. It exists right from the fusion of two parent cells. It is the energy which dominates

every part of the body and develops them. Without this vital energy the body becomes inanimate and dies. It is only because of the vital force that if a living organism is capable of physical action. The material body derives all sensations and performs all functions in a harmonious way only by means of dynamic vital force. In its absence the body ceases to exist and loses all sensation, functions and self protection and ultimately dies.

The energy of the Vital Force is dynamic in nature. Any disturbances of this flow of energy in the body results in morbid development and functions, resulting in disease condition. This disturbance may be in the form of sudden fright , excessive worry or hereditary miasms from parent cells. Appearance of any morbid phenomena is the expression of inner derangement of the Vital Force.

Its disturbed harmony is shown through outward manifestations in the form of symptoms. Disease is nothing but the abnormal functions and sensations which are the outward manifestations of the disturbed Vital Force. The Vital Force can in no other way express its disturbance, other than through morbid symptoms. And only on these morbid symptoms should the physician depend for the selection of the simillimum for bringing about the process of cure. Homeopathy teaches that all diseases are a disorder of the Vital Force.

The first time I read about the vital force was about the Kirlian method, the technique of using electromagnetic impulse to visualize through photography emotional, mental and physical changes in the person, the aura of a person. Hahnemann calls it Lebenskraft, Latin called it Animus or Vigor Vitae, the Vital Force is what animates our body.

The Chinese call it Chi, the Japanese Hara, the Indian Chakras. It controls all of the body's natural processes and preserves balance. When it becomes inactive, we die. In homeopathic philosophy, the Vital Force is seen as elemental and indivisible , which means it reacts as a whole to any irritant. If an irritant is strong enough, it can produce a stable derangement of the vital force itself which is the disease. Because the Vital Force is elemental, it can sustain only one kind of derangement (disease) at a time. Such a derangement may somehow dull the ability of the Vital Force to recognize what is wrong and that, in turn, causes a chronic illness.

Although the Vital Force may have the power to 'throw off' such an illness, it may fail to do so because it lacks perception of the problem. The Vital Force is the essential to our being and makes the symptoms be felt on all levels, physical, mental and emotional. In the 'Organon' Hahnemann says that the homeopath practice must be based on the philosophy of homeopathy.

The word 'philosophy' means 'love of wisdom' where wisdom is the knowledge of what is true and right, knowing what is appropriate to each situation. The wise person discerns the right action. To be able to do this a philosophy of medicine is needed, a way to study nature that will give a direction to our practice. 'Medicine' is literally the art and science that aims at the maintenance, promotion and recovery of health. There are three branches of medicine:- prophylaxis, the promotion of health and prevention of disease- diagnosis, the understanding of the whole phenomenon of disease from beginning to end- therapeutics, the treatment of disease with the aim of restoring health

The basic principles of common sense medicine are:

Prevention.

‘Primum non nocere’ = do no harm. This principle comes from Hyppocrates. Amazingly the fourth largest cause of death today is prescription error.

‘Tolle causam’ = remove the cause of disease instead of just treating the single symptom.

‘Vis medicatrix naturae’ = or the healing power of nature. The only way a person can heal disease is through their own healing power.

Holism.

The person must be seen as a whole. An individual is not an aggregate of organs. The sick person is not a diseased organ but a human being with history and interaction with is environment.

Unfortunately those principle of medicine are not followed completely by modern medicine.

The word ‘physician’ comes from ‘physis’ which means nature. So a physician is someone who understands the law of nature.

The word ‘doctor’, at last, comes from Latin ‘docere’, which means ‘to teach’.

The first generation of homeopaths (Hahnemann) were natural scientists. To be a good homeopath then means to have a knowledge of nature and science. The first two aphorisms of the ‘Organon’ say that the mission of physician is to promote health. First, the physician needs to educate and guide people in a lifestyle that meets the psychological and physiological needs. Second, the physician needs to help the patient to restore him or herself to health in the optimal way.

Aphorism 3 says that in order to achieve these goals the physician must know how to apply the forces of nature, to know medicines and their interactions and how to use the ill-disease gently and effectively. In other words, the physician needs to understand all aspects of human nature, from the gene to the psych, and must be able to understand the phenomena of disease from beginning to end.

Most importantly the physician must understand the Vital Force, the energy in a person that keeps him alive and passes life to the next generation. It is the force that heals and which maintains the body healthy. Its nature is a mystery.

In aphorism 9 and 11 Hahnemann talks of an energy (dynamis) that gives life to the body, that governs all the body's functions without exception and that creates a harmonious whole. The organism in fact is absolutely able to keep itself 'healthy'. It can correct homeostatic balance and repair tissues or direct energy where is required. It is able to heal itself and if not there must be something wrong with the coordinating process (the Vital Force).

So there is only one possible disease: the disturbance of the Vital Force. It is thrown in disharmony when its curative action is undermined. But what is health? Health is homeostasis, a state of balance. The function of the organism is to maintain this balance.

Alexander Technique, for example, teaches us then when we stand, we move or even when we are still, we are in constant motion to maintain our physical balance. When we lose the ability to re-establish this healthy balance we are ill. When we are in a state of emotional upset, we should be able to re-establish an emotional balance. We should feel right or at peace. We should be able to use our mental faculty properly.

Health is a state of global balance within oneself and with the environment. What factors determine the state of health of the person? Heredity is one of the most important factor in health.

Researches in USA show that approximately 80% of the state of health is determined by genetics and 20% from the environment. Another very important factor is the lifestyle of the person. One's emotional needs must also be met: a human being has the need to be part of a group. Heredity, lifestyle, hygiene and how a person uses his mind are the most important factors in health. Homeopathic remedies directly affect the Vital Force.

Because the Vital Force perceives a homeopathic remedy as a disease producing irritant and because the irritant is strong enough, it stirs the Vital Force into action to repeal it. If the disease state produced by the remedy is similar to the disease the Vital Force recognizes the similarity and, in repelling the remedy irritant, it also repels the disease. In effect, the remedy gives the Vital Force a global view of itself in a mirror.

I like the way Dr. Rajan Sankaran explains the concept of the Vital Force. He uses a metaphor of a pole that has several vines growing and wrapping around it. Even though we may not be able to see the pole itself, we know it is because without it the vines would fall to the ground. We can remove one vine, then another, then another, until we think we have removed them all, but they will grow right back and will continue to grow back as long as the pole remains in place to support them. The pole represents the central disturbance within the Vital Force and the vines represents the disease.

By observing the shape of the vines on the pole (the characteristics of the symptoms) we can ascertain the shape of the pole itself (the general characteristics of the inner disturbance). We then can find a remedy that causes the most similar derangement in a healthy person. This remedy is administered in homeopathic form and eventually will stimulate the

action of the Vital Force. The Vital Force will remove the disturbance (the pole) and all the individual diseases will get cured.

The main role of the Vital Force then is to maintain the integrity of the whole person, the balance in the individual. When the integrity of the whole is disturbed, the role of the Vital Force is to correct or recover that integrity.

Four are the principles that determine the degree of ill health:

The vitality or MOMENTUM.

The exciting cause or DISTURBANCE.

The predisposition or SUSCEPTIBILITY.

The inheritance or MIASM.

Disease is not a separate entity from the person. Hahnemann explains about disease in aphorism 13. Disease is not an entity but the expression of an organism out of balance. Hahnemann uses the term 'untunement', or out of tone, for disease in aphorism 11 and 12. The disease is associated with disagreeable sensations and abnormal functions (aph. 6 and 15).

There are:- subjective symptoms, or what the patient feels;- objective symptoms, or what others can see;- incidental symptoms, or the circumstances causing the symptoms Diseases can be classified by lesion (or tissue change) and cause (or organ affection).

Disease classification are for convenience only and do not describe the reality of the disease state. The process of aging, for example, is not a disease. However, aging can be accelerated or retarded by lifestyle. Hahnemann differentiates between acute and chronic disease. Acute disease is described in § 72 of the Organon, while § 73 describes the subdivision of acute diseases. There are harmful external influences that affect the individual.

For example, increase risk of cancer due to exposure to ultraviolet rays. There are sporadic diseases, like flu, and there are epidemic diseases where the genius are the totality of the symptoms in all those susceptible to epidemic. In the 'Organon' Hahnemann discusses all different kind of diseases:- real disease which is an untunement of the Vital Force- apparent disease is due to some external cause, such as a coffee causing insomnia. When the cause is removed, the disease is caused by drugs or even by remedies (provings, for example). Artificial disease can eliminate

natural diseases if their symptoms are similar and stronger (a stronger dissimilar disease).

Contrary to allopathic method, the homeopath doesn't labels a disease because each Vital Force is unique in the patterns it produces. When we are ill we produce different patterns of illness. If we consider for examples two patients with bronchitis, even if they will show the common symptoms of the disease they will also show individual complaints (symptoms), characteristic of their own constitution.

The same if we consider an epidemic disease such a common cold. If we consider a family group, for instance, we will see that in the same group the father will catch a strong cold with chills and sneezing, the three years old son will have runny nose, the six years old will develop a cold with stuffed nose and the mother will eventually complain about headache due to a nasal congestion.

So why do some people not 'catch' a disease? Because of the susceptibility. Susceptibility is either inherited or acquired. There are certain aspects of susceptibility which are common to certain species (for example, distemper is a disease specific to dogs, syphilis to man, etc). Susceptibility can be specific to a race, to a family or individual. It can also be acquired (i.e. through exposure to toxic chemicals one becomes sensitive to further exposure). It is not possible to measure the untunement of the Vital Force but only to see its manifestations. The untunement can be transferred from one generation to another. Psychological disturbances can dis-regulate the Vital Force.

There are different kinds of intervention in disease:

PREVENTION

CURATIVE to remove the cause.

SUPPORTIVE to speed up the body's natural curative powers.

Palliation doesn't remove the cause and it is not very effective (except in terminal state disease, such as cancer, aids, etc). Suppression removes the symptoms but not the causes and it often leads to worse problems. Disruptive intervention disrupts the body's functions.