

“To like things like, whatever one may ail; there is certain help.”
Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Faust

What is homeopathy?

Homeopathy is a healing art based upon the principle that a particular homeopathic preparation may cure an illness or disease if that preparation can produce symptoms similar to that disease when taken by a healthy individual. The word homeopathy comes from the Greek words, ‘homois,’ meaning “similar,” and ‘pathos,’ meaning “disease.” While, Hippocrates taught about the Law of Similars 2400 years ago, this principle is now referred to as the Law of Similars. Samuel Hahnemann, a German medical doctor is credited with developing the modern principles of homeopathy.

A bitter discovery.

Dr. Hahnemann, a highly skilled physician and esteemed chemist, was the personal physician to members of the German royalty. As the author of a highly respected German chemistry book and fluent in a number of languages, he also translated literary and scientific texts. It was while translating a medical textbook that the groundwork was laid for Hahnemann’s subsequent development of the principles of homeopathy.

In this book, the author claimed that it was the bitter quality of Peruvian bark, that made it an effective treatment for malaria. Dissatisfied with the explanation Hahnemann made a medicinal preparation that was even bitterer. While testing the Peruvian bark he found that he developed malaria-like symptoms that would subside when he discontinued the intake of the material. Hahnemann found through exhaustive study that other materials from plant, animal, and mineral sources would bring on symptoms similar to a disease or illness for which it subsequently came to be used for the treatment of.

The Law of Similars.

In the 4th century B.C. Hippocrates said, “Through the like, disease is produced, and through the application of the like, it is cured.” Samuel Hahnemann coined the phrase “similia similibus curentur,” or “let likes be cured with likes.” He tested substances tirelessly, meticulously cataloging every symptom he experienced, it’s duration, and an extensive detailing of the accompanying symptoms. The basic essence of the Law of Similars is: like cures like. The first like is the substance that causes a certain complex of symptoms in a healthy person. The second like refers to the same symptoms when they are present in a sick individual.

Other physicians of the time became intrigued by Hahnemann’s findings and they started to experiment on themselves by taking different homeopathic preparations while keeping detailed notes on the ensuing symptoms. This type of testing is called “provings” in homeopathy and has been cataloged in books called Repertories. It is the Law of Similars that sets the standard of treatment in homeopathy.

Homeopathy was a significant part of American medicine at the turn of the 20th century. At that time there were twenty-two homeopathic medical schools and one-hundred homeopathic hospitals while 15% of the medical doctors were also homeopaths. Presently in France, 32 percent of family doctors use homeopathy, while 42 percent of medical physicians in the United Kingdom refer patients to a homeopath. The American Institute of Homeopathy challenged the American Medical Association (AMA) in 1912 to perform controlled studies comparing the effectiveness of homeopathy vs. the current medical treatment. The AMA declined. They have also declined to perform comparative studies of chiropractic care against standard medical treatment for the treatment of some ailments.

Homeopathy is considered safe and has been scientifically proven effective. However, it is important to consult a health care practitioner trained in natural medicine. Homeopathy is a great way to alleviate the overt symptoms of numerous health conditions. It is important to note that other forms of treatment may need to be incorporated into the treatment program to bring about long-term relief and healing. These might include acupuncture, chiropractic or nutritional therapy to address and correct the cause of ill-health.

Homeopathic remedies offer an extensive list of benefits.

What is the difference between "Classical" and "Nonclassical homeopathy?"

Have there been any scientific studies behind homeopathy?