

Methodology

The purpose of this article on Methodology is to expose you to and offer an explanation of a wide variety of techniques used successfully by homoeopaths over the years. Following are some excerpts from ***A Guide to the Methodologies of Homoeopathy***, by Ian Watson (referred to here as GMH).

AETIOLOGIES

Definition: Aetiology = 'the assignment of a cause'.

A prescription is based primarily on some past trauma, illness or event rather than on the presenting symptoms. The stronger the cause-and-effect relationship between the trauma and the presenting state, the more an aetiological prescription is indicated. (GMH p.1)

Direct Aetiology: In cases with a direct aetiology there is clear and direct relationship between the presenting problem and the trauma that preceded it, no matter how long the problem has persisted. For example, when a patient says "I have had recurrent headaches ever since a head injury three years ago", that is a direct aetiology. The appropriate rubric is a good starting place in a case displaying a direct aetiology. (GMH p.1)

Indirect Aetiology: There are two main types of indirect aetiology. The first is where a person has been in a certain environment, family dynamic or in any other life or work situation which has, *over a period of time*, lowered that person's level of health and has contributed to them becoming sick. (GMH p.5). Secondly, where a person had an illness or maybe an operation at some time that lowered their general state of health, although they may appear to have fully recovered. As a result of this they become susceptible to new problems, which start to manifest over a period of weeks or months. (GMH p.5)

GENUS EPIDEMICUS

Definition: A prescription is based on Hahnemann's observation that during a true epidemic of acute disease a majority of cases will respond to the same remedy, provided the remedy is similar to the characteristic symptoms of the epidemic. (GMH p. 25)

Prescribing Technique: Details are taken of the characteristic symptoms of a number of cases during the epidemic, and these are put together to form an image of the disease in its entirety. A remedy is chosen which bears greatest similarity to the characteristics of this complete image, and if it is found to act curatively in the majority of cases it may be said to be the genus epidemicus of that epidemic. The remedy is then used prophylactically for contacts who have not yet developed disease symptoms. (GMH p.25)

When to Use the Method: This method appears to be most applicable to the more serious acute diseases such as cholera, typhoid, smallpox etc, and to the acute diseases of childhood such as measles and whooping cough and even influenza where a number of cases are found to occur in the same locality. (GMH p.25)

ISOPATHY

Definition: This term derives from the Greek *isos* meaning 'equal'. In homoeopathic terminology, isopathy is usually taken to mean prescribing a remedy made from the supposed causative agents or products of a disease to a patient suffering that same disease. Thus for instance a patient with tuberculosis might be given *Bacillinum*, prepared from the sputum of another TB sufferer. (GMH p.27)

When to use Isopathy: Many patients are hypersensitive or allergic to certain substances or agents, and often these conditions are curable by traditional homoeopathic methods. On occasion however, a patient will respond generally to homoeopathic treatment but a specific allergy will remain uncured which may be problematic. In these cases isopathy can be a useful adjunct, particularly in cases when all else has failed. (GMH pp.27/28)

ORGAN REMEDIES

Definition: This method is based on the assumption that a). certain remedies have a specific affinity for certain organs, and b). there are patients in whom it is desirable or necessary to treat specific organs or systems in order that the whole person may be properly cured. (GMH p.49)

Prescribing Technique: Usually low potencies (up to 6c) or mother tinctures are employed in organ prescribing, and the degree of symptom similarity may be negligible. Burnett, inspired by the work of Paracelsus and Rademacher, prescribed mother tinctures at the rate of five drops in a little water to be taken three times daily. Two drops per dose is usually sufficient for children. (GMH p.51)

Sarcodes: Organ prescribing incorporates the use of sarcodes & sarcode-derivatives (potentised healthy organs & their secretions) e.g. *Thyroidinum*. There is abundant clinical evidence that Organs can be acted upon therapeutically by potencies either of the organ itself or of its secretions. According to French research different potencies have different therapeutic uses. *Folliculinum*, for instance, is said to *arouse* different organ functions in 3x or 4c potencies, whilst in the 7c it will *regulate* function and in the 9c it will inhibit. (GMH p.52)

Some Leading Organ Remedies (GMH pp53-55)

Brain & Nervous System	Avena sativa O , Kali phos 6x.
Heart	Crataegus O , Cactus O
Digestive organs	Alfalfa O, Hydrastis O

POLYPHARMACY

Definition: This method encompasses any prescribing technique in which two or more remedies are prescribed *simultaneously*, either in alternation with each other or as a combined formula. (GMH p.71)

Prescribing Technique: Generally low potencies are more frequently employed, mostly within the range O - 6c...The biochemic tissue salts are ideally suited to this method. (GMH p.71)

Non-individualised Polypharmacy: One combination remedy widely used is: *Sulphur 6x, Silica 6x* and *Carbo veg. 6x*. This remedy is known by its abbreviation S.S.C. and is indicated for adolescent acne and as a general 'cleanser of the blood'. (GMH p.73)

TAUTOPATHY

Definition: Tauto = 'the same'. This method is really a variation of isopathy, the difference being that tautopathy refers specifically to the prescription of a potentised *drug or toxin* that a person has ingested at some time previously.

When to Use Tautopathy: It is not necessary to 'antidote' everything the person has ever taken in the way of medication - the vast majority of it will have left no long-term effects once it has been discontinued. (GMH p.99)

THERAPEUTICS

Definition: Therapeutics means that a prescription is arrived at by differentiating between a group of remedies that are known to have a proven clinical relationship to a particular disease process.

Prescribing technique: In therapeutics, the emphasis is on treating the disease process rather than treating the person. In common with other homoeopathic techniques, however, therapeutics depends upon individualisation of each case of disease in order to be consistently effective. The basic technique involves taking as complete a case as possible of the disorder, reference is then made either to a therapeutics book that included the disease to be treated or to a repertory and materia medica. (GMH p.105)

Therapeutic Books: It will pay dividends for any student or practitioner to create their own alphabetical therapeutics book, which ideally should be a loose-leaf type book that can be easily updated without destroying the structure. The aim is to jot down the distinguishing symptoms of the most frequently prescribed remedies in the disorder concerned. It is far more useful to thoroughly learn the top six remedies say, for headaches, than to write out indications for every single remedy that appears in the *Repertory* under 'Headache', because the rubric contains

many remedies that are very rarely needed in practice. It also make sense to start out with the disorders that you are most likely to encounter on a regular basis, such as headaches, influenza, earaches, sore throats, etc., and to learn these thoroughly. Further disorders and additional remedies can be added as one's experience grows.

You find with experience that once you have treated a dozen or so sore throats using your own therapeutics book to help you, many of the essential features of the remedies listed will be retained in your mind and you will have to consult the book less often. This has the advantage of speeding up your prescribing considerably, and it also enables you to streamline your case taking because you can eliminate and discriminate between remedies as you gather the information. You will find that you reach a point with disorders that you treat regularly where you know very quickly once the case had been taken whether the needed remedy was amongst your 'top six', or whether it was a less-frequently used remedy that was outside that group. As long as you are able to use therapeutics in a flexible way, amending and updating your groups or remedies according to your own experience, then the approach has many advantages. (GMH p.106)

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Next month we will explore **Obstacles to Cure and Maintaining Causes**