

Autism: Beyond Despair

Tinus Smits

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Reviewed by David Nortman, Israel

Autism: Beyond Despair is best understood as part of the recent burgeoning literature on alternative perspectives on the causes and treatment of autism. It is a sort of manifesto that heralds an integrative approach based largely on isopathic detoxification using ascending potencies, along with the occasional use of supplements and other homeopathic remedies. Both obvious and potential causative factors are considered, including vaccinations, antibiotics and other medications, and major infections to which the child or the mother (during and even prior to pregnancy) have been exposed. According to Smits, in the majority of cases classical homeopathic treatment is not necessary to achieve cure.

Through numerous case reports, Smits builds up a portrait of his systematic clinical approach. He additionally offers substantial clinical evidence and invaluable insights about the links between a wide variety of pharmaceutical and infectious stress factors and the rise in the prevalence of the disease. Weighing in on the debate about autism and vaccination, he concludes that no single chemical in vaccinations causes autism, whereas in some cases even minor medications (such as a nasal spray used by the mother during pregnancy) may be a critical factor in the development of autism. Moreover, even when the disease appears to have been precipitated by a specific factor, most or all past factors need to be detoxified before recovery can take place. Smits takes all of this to mean that autism is best viewed as a multifactorial disease caused by accumulated insults rather than by a single factor.

For the skeptical classical homeopath, Smits' approach has the benefit of being easily verifiable in the clinic: aggravations, a normal occurrence during this process, both implicate the substance in question and indicate that detoxification of that substance has not been completed. Smits claims virtually a 100% success rate through his method, but again the usual caveat about falling into the habit of not finding a precise individualized remedy applies here.

Autism: Beyond Despair is intended for a mixed audience. For parents of autistic children it offers hope and inspiration through numerous cured cases and extensive testimonials. For the professional homeopath the book offers sufficient examples to inspire experimentation with this approach, but perhaps not quite enough to do so with full confidence: homeopaths are called to attend the five-day CEASE (Complete Elimination of Autistic Syndrome Expression) Therapy certification seminar in order to gain sufficient exposure to the method. Given Smits' recent untimely death, it can only be hoped that the teaching he began in this book, which appears not to be a complete exposition of the method, will be continued by his followers both through courses and in print.

Inspiring Homeopathy and *Autism: Beyond Despair* may be viewed as unconventional within the classical homeopathic world. Regardless, they reveal the original spirit of a restless, searching, and compassionate practitioner who was genuinely committed to the benefit of his patients and betterment of humanity. With Tinus' trek cut short, we owe it to him to consider his legacy and potentially continue in his path.