

California Homeopath

Article for the issue on challenge, transition, transformation

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In some sense Homeopathy is out of sync with modern society and its needs.

I have been experiencing this throughout the years of building my homeopathy practice on the East coast, just to start over again when two years ago I moved to California.

Having been through years of training in classical homeopathy, then ongoing studies of the Sensation Method with Dr. Sankaran, teaching, spreading the word, I kept working with my clients, had some wonderful results and some not so impressive ones. I always found my homeopathy practice satisfying. Yet I wondered what it was I loved so much in this work? This question kept simmering in the back of my mind as I maintained my private practice, wrote articles and published a book on homeopathy: What is it that my clients like about their interactions with me, and through me, with homeopathy?

On the other hand, another, just as important question: what keeps thwarting the spread of homeopathy in our society?

There are many ways to approach this question. One of my answers lies in the structure and expectations of homeopathic treatment. Homeopathy seems too farfetched for people to bring it into their everyday lives, and homeopaths do not have standard tools to be there with their clients in their everyday. Homeopaths recommend remedies but it seems like people need some support beyond receiving these remedies. Some practitioners have an innate capacity to offer this crucial element of clinical practice, but it is not inherent in the role of a homeopath. There are so many subtle ways the vital force shows its work throughout the days and weeks in between visits, a movement towards health, hard to discern if one is not trained to see it. How can homeopaths be there for their clients to guide them through this healing journey, how do they maintain the clients' wish to continue treatment when there are so many voices around them that tell them to stop.

Homeopaths are busy with other aspects of their work, so often essential clinical skills get overlooked and forgotten. These skills should be cornerstones of clinical practice and their lack is palpable and often contributes to the inability to establish or maintain a thriving practice.

Once homeopaths discover how to be there for their clients besides conceptualizing the case, deciding on remedies, knowing the Material Medica, figuring out remedy reactions, aggravations, and decide on potency and dosage, they can provide a framework in which their clients can heal and transform in more meaningful ways.

Relating to clients' experience of the healing process, frequent visits to discuss their reaction to the remedy without the promise of giving a new dose or a new remedy, is not standard care in homeopathy. Yet there is great therapeutic value in this process and there are refined skills to do this job well.

While I was working on refining my skills on my own, I realized that these were actually taught in psychotherapy training. I kept reinventing the wheel, and at the same time there was no place for many of these useful practices in the scope of my work as a homeopath.

In my particular case I decided to get formal training as a psychotherapist and see where my path would take me. Since I had only homeopathic schooling prior to this, (which is not accredited in the US) this path took me a lot of effort: receiving a bachelor's degree in psychology, continuing in graduate school and internships towards licensure as a psychotherapist. This is quite an arduous process especially for someone who is an already-established practitioner.

I have met several clinicians who are both psychotherapists and homeopaths – some of them combine their two crafts, some keep them separate. Either way one goes, a deep and broad understanding of the human psyche and body is an amazing combination to offer to clients.

Many of the issues around the innate psychotherapeutic qualities of homeopathy and the value in combining the two are addressed in *Homeopathy and Mental Health Care*, the book published last year, edited by Johannes and van der Zee. Several authors give their insightful observations and thoughts in this compilation – an interesting read!

Whether it is the wisdom of psychotherapy brought to the awareness of homeopaths or the wisdom of homeopathy brought to the awareness of psychotherapists, any of the bridging work is worth the effort.

Recognizing the value in other disciplines and learning from each other is a very important skill of a creative mind. In times when transformation is called for, homeopaths need to look at the world with a creative mindset: where are the sources of stagnation and challenges in their own profession as well as in the circumstances? Is there anything we can do to improve or transform them?

Healing through Homeopathy has many innate attributes that are not fully utilized as practiced by the majority of today's homeopaths. The vast amount of clinical and research material from the field of psychology has many answers homeopaths do not pay attention to. On the other hand, there is a growing need in the field of mental health to recognize the body's role in psychological processes: a field, where homeopaths can contribute with their understanding of the body- mind connection.

Whatever form the bridging process takes, it seems like a promising and fruitful path, worth exploring. Challenges move transformation – it is our choice to take on the challenge or let it pass by.