

# Introduction

## One Book For Under A Tree

The idea of a therapeutic guide is to find practical and efficient ways to select a homeopathic remedy for practitioners predominantly working in a busy, clinical environment. This book has come from years of working in an African context especially in rural environments where the types of cases seen and the health challenges of people are often quite similar and yet require the ability to choose an effective remedy on the spot. There is mostly little time for analysis and contemplation. This requires knowledge of case taking techniques, materia medica, therapeutic indications, keynotes, and repertory skills to be integrated together. Therefore, the inspiration for the book came from the idea of creating a manual for students and practitioners in Africa. From there, the book further developed into a therapeutic manual for clinicians wherever they are practicing, in rural or urban areas, in developed countries or in so-called developing countries.

I was asked at times when in Africa whether Africans have different problems and require different remedies. My answer was that most of the time, the same remedies are needed for any type of person, whatever race, and culture they come from. However, the daily experience of people living in relatively poor and rural environments, whether in Africa, Europe or the USA is different than in more urban and wealthy environments. The circumstances of one's life directly impacts one's health and therefore the type of conditions seen. In this book, some newer but popular African herbal medicines are also given based on the knowledge of them being widely used in various countries in Africa. *See Chapter Eleven.*

## KNOWING THE DEPTH OF A CASE

When treating more acute conditions, even if it is serious, then a summary of the key immediate symptoms is mostly enough to find a remedy. In homeopathic practice, knowing when to treat the underlying *constitution* or in understanding that the condition is a *chronic* one and requires a more in-depth analysis is important. The term *constitution* means that the basic *soil* or *terrain* of a person is taken into account, so a full health history, including family history of illnesses and all important physical and mental characteristics, including basic personality qualities are taken into account. In homeopathy, we treat the person, not just the disease. The complexities and uniqueness of each human being must be taken into account, which makes the *case taking* process a more nuanced and subjective experience, both for the patient and the homeopath. It can involve a conventional medical diagnosis and an understanding of the pathological processes of many diseases, but it also incorporates a unique knowledge of the human condition from a homeopathic perspective and the homeopathic medicines that can be given to fit each case. As is commonly stated, 20 cases of pneumonia or 20 cases of migraine headaches may be given 20 different homeopathic remedies as each case presents differently. With this perspective, even looking at the case from a therapeutic perspective means that we may often need to take a full intake, and fully individualize each case.

## ANALYZING THE DEPTH OF A CASE

Chapter One therefore explores the types of cases seen and the type and depth of case taking and analysis that may have to be done. This is the first step and decision the homeopath must make in trying to find a homeopathic remedy. If possible, it is nearly always a good idea to take a *full case*, as that can give the best longer-term approach to the situation and by looking at the whole person, seeing what possible remedies may be indicated throughout the curative process. However, it may not always be possible or practical to do this and

this is something that we can see often when working in an African context when working under a tree somewhere or in any clinical situation where there is limited time. Therefore, in Chapter One - Case Taking, the types of case taking and initial analysis to be considered is important to recognize. A decision must be made how far to go into the case. This is the most important first decision to make. Stopping too soon before one has a complete remedy picture is one mistake. Another is routinely taking a whole case, in which no information exists when the picture is right in front of you and a key selection of symptoms and rubrics is enough to go on.

The terms *acute* and *chronic* are used as one of the main distinctions in a case which may determine the type of case taking and analysis done. An acute case is one where there is a natural development, progression, and resolution within a certain time frame. Whatever treatment one gives it will ideally resolve leaving no longer term impact. Accidents and traumas are mostly acute and sudden infectious diseases (viral, bacterial, fungal) are acute. They are conditions superimposed upon the *constitution* and only the symptoms of that situation since it began should be considered in finding a remedy. In homeopathy it may still require an analysis of how it is affecting the whole person, but it is only the changes that have occurred since the situation began that are considered, even if the changes are affecting the normal state of the person e.g., making a person more irritable, impatient, sad, tired, excited etc. If an acute condition is not resolved it may become a chronic condition. A *chronic* condition is one where the body is unable to fully resolve the condition, and where the body/mind accepts a degree of compromise or acceptance of certain symptoms or disease states. It becomes a new normal state. As we get older, many of us may have lingering *chronic* conditions, that either come and go or are a constant nagging experience. It may be in any area of the body or mind, and it becomes embedded into the *terrain* or soil of a person. Sometimes, these conditions become exacerbated, and behave as if they are an acute condition and may need to be treated as such, but it is important to recognize that the roots of the condition are chronic and for full resolution, need to be treated at that level.

As a reminder, homeopathy only works by stimulating the body's own immune system and natural intelligence to support self-cure. The term cure can only really be used when the body has been able to cure itself through its own natural intelligence, the intrinsic self-defense systems and complex immune capacities that exist in all of us. The biological imperative or survival mechanism in all of us is to adapt to circumstances, including resolving acute and chronic diseases. Often, through that resolution, this knowledge and information is carried with us, protecting us against future challenges. This is both in psychological and physical conditions. It is part of an information field that is carried on through life and which is also inherited from our parents and grandparents etc. Our immunity and *natural intelligence* are an evolving thing, one which links us to our ancestors and the larger human condition and living planet.

Homeopathy and other forms of medicine are needed to help the body in this evolving and adaptive process when the body cannot resolve a situation by itself and needs help. All forms of medicine have their place. Conventional drugs help by doing the work for the body, ideally giving the body a break and time to strengthen itself. Homeopathy and other holistic forms of medicine support the body directly to do its work more effectively. They enhance the body's capacity to help itself. That is why in many cases one must understand the underlying unique *constitution* of a person in order to help get to the real roots of illness. The term *constitution* in homeopathy therefore means looking at the roots or soil of the whole person. It embraces a comprehensive, holistic analysis of mind, body, and soul, to see the unique patterns that exist in all of us and to understand that illness does not exist separate from the whole person. *Constitutional characteristics* include basic observations of a person's character, personality, body type, skin type, food preferences etc., qualities inherent to a person and that will not change with a remedy but none the less can be used to help decide on a remedy. In many chronic cases it is a mix of the main chronic symptoms

presenting, along with certain *constitutional* qualities that help in a remedy choice. Simply suppressing symptoms does not allow a real cure to take place. It only sublimates symptoms in the body, at times leading to deeper sickness. For example, a child who is given steroid creams for eczema may develop asthma afterwards as the skin condition has not been cured but pushed or suppressed further into the body. A homeopath will recognize that and by treating the child one may often see a return of the eczema as the asthma improves. This is an important observation and confirms to the homeopath that the cure is moving in the right direction. It is called *a return of old symptoms* when during the process of cure, old symptoms return temporarily and ideally will then resolve of themselves. This is especially the case when symptoms have been previously suppressed by strong medications. Skin conditions treated by steroids are a good example. The overuse of antibiotics is another example of this. Sometimes they cure infectious diseases but at other times, they can suppress symptoms and weaken the body's immune system. Anti-viral drugs can do the same thing, and therefore we should always be careful in knowing what medicines to take and for how long.

### THE DIRECTION OF CURE

There has been a well-known guide in homeopathy to the process of cure in a person. It states that disease resolves from the inside to the outside, from the more important to less important organs, from the top to the bottom of the body and in the reverse order of the appearance of symptoms. All the above directions indicate a process of cure where an integrated analysis of the whole person reveals that the body/mind always tries to protect the most vital functions of its being, to preserve the essential integrity of its biological function, which is its survival and optimal health. This happens through an integrated and centrifugal impulse to protect the central functioning of the body. Remember, the body cures itself.

### UNDERSTANDING SUSCEPTIBILITY

The term *susceptibility* is also often used in homeopathy. This indicates that each organism has its own *energetic vibration* and overall immunity. This is based on the underlying genetic foundation of a person, and the impact of life's experience, both mentally/emotionally and physically, including all the illnesses one may have had. Our personal life situation, including nutrition, exposure to environmental toxins and behavior also affect us. Some of these things we can control, other things we cannot. However, all these factors can create a unique susceptibility in a person, whether it is exposure from cold and heat, a weakness in the chest, digestion, skin, urinary organs etc., or if a person has never felt well since experiencing an illness. This could be the flu, malaria, an accident, or another condition that leaves an imprint in the person and creates a susceptibility to further similar challenges. It is a type of body memory, something one cannot see, measure, or necessarily evaluate with diagnostic procedures but which none the less has an impact. It may be that we often must give a remedy purely on the basis of this *susceptibility* to antidote the impact of a particular event or illness. The word used in homeopathy is *aetiology*, which also means causation. The goal of homeopathy is to lessen the susceptibility to illness through optimizing the health of a person. If health is optimized then perhaps the weakness of the chest will improve, or whatever lingering or more intense condition exists. It is similar to tuning an engine. We all need a tune up now and then and that is the role of holistic medicines. One of the most challenging yet crucial points in homeopathy is the concept of *energy* or as defined in homeopathy, the *vital force*. This describes a life force, a living energy which is infused with biological information for survival, adaptation, and optimization of health. It is the fuel, the energy for what can be called the *biological imperative*. It allows the body/mind to adapt to all circumstances in life, whether biological in the form of bacteria, viruses etc., and also psychological. It also allows adaption to the external, environmental, climate and other challenges one may be exposed to. Again, adaptation is the key and a healthy *vital force* gives a person the ability to do this. The quality of the vital force is predicated on both inherited and acquired factors in life. In Chinese Medicine it is called

*chi* and in India *prana*.

### **INHERITED OR MIASMATIC FACTORS**

Another term in homeopathy that impacts the chronic/constitutional picture of the person is the possible inherited tendencies that we all have from diseases in previous generations. In homeopathy it is termed a *miasm*. It comes from the word *miasma*, which describes *an influence*, or a tendency to something. It is used to describe a vibration or force, virtually a feeling that is present in the atmosphere. In homeopathy it is used to recognize the deeper roots of illness and how for example, a history of tuberculosis in one's family may reflect in a generalized weakness in the lung, or asthma or a tendency to getting a cough with each change of weather. In this example, the history of T.B. has passed on a similar vulnerability in the lungs, but without it being T.B. Homeopathy looks at many other diseases and symptom patterns in this way which can be traced back to a history of specific illnesses in the past. This becomes an important part of case taking for a homeopath and helps the homeopath see symptoms as part of an overall pattern.

We are a product of our parents and our ancestors and we inherit certain patterns and susceptibilities from them, for better and worse. This may be reflected in vulnerabilities in certain organs, or a predisposition to certain conditions. It may also be seen in mental/emotional patterns and basic physical and mental characteristics that make up our personality. These inherited tendencies are not generally seen in our DNA unless specific genetic markers are seen, but our body type and other characteristics are part of what we inherit and this information is what a homeopath looks at in identifying remedies and understanding the constitutional disposition. So, in Chapters One and Two, miasms are mentioned as a factor in determining the depth of a case and what are influencing patterns of symptoms and susceptibility. They are also discussed in some detail in Chapter Eight, when discussing treating children, as often the miasmatic patterns are important to see in children. There are also specific remedies in homeopathy that derive from specific diseases. They are termed *nosodes* and at times they can be needed to address the impact of a specific illness, even if it was one or two or more generations ago. Some of these remedies are listed in the Chapter Nine: Thematic Materia Medica chapter and also in Chapter Eleven, when looking at new and more unusual remedies.

### **CASE ANALYSIS: RECOGNIZING WHAT IS CHARACTERISTIC IN A CASE**

Once it has been decided at what level the case needs to be taken (*see Chapter One*) and we have taken down all the important and characteristic symptoms, then the question is what to do with the symptoms. It is important then that the homeopath can choose the most characteristic symptoms, the most unusual symptoms in every given case. That takes some time to learn and is part of the study of homeopathic remedies in the Materia Medica and of understanding the human condition. How a person behaves and their attitudes to life are not separate from their relationship to illness and any illness is connected to some of these personality characteristics. The study of homeopathic materia medica is a vast body of work, the accumulation of over 200 years of study and clinical evidence. But from this study, a person gains the knowledge to know what is characteristic in a case, or what is called in homeopathy a *strange, rare and peculiar* symptom. This may be a mental symptom, an unusual dream, strong food desires or aversions, weather likes and dislikes or simply a very unusual physical symptom that stands out in the case taking.

Once a case is well taken, one can go to the homeopathic repertory (an index of symptoms) to seek confirmation and remedy suggestions. A repertory is a whole study of itself and is not the focus of this book, which is based more on a therapeutic approach. However, an abridged repertory is given at the end of the book to help the homeopath in certain situations and also to familiarize a person with homeopathic language. A serious study of homeopathy requires a detailed understanding of this approach to the analysis of homeopathic symptoms and how it can assist in finding a homeopathic remedy and there are many repertories available, both in book and computer form.

## BOOK STRUCTURE

As the book is described as a therapeutic guide, once a case taking has taken place, one can simply go to the appropriate chapter to find the condition that the person has come with. There, one can find a list of remedies that can be given for whatever condition. However, it is also useful and, especially in deeper, more chronic and constitutional cases, to look at a more detailed materia medica for confirmation. This book has both and therefore both a therapeutic analysis and confirmatory remedy study can take place. One should ideally also look at other materia medica for confirmation if need be and cross reference with repertory rubrics if possible for further remedy possibilities.

After taking the case (described in Chapter One), one can look at Chapter Two to look at different case analysis techniques. This can help in navigating through and sieving homeopathic symptoms. This chapter also explores how to analyze the reaction to a remedy, what to do after having given a remedy and how to possibly follow up with another homeopathic remedy to carry on the case. Or one can also go to Chapter three, Clinical Therapeutics where one can find a lot of common conditions and their remedy recommendations or to Chapters Four to Seven if you are looking for some specific conditions and situations to treat. Chapter Eight explores how to treat children and gives more of a focus on the constitutional and miasmatic factors that are important in homeopathic practice, especially for children.

If the case is a chronic and you have focused on an analysis of the chronic and maybe constitutional symptoms in a person, then Chapter Nine can be consulted which gives a list of some of the most important remedies used in chronic treatment. It gives a summary of the picture of the most important remedies used in homeopathy, with a focus on the thematic aspects of each remedy. These are the key themes and ideas of a remedy which ideally should be there in most cases. There are more detailed homeopathic textbooks that can be looked at to gain a deeper understanding of these remedies but the key is to identify the unique characteristics we look for in matching a remedy to a person. With experience one can identify or at least be in the right direction with a remedy based on some observations of body type, facial qualities, general attitude, the *feel* of the person, and confirmed with a few keynote. In many cases that may be enough and for example, when working in rural parts of Africa, when very little information is often given to prescribe on.

Observational skills and gut instincts of the type of remedy needed is important and this is helped when the practitioner has a good understanding of the main homeopathic remedies and how they present in people needing these remedies. Chapter Ten gives a summary of the most important symptoms for many remedies used in a more *acute* context, for specific conditions. Again, every remedy has its own unique action and image and a remedy may be given for many types of conditions and diseases if the presenting picture is characteristic of the remedy. This is shown in this chapter and the list of possible acute conditions is given for each remedy, along with the characteristic symptoms of the remedy. Chapter Eleven introduces some newer and more unusual remedies used in homeopathy. As the materia medica is constantly expanding and new remedies are being explored, it is useful to see how some of these remedies may be used effectively to address some of the conditions seen today. Everything is in flux and new knowledge is important to explore and integrate.

## NAVIGATING THE REPERTORY

Chapter twelve gives an abridged repertory, with a focus on general and mental characteristics. There are many different types of repertories used in homeopathy, both books and computer repertories. This repertory is taken from Kent's original repertory and simplified somewhat to be used in a book form and to complement the rest of the information in the book. However, having a complementary full repertory to go with this book is advisable. A list of aggravations and ameliorations taken from Boger's Synoptic Key repertory is also given as a further cross reference.

If there is a clear condition presented, either acute or chronic, then looking at the clinical

therapeutics can be enough. Many cases can present without any constitutional/chronic symptoms: no food desires, dreams, general or mental symptoms or seemingly anything else. Sometimes, that may be because questions were not asked to elicit these symptoms. Either way, the key question is: Do we have enough information to give a remedy on? Looking at the information in Chapters Three to Six can ideally help do this and be a short cut to finding a remedy.

Whatever method is used to find a remedy, the key to prescribing is a wide and deep knowledge of *Materia Medica*. This simply comes from study and experience. A therapeutic guide is one way to access and analyze this knowledge.

If it is necessary, one can do a full repertorization, using a select totality of symptoms in the case, ideally from the Mind, Generalities and specific physical keynote. If one has time, that is the best way to go. However, in busy clinics it does not always help, especially in cases where there is a limited amount of information given or the case is very *one sided* with little confirming keynotes, modalities or constitutional information. Then looking at only 1-3 rubrics can be enough. The key is in choosing correct rubrics in the repertory. As mentioned, there are also different repertories that can be consulted, especially if the abridged one in this book is not enough. That may occur if specific physical symptoms are indicated. The focus in this book is in Generalities and in specific modalities, that is, things that make a symptom better or worse. Modalities are some of the most important characteristics of a symptom as they individualize a symptom in a person most clearly.

If one finds a strong modality, it becomes a general characteristic in the case. Certain remedies have strong modalities and it is important to know what these are. Therefore, it is recommended to study both *materia medica* and the repertory in this book to become familiar with the language of homeopathy and the types of modalities one can find.

#### **POSODOLOGY (POTENCY AND REPETITION)**

Once a remedy is chosen, the posology (dosage and repetition) is the next step, which requires some thought. In Africa, when working in rural settings, for practical purposes, most cases can be given a remedy daily in water, with instructions to stop only if symptoms get worse. This is different in private practice where you may have more access to the person and you can review the case more easily. A 4oz bottle will give about 20 doses of the remedy. In very acute situations the remedy can be given every 10-20 minutes for 3-4 hours. In less acute, then up to 4 times a day for 2-7 days. In sub-acute or chronic cases the remedy can be given 1 -2 doses a day until it is finished. The case can be reviewed after 3-4 weeks in most cases.

There are many different potencies used in homeopathy, the most common and popular ones being 6c, 12c, 30c, 200c, 1m and 10m. The process of making homeopathic remedies is called *potentization*. It involves a process of dilution and shaking (termed *succussion*) that enhances the energetic potency of a remedy. The more processes of dilution and shaking involved, the more potent it becomes. Homeopathic remedies do not work on a direct molecular level, but on an *energetic wave length level*, where the correct remedy resonates with the person. Therefore, the higher potencies, which have been more *energized* as they move away from the molecular level, become *more vibrant and strong* and work more intensely on the body's own energy, which in homeopathy we call the *Vital Force*. As mentioned, in Chinese Medicine it is called *Chi* and in India *Prana*. All these systems and philosophies recognize the essential energetic nature of living things, an immaterial force that animates and gives life to the physical body. It is part of a broader philosophical and scientific understanding of the underlying interconnectedness of all things and that there is an energetic foundation to the function of all matter and form.

The following guidelines can be used to choose which potency and repetition to give in most situations:

1. Acute case with intense symptoms: e.g., sudden high fever, sudden shock, trauma. Give 200c or 1m. Put one or two tablets in a glass of water and take approx. 1 teaspoon every 30-60 minutes. Stop when significant relief is seen and start again if symptoms return. Stir the remedy water each time it is taken.

2. Acute case with more mild symptoms or that have been there for some days: give 30c potency, dry or in water, repeat 3 times a day for up to 5 days. Stop if improvement is seen.
3. Acute exacerbation of an underlying chronic condition: give 30c or 200c depending on intensity of symptoms, dry or in water 3 times daily for up to 5 days.
4. Chronic condition but with intense symptoms requiring immediate relief e.g., extreme pain, intense psychological states: 200c or 1m, dry or in water up to 3-5 times a day until relief. Stop once relief is seen and repeat one time only if symptoms reappear.
5. Chronic conditions with structural pathology and low energy, e.g., chronic arthritis, neurological conditions, degenerative auto immune states, chronic fatigue states: give 6c, 12c, or 30c, dry or in water, 1-3 times daily for a week or until relief. Then continue one dose dry daily as long as things are continuing to improve. A water based dose can also be given if preferred. Stop if symptoms get worse. If no further improvement, wait a few days, review the case and if the same remedy is needed, increase to the next potency and give one dose daily for up to a week or a change is seen.
6. Chronic/constitutional case where the picture is clear, the energy of the person is fine and there is no obvious underlying pathology: give 200c, one tablet dry in the morning and another in the evening of the same day. Then stop. Do not give anymore. Wait 3-4 weeks and review the case.

It should be noted that in most cases, the right remedy will work in many different potencies. Every now and again, a higher potency will be the one needed and the lower potencies just do not seem to work. So, it should always be kept in mind to change the potency before changing the remedy. Also, practically we must give the potency we already have. Often, we may not have anything more than a 12c or 30c, so in those cases, we simply give the potency that we have available.