



HOMEOPATHY AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE: INTEGRATIVE PRACTICE, PRINCIPLES AND RESEARCH

Edited by Christopher Johannes, PhD, and Harry E. van der Zee, MD Hom

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HOMEOPATHY AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE IS A TRULY WELCOME ADDITION TO OUR homeopathic library! A collaboration of 22 homeopaths from 10 countries, the book's message is crystal clear: homeopathy can play a major role in today's global mental health crisis, if its inherent psychotherapeutic effects are acknowledged and enhanced.



Christopher K. Johannes and Harry van der Zee compiled and edited the work, giving each of the 22 authors a chapter to address a different aspect of homeopathy's role in mental health care. This anthology format is effective, as no one practitioner could possibly give a comprehensive overview of this emerging field. The book is organized into three main sections: 1) Introduction; 2) Integration, Case Application, and Therapeutic Process; and 3) Research, Ethics, and Theory. Here are some samples to give you an idea of the variety of topics covered.

In the Introductory section

- **Manish Bhatia** argues that while modern medical science acknowledges psychosomatic ailments, its therapeutic approach is still focused on suppressing isolated symptoms. Homeopaths have been exploring mental as well as physical aspects of clients' ailments ever since the 1790s, and Bhatia maintains that "this makes homeopathy the first medical modality to systematically study the psychological effects of medicines."

In the section on Case Application

- **Judyth Reichenberg-Ullman** gives a glimpse into her work and describes four cases in detail—children with Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, phobias, and aggression.
- **Edward Shalts**, New York-based homeopath and physician, gives a concise summary of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, its types and stages, and his experiences

treating this ever-more-relevant illness. He suggests approaches to Acute Stress Disorder, especially in the aftermath of natural disasters and other terror-inducing events that affect large numbers of people. In another chapter, he summarizes key points to consider when treating clients who are taking prescription psychotropic medications.

- **Harry van der Zee** addresses healing collective trauma, proposing the use of a "genus traumaticus" in similar fashion to the epidemic-specific remedy, the "genus epidemicus," that has made homeopathy popular throughout its history. He also introduces the idea of treating intergenerational effects of trauma, followed up with individualized homeopathic treatment as necessary. He draws on his work with miasms and on his experiences in Africa treating survivors of war, genocide, and rape.

- **Christopher K. Johannes** calls the homeopath's role in mental health care "underutilized." He suggests that while counseling skills are already integrated into homeopathy, this integration needs to be acknowledged and verbalized. A broader clientele could be reached if the counseling aspects of homeopathy were emphasized, and homeopathy could achieve fuller potential as an integrated modality. Johannes introduces the idea of a new title, "homeopathic counsellor." Whether the same practitioner is trained in both homeopathy and counseling or whether a team of practitioners works together in a collaborative fashion, clients would receive more comprehensive treatment.

- **Ian Townsend** shares Johannes' view on the lack of acknowledgment of homeopaths' inherent use of therapeutic skills. He sheds light on the similarities between Rogerian client-centered therapy and the homeopathic case-taking process. He encourages homeopaths to approach the therapeutic relationship in an informed way to improve their own effectiveness as well as develop a shared language with other health care professionals.

- **Kenneth Silvestri** uses elements of "systemic psychotherapy" and the genogram (family tree) in his work with clients. His findings resonate with van der Zee's suggestions for treating the inherited effects of collective trauma. While van der Zee treats intergenerational trauma first, Silvestri concentrates on the effects of family dynamics, then turns to the individual's constitutional remedy.

In the section on Research, Ethics, & Theory

- **Jane Ferris** shares findings from her research conducted with psychotherapists whose clients have had homeopathic treatment and psychotherapy conjointly. Ferris has found that homeopathy works synergistically with depth psychotherapy. The combination can be especially useful when therapy is stuck. Homeopathic remedies reach a level that is not easily touched by psychotherapy, and homeopathy can move patients to greater awareness and "wholistic" functioning.

- **Kate Chatfield**, building on the framework of ethics in medicine and mental health care, suggests that well-defined

guidelines for safe and ethical practice are crucial for homeopaths. According to a survey of 96 practitioners in the UK, homeopaths treat a full spectrum of mental health disorders. Problem areas are collaborative support, use of allopathic medication, compliance, boundaries, and safety for both patient and homeopath. Chatfield concludes that in order to create sustainability in the profession, collaboration with other health care providers and patients' social networks is a must.

And much more

Many more authors share their insights in the book including: Iris Bell on transformational outcomes of the healing process, Daniel Benor on spiritual aspects of homeopathy, Peter Morrell on Hahnemann and psychiatry, Philip Bailey on Multiple Personality Disorder, Jane Cicchetti on Jungian perspectives, Hannah Albert on personal evolution through homeopathic treatment, Seema Mahesh on her clinical diary, Joseph Rozencwajg on combining homeopathy with Chinese medicine, Corina Güthlin on research issues, and Traian Stanculescu on neuro-psychic disorders and biophotonics. Throughout the text, the authors cite and discuss evidence-based research. Their expertise and professionalism are evident in their writing and references.

This book will be eye-opening to the general public and the homeopathic consumer, as they realize the benefits of homeopathic treatment in mental health, as well as to psychotherapists and other

mental health care providers. Homeopaths reading this book will find ways of redefining their role in the healing community. Homeopathic educators can use it to create curriculum integrating the authors' ideas. A word of caution: some ideas in the text are thought-provoking or controversial and might be confusing for the novice. For this reason, I would recommend it only for those who have some basic understanding of the principles and practice of homeopathy.

Homeopathy and Mental Health Care is a good-quality, hardcover book that can be reread and referenced with ease. The list of short biographies of the authors and the separate index of remedies and keywords make it handy for quick reference.

Timely topic

Increasingly, mental health professionals are also realizing the importance of body and mind integration. Psychoanalysts and psychotherapists are looking for ways to incorporate the body's role in expressing the unconscious. Publishing *Homeopathy and Mental Health Care* is a wise and timely first step in a process of acknowledging homeopathy in broader circles of mental health care.

Now it is the task of the homeopathic community to follow the authors' lead and keep the momentum going. If these efforts succeed, we all—homeopaths, psychotherapists, and consumers of mental health care—will benefit.

This book celebrates the integration of tradition and innovation in homeopathy, and it offers an interesting challenge that stimulates dialogue. An important job well done!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ildiko Ran, CCH, PDHom, lives and works in the San Francisco Bay Area. In addition to being an established homeopath, she is currently training to be a psychotherapist. Ildiko believes that homeopathy and psychotherapy can inform and illuminate each other resulting in more rewarding treatment outcomes. Author of *Sensations: The Healing Power of Homeopathy*, Ildiko enjoys the intimacy of her private practice, while she also teaches and supervises novice homeopaths. When not at her desk, her five happy, healthy children keep her busy. She can be reached through her website www.innerexperience.com

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