

# Famous Keynotes

The following information is modified from A Guide to Methodologies by Ian Watson.

Watson states that his understanding of keynote prescribing is that a prescription is based on one or a few outstanding (characteristic) symptoms of the case, which are known to be strongly indicative of a particular remedy, especially when only one or a few remedies are known to have that symptom or group of symptoms.

Keynotes also provide invaluable differentiation between several remedies, which appear to be well indicated on other grounds.

Most remedies have one or two symptoms that are so well verified that they suggest the use of that remedy almost regardless of the rest of the case. These symptoms need to be outstanding in the patient to be considered keynotes. Examples would be 'ailments following smallpox vaccination' indicating *Thuja*, 'mental changes following head injury' indicating *Nat sulph*, 'ill effects of puncture wounds' indicating *Ledum*.

Other keynotes that you could come across and the remedies that would come to mind for consideration:

Describing how they feel 'as if bruised and beaten' *Arnica*

Describing symptoms 'as if stung by a bee' or on the mental level 'busy as a bee' *Apis*

Sensation of a dark cloud descending *Cimicifuga*

Symptoms described of being 'as if on fire' *Cantharis*

Describing uterine or abdominal sensation of 'as if the insides will fall out' *Sepia*

Children who cannot bear milk *Aethusa*

Describing digestive symptoms 'as if poisoned' *Arsenicum*

When you hear and recognise a keynote it takes your thinking straight to the remedy and its picture, from here you explore the possibility that this could be the remedy.

The book Allen's Keynotes and Characteristics by H C Allen (1836-1909) is an excellent addition to your home prescribing texts. The book can be downloaded from

<http://www.similima.com/allens-keynotes>

Next month we will explore **Miasms**.