

Forms of Modern-Day Homeopathy

Classical Homeopathy

Classical Homeopathy represents the predominant form of homeopathic prescribing used throughout the world today. In the classical method, the homeopath will engage the patient in an extended discussion about the patient's total symptom picture, including his physical, mental, and emotional symptoms. After analyzing the symptom picture, the homeopath will decide on what he believes to be the *one* remedy that matches the patient's symptom picture. The *key feature* of this method is the *use of one remedy* and *one remedy only*.

Other practitioners practice a form of homeopathy called poly-pharmacy in which the practitioner prescribes multiple remedies. This form of homeopathic practice is very strong in France and Germany, although it can be found everywhere. Practitioners also weigh the importance of mental symptoms and physical symptoms differently. Dr. James Tyler Kent, the great American homeopath of the mid-1800's, elevated the mental symptoms to the higher rank and believed that this therapy should treat the whole individual rather than any particular set of symptoms.

It is very important to understand that homeopathic remedies, regardless of the school of thought, are prescribed on the basis of symptoms. Those who are strongly influenced by Kent, and some of his modern-day colleagues, believe that choosing a remedy specific to the mental symptoms will provide a more significant result, one that will improve both mental symptoms and physical symptoms simultaneously.

Many of the homeopathic products sold in health food stores and pharmacies today are combination remedies used to treat specific symptoms such as headache, colds, and intestinal discomfort. However, some workers in the field of homeopathy believe that symptom relief treatment is no more effective than other symptom-based treatments in achieving improvement in individuals suffering from chronic conditions.

In his later years, Hahnemann moved away from the concept of treating on symptoms and began to base his practice on the treatment of what he believed was the underlying cause(s) of disease. During an intense twelve-year period, Hahnemann postulated a theory that every living person had been infected by three diseases that he called miasms. Hahnemann believed that these three inherited diseases led to a predisposition (a likelihood to contract) and a susceptibility (weakness) to becoming diseased. In a sense, this was Hahnemann's genetic theory of disease.

Few homeopathic practitioners have embraced Hahnemann's philosophy about miasms, and fewer yet practice miasmatic therapy. The basis, today, of homeopathic prescribing is, primarily, still upon the symptom picture.