

Chapter One

The Basic Principles of Homeopathy

Without a doubt, this is the most important chapter in this book. In it, you'll learn what homeopathy is and how it differs from conventional Western, or *allopathic*, medicine. I'd wager you're probably just looking to learn about a few homeopathic remedies so you can help your children, and I promise that you'll find such information in these pages. Yet homeopathy differs enormously from conventional medicine. So before you can set out on a course of homeopathic healing, you need to understand a few significant details. Otherwise you may be as astonished and disbelieving as Tim's parents were.

As happens frequently in my homeopathic practice, I saw Tim after his parents had already tried every single conventional approach offered to them by dermatologists. Tim was thirteen and he had an awful case of eczema. Lesions had spread all over his body, most looking like various stages of poison ivy, and they were, as Tim put it, "very ugly." The itching was enormous. Luckily, he only had a few marks on his face.

Tim and his parents felt devastated. This good-looking, intelligent boy couldn't socialize, as he was afraid that other kids would make fun of him. He avoided going to the beach, swimming in the pool, or playing sports. After all, what if another student saw his embarrassing lesions while he was changing in the locker room? His parents were also concerned that the eczema wouldn't get better no matter what they did. They'd heard from dermatologists that kids usually "outgrow" eczema. But it hadn't happened so far.

As far as homeopathy is concerned, the severity of skin lesions doesn't matter as long as the patient is otherwise healthy. In our initial consultation, I determined that Tim was. I therefore knew I simply had to find the correct remedy. One dose of that exact remedy would probably take care of everything. Of course, this was easy for me to say. The parents told me honestly that if not for the utter failure of conventional treatments, including steroids, they would never have considered bringing their son to a homeopath. In the end, they only came because a mutual friend recommended me as trustworthy.

After taking a look at Tim's lesions, I conducted a full homeopathic interview. The questions I asked were seemingly strange. I was mostly interested in what made his rash feel better or worse, and in what made Tim different from other people. I wanted to know his eating and sleeping habits and about his relationship with the weather, animals, and people. I needed to understand what made this particular child with eczema different from everyone else with the same diagnosis. In addition, I needed to match the set of symptoms that Tim was then exhibiting with the set of symptoms that had been triggered in healthy volunteers by a homeopathic substance during initial research that was conducted to understand its curative properties. That's how a homeopath carefully picks a remedy.

After about an hour and a half, I made a decision. I gave Tim a 200C dose of a homeopathic remedy called *Rhus toxicodendron*. He dissolved the sugary pellet under his tongue and told me he liked its sweetness. I explained to his parents that I'd given him a preparation of poison ivy that had been diluted 10^{400} (that is, 10 to the four hundredth power) times. Tim's father was a chemist. He said, "That's crazy. Nothing diluted this much can work." He was also surprised that I wanted Tim to take a pill only once. Both parents seemed disappointed that there was nothing else I was willing to offer. Nevertheless they didn't have a choice.

I asked Tim's parents to wait six to eight weeks and then come in for a follow-up appointment. Two months later, they brought Tim back. The rash was gone! Tim was so happy that he

decided to become a homeopath when he grew up. They reported that about five days after taking the *Rhus*, Tim complained of an increased rash and itching. But a few days later, the itching subsided and the lesions started to disappear. The skin on the upper parts of his body healed first, and then the rash completely went away.

Interestingly, not all cases of eczema would have responded to *Rhus*. To the contrary, I've successfully prescribed many other remedies for the same skin condition. In homeopathy, we treat the individual patient rather than suppress the symptoms of a disease. Like Tim, his parents were thrilled with the results of homeopathy. But they still wondered if we should give Tim more of the remedy, just to make sure he would be fine in the future. I explained to them that it wasn't necessary or even useful. He was cured.

What Is Homeopathy?

Homeopathy is a medical approach that's defined by the principle of *similars*: "like cures like." Its practitioners use small quantities of highly diluted substances that in larger quantities would provoke the same symptoms they intend to cure. In the case of Tim, for instance, we employed heavily diluted poison ivy to heal an itchy skin rash. The idea is to give the body's own healing process a tiny boost. All forms of medicine that don't follow this principle are considered *allopathy*.¹

In homeopathy, we appreciate symptoms as being the language in which the body speaks to us. They show us that the body is struggling to externalize the potential damage that a deep-seated illness could do at the body's core. If we're seeing various external symptoms, we can be fairly certain that deep damage hasn't been done yet. If these stop, we can assume that either the individual is cured or the illness has reached deeper to the core level.

In allopathy, symptoms are viewed as *being* the illness, rather than as an attempt to heal, which is why conventional doctors believe they must be suppressed. By contrast, homeopathy views the body's expression of symptoms as a healthy mechanism. For this

reason, homeopaths treat a patient's set of symptoms with remedies that would cause a similar set of symptoms if taken in sufficient quantity by a healthy person. Like cures like.

The Principle of Similars

Samuel Hahnemann was an extraordinarily intelligent and multi-talented man. Born April 10, 1755, into the family of a poor German porcelain painter, he had to work from a young age. At twelve, he was already tutoring Greek. Later on, he became a prolific writer, translator, doctor, chemist, and pharmacologist. Once he presented a thesis in Latin at the University of Leipzig. During this presentation, Hahnemann apparently quoted sources in eight original languages, including Hebrew and Arabic.

A tragic misconception about homeopathy is that it has no scientific basis. This statement couldn't be further from the truth. As you read on, I'm sure you'll appreciate how much Hahnemann has done for modern biomedical science. He introduced many groundbreaking ideas into medical practice. Hahnemann discovered homeopathy at age thirty-five by conducting a series of experiments on himself. In the process, he invented reliable research methods. Prior to that, he was already deeply involved with nutrition and noninvasive healing. We're talking about the 1700s here! Clearly a man way ahead of his time, without any doubt, Hahnemann deserves recognition as being the father of modern scientifically based medicine, both homeopathic and conventional.

Hahnemann's discovery of homeopathy began when he was translating a book on pharmacology that described Peruvian bark, a preparation made from a tree that was highly effective in treating malaria. As medicine in his era had no scientific basis, the only explanation offered by the textbook for Peruvian bark's curative effect was that it had the capacity to upset the stomach. It was a cockamamie time for medicine. The most respected theory of the era was the *doctrine of signatures*, which a German mystic named Jacob Boehme had popularized in two books, *Aurora* and *The Signature of All Things*, more than a century earlier.

The doctrine of signatures was a purely philosophical notion until Boehme's predecessor, the alchemist Paracelsus, had applied it to medicine. It postulated that certain features of a plant carry indications of its medicinal use. For example, plants with yellow roots or flowers (yellow signature) were supposed to cure jaundice. Plants impregnated with the color red (red signature) were considered to be beneficial for blood disorders. The hue of iris resembled bruises, so that's what the plant was used to treat. Also the shape of plants played an important role in determining their uses.

Hahnemann couldn't accept the textbook's silly explanation for why Peruvian bark worked so well. He decided to take the preparation himself and find out what would happen. After a few repeated doses of Peruvian bark, he developed symptoms that closely resembled the symptoms of malaria. These subsided shortly after discontinuation of the medication. Hahnemann described this experiment in a footnote to the translation, which was published in 1790. Six years later, after a continual literature search and further experimentation, Hahnemann published a landmark article, "Essay on a New Principle for Ascertaining the Curative Powers of Drugs." In this piece, he proclaimed the discovery of a curative law of nature: *Similia similibus curentur* (like cures like).

You were introduced to the principle of similars in the story about Tim's eczema. Let's look at another real present-day example to see how it operates. Yellow-jasmine poisoning causes severe weakness with significant heaviness in the back of the head, heavy eyelids, and chills running up and down the back.² The homeopathic preparation of this flower, a remedy called *Gelsemium*, has shown to be very helpful for treating the flu in people who develop the same set of symptoms.

Superficially, it might seem as though the use of the conventional drug Ritalin for the treatment of attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) follows the principle of similars. Ritalin is a stimulant given to children who are restless to calm them. But the way the medication is typically used actually doesn't correlate with our natural law.

For a medication to be suitable for a specific patient, other individual characteristics must be present, besides the ones that everyone exhibits. In the case of ADHD, as a common symptom is restlessness, we would look elsewhere. The same remedy won't work for everyone. Furthermore, remedies need to be homeopathically prepared—diluted and activated. This process is described in detail in Chapter Two.

Another interesting modern example demonstrating the principle of similars is the conventional allergy elimination technique. First, an allergist conducts a series of tests to find the allergen that's affecting someone. Then this same allergen is given to that individual in significantly smaller and smaller concentrations until the allergy goes away. Many children and adults have benefited from the application of this technique.

Interestingly, in the same year that Hahnemann published his seminal paper on homeopathy, British physician Edward Jenner published a paper on vaccination. He noticed that milkmaids never got sick with smallpox, a terrible, deadly infectious disease. But most of them had experienced cowpox, an illness benign to humans. Jenner cleverly suspected that milkmaids were protected from smallpox by the similar illness. He therefore decided to inoculate people with cowpox to protect them from smallpox. In Latin, *vacca* means “cow.” His idea worked perfectly. As a result, 1796 gave birth to two great medical discoveries, both of which incorporated the principle of similars.

Testing New Remedies

During his research on Peruvian bark, Hahnemann invented an experimental method for finding new remedies and investigating their qualities. He called this process a *prufung*, meaning a “test.” In English, it's known as a *proving*. Original provings were conducted using alcohol-based tinctures of various substances. Essentially, he took the substance and then experienced a set of

symptoms, which he recorded in great detail. Healthy volunteers, or *provers*, also received repeated doses of the substance in question and then would describe all the symptoms they experienced.

Obviously, people have varying levels of sensitivity to particular substances and therefore develop different sets of symptoms, depending on their individual dispositions. A few of the provers were highly sensitive to a particular substance and would develop hundreds, often thousands, of symptoms. Other provers weren't sensitive to it at all.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the systematic summary of everyone's combined symptoms is called *Materia Medica*, an old name for a textbook on pharmacology. It's a collection of symptoms experienced by a pool of provers and also symptoms that arose during cases of accidental poisoning. At a later point, symptoms cured by the remedy that weren't in the original provings were also included in *Materia Medica*.

Provings were a prototype for the first phase in contemporary pharmacological studies of conventional drugs. There's a major difference between a proving and a *phase I study*, however. Phase I studies are designed to establish side effects. Homeopathic remedies don't have any "side" effects. All effects discovered in a proving are used to match a particular substance as closely as possible with the symptoms of a particular ill person. When a perfect match—in homeopathic parlance, the *simillimum* (meaning "similar" in Latin)—is found, a remedy is administered to that sick person in order to stimulate a cure.

Double-blind, placebo-controlled homeopathic provings occurred as early as the first part of the 1800s, whereas the first placebo-controlled study published by conventional medical researchers dates back to a 1948 trial conducted by the Medical Research Council on the use of streptomycin to treat pulmonary tuberculosis. The term *double blind* means that neither the participants nor the researchers in a study know which substance specific participants are receiving. *Placebo-controlled* indicates that an active substance—a medication of

any kind—is being compared with a neutral substance, such as a sugar pill. Both requirements ensure that the results of an experiment are nonbiased.

Homeopaths instituted another important research design feature: the *multicenter study*. The importance of multicenter research is that it eliminates the influence of unforeseen variables, such as the character of a regional population and human error. If results are duplicated when conducting the same research in more than one location, that verifies that those results are extremely reliable and accurate. The first multicenter study of a homeopathic remedy (*Belladonna*) was conducted in 1906, whereas the first multicenter study of an allopathic drug was conducted in 1944.

I only present such facts to help you understand how the two hundred-yearlong feud between conventional physicians and homeopaths has translated into ignorance about homeopathy's scientific underpinnings. Unfortunately, our allopathic colleagues don't usually realize how deeply rooted homeopathy is in objective measures. Homeopathic prescribing is based on experimental data received from healthy humans. Its practice is rooted in precise and rational scientific observations.

During Hahnemann's research and professional practice, he continually refined his understanding of homeopathy and his methods. For a long time, Hahnemann used fairly concentrated tinctures of substances. For an unknown reason, he started to dilute remedies in proportions of 1:10 (called *decimal*, from the Latin word for ten, and marked with the letter X) or 1:100 (called *centesimal*, from the Latin word for one hundred, and marked with the letter C). Between each of a series of *dilutions*, he hit the tube against a thick book ten to twenty times. He called this process *potentization*.

Hahnemann believed that vigorous shaking helped to extract healing energy from the active substance in the remedy: a vital force that could produce a response in a patient's vital force. Frankly, we don't yet have a better explanation. But we do know that he discovered that higher serial dilutions provide deeper and

longer-lasting results than lower serial dilutions. He didn't "dream up" or theorize these results. He just followed the data he was objectively collecting from the numerous patients he treated. It wasn't unusual for him to administer remedies diluted 10^{400} times (200C) or more.

Today the majority of contemporary homeopaths from North America, Great Britain, and India use *ultramolecular dilutions*, as Hahnemann did. But, interestingly, a large group of homeopaths from other countries successfully employ remedies that contain discernible concentrations of original source materials. These remedies are still prepared by dilution with potentization, but they are much less diluted. Consequently, when they're taken, they require significantly more frequent repetition than higher dilutions—for instance, taking two to three doses a day for a duration of a month or more, as opposed to taking one dose every few months, or even years, for ultramolecular dilutions.

The concept of ultramolecular dilutions, although significant, is not central to homeopathy. It's more important to remember that during the process of serial dilution, the tube is vigorously shaken, or *succussed*, between each step. How remedies are manufactured will be explained in detail in Chapter Two.

Extremely Safe and Gentle

Physicians are taught in medical school that it's better to do nothing than to take an action that might harm a patient. This is the guiding principle of medicine and has been for twenty-five hundred years. According to legend, Hippocrates, the renowned Ancient Greek physician known as the *father of medicine*, was already telling his students, "First do no harm." Unfortunately, we know too well from past experience that conventional medications almost always produce side effects—some mild and some severe. A cold remedy can make you drowsy. An antibiotic can upset your stomach, cause severe allergies, or destroy important friendly bacteria in your gut. We often accept minor side effects as the "price we must pay."

Homeopathic remedies are nontoxic because they are highly diluted substances. In addition, they have no side effects, although in some sensitive children certain symptoms may appear. Occasionally, I'll receive a call from a frantic mother whose child has just ingested half a container of a 30C potency remedy. Each container holds about seventy pellets. Anyone familiar with basic math can understand that even if taken at once, the entire contents couldn't possibly cause any complications. The active ingredient in a 30C remedy has been diluted 10^{60} . That's a ten with sixty zeros following it ($10 \times 10 \times 10 \dots$ sixty times over).

Homeopathy is safer than conventional medicine. Look, you receive instructions on correct usage when either an allopathic doctor or a homeopath prescribes medication to you. The crucial difference is that if you correctly follow the instructions when you take a homeopathic remedy, nothing bad is going to happen. But even if you correctly follow a doctor's instructions when taking a conventional drug, it could have side effects.

The principle of safety has played a defining role in my own life. It was a cold Russian winter in 1984, and I was working as a family physician in Moscow. A doctor in our clinic called in sick, so I agreed to cover her home visits. It was a busy day for me, full of cases of common colds and bronchitis. As one of the addresses belonged to a close friend of mine, I left this visit for the end of my tour. It would be so nice to meet him and talk about the American science fiction and jazz music we both liked! Finally, I was at his home. I rang the bell. A beautiful young lady opened the door, the patient. She turned out to be my friend's sister, Natasha. I never knew he had such a beautiful sister!

After examining Natasha, I diagnosed her with a mild case of bronchitis and offered her a few choices. She could take herbal expectorants, conventional medication, or homeopathy. She'd heard homeopathy was very good and was surprised that a local family physician knew about it. In Russia, homeopaths are highly respected and usually expensive. She was eager to try it. Because I liked her and she was my friend's sister, I volunteered to go and fetch the remedy for her. She was instructed to take one pellet

three times a day. During our follow-up appointment, Natasha admitted that the pellets were so little and tasted so delicious that eventually she took all those remaining at once.

The results were amazing. Whatever I gave her worked well. She was cured. We got married a few months later and we're still together. Did Natasha's treatment have any side effects? Actually, it did. We now have two beautiful daughters.

Hahnemann was firm on the principle of giving a single remedy to a patient at one time. Throughout his life, he fought against the practice of polypharmacy, or prescribing numerous medications to the same patient, a problem that persists in allopathic medicine. Adverse reactions to medications must often be attributed to drug interactions. Two hundred years of experience have shown that homeopathic clinicians who follow the principle of using a single remedy receive much better and longer-lasting results.

Of course, finding the special remedy for a special person can sometimes be difficult. But the results are spectacular. Soon you'll see for yourself.

Consistently Proven Effective

The foremost benefit of homeopathy is its efficacy. In fact, the primary reason homeopaths are enthusiastic about what we do is that we are privileged to witness the miracle of a complete cure every day. Frankly, we never get used to it. Even after practicing homeopathy for more than twenty years, I'm still amazed at how quickly the human body can recover from a seemingly dangerous condition after the administration of a lone tiny pellet. At conferences and social gatherings, whenever several homeopaths are in the room, there's an endless exchange of stories about the numerous "little" cures they've seen for acute conditions, such as hives, colic, and poison ivy, and the "big," amazing cures they've seen for severe chronic illnesses, such as asthma and ADHD.

Its consistent success rate was the most important factor in making homeopathy popular in the early 1800s, and it has kept the practice of homeopathy alive in the United States since then,

despite conventional medicine's opposition to its principles and methods. Of course, every homeopathic practitioner has experienced failures, yet our outstanding success in curing both children and adults motivates us to continue our efforts to find the perfect remedy for those patients we couldn't help right away.

Samuel Hahnemann became a medical celebrity in 1799 due to an early success. Only three years after homeopathy's official discovery, an epidemic of scarlet fever swept Germany. Children were the main victims of the illness, which is a severe form of strep throat. Hahnemann achieved such impressive results in the treatment and prevention of this deadly illness that soon many allopathic physicians adopted his new approach and began praising homeopathy. The outcome was staggering. Ten physicians gave the homeopathic remedy *Belladonna* to 1,646 children for prophylaxis, or preventive treatment, and they reported that only 123 developed the illness, whereas the morbidity rate in the untreated population surged as high as 90 percent! Subsequently, the protomedicus of Prussia, a public health official comparable to our surgeon general, declared the remedy effective, and the government made the use of *Belladonna* for the prevention of scarlet fever mandatory. Today the scope of this decision would be similar to having the U.S. government recommend homeopathy for the treatment of cancer or AIDS.

From its inception, homeopathy has been able to treat epidemics with impressive results, making the approach popular worldwide. In *The Logic of Figures*, first published in 1900, Thomas Bradford, M.D., a homeopath and historian, compared success rates from allopathic therapeutics with those from homeopathy. Here are some interesting statistics that he put together:

- In 1813, following the defeat of Napoleon's army by the Russians, retreating French troops carried an epidemic of typhoid fever through Europe. When the epidemic hit Leipzig, Hahnemann saw 180 cases of typhus. He cured all but two, representing a 1 percent mortality rate. Conventional physicians reported a 30 percent mortality rate.

- In the European cholera epidemic of 1831–1832, homeopathic hospitals had 7 to 10 percent mortality rates, whereas conventional physicians saw rates of 40 to 80 percent. As a result, a law forbidding the practice of homeopathy in Austria was dropped.

- In 1854, cholera broke out in London. The House of Commons asked for a report comparing various methods of treatment. Initially, homeopathic figures weren't included. According to the report, the mortality rate for patients under allopathic care was 59 percent. In response to an inquiry by the House of Lords, statistics for patients under homeopathic care were then provided. The mortality rate was only 9 percent.

- During the 1850s, several epidemics of yellow fever hit the southern United States. Today we know that mosquitoes transmit this disease. William Osler, a prominent physician of that era and author of the famous book *Systems of Medicine*, reported that the allopathic mortality rate from yellow fever was 15 to 85 percent. Homeopaths reported a mortality rate between 6 and 7 percent. In a similar epidemic in 1878, the mortality in New Orleans as reported by allopathic physicians was 50 percent. Homeopaths reported mortality of 6 percent for 1,945 cases.

- Children have always been easy targets for severe infectious diseases, and one of the most deadly of these was diphtheria. Although diphtheria was eventually eliminated by the advent of widespread vaccination, before then it was difficult to treat, as it rarely had the same presentation. Almost every case was a life-or-death proposition. Records from 1862 to 1864 in Broome County, New York, indicate an 84 percent mortality rate for patients given conventional medicine and only a 16 percent mortality rate for patients given homeopathy. Individualization of the homeopathic treatment was the most crucial factor in its success.

- Another devastating childhood disease is polio. Before the polio vaccine, this illness used to spread in epidemics, paralyzing and killing huge numbers of children. The most memorable outbreak was the infamous polio epidemic of the 1950s. An American homeopath, Arthur Grimmer, M.D., and an Argentinean homeopath, Francisco Eizayaga, M.D., both reported excellent results

from using homeopathy to prevent and treat polio prior to the introduction of the vaccine.

- In 1996, the Homeopathic Medicine Research Group, which was formed by the European Union to determine the effectiveness of homeopathy, conducted a large study. It's important to know that scientists skeptical of homeopathy were involved in the design of the study. The study analyzed outcomes from seventeen clinical trials on a total of 2,001 subjects and showed that homeopathy was more effective than a placebo. There was only a slim probability (0.027 percent) that this result was due to chance.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that 10 to 20 percent of Americans come down with the flu annually. Children are two to three times more likely than adults to get sick, and children frequently spread the virus to others. Although most people recover, the CDC estimates that more than 100,000 people in the U.S. are hospitalized, and about 36,000 people die from the flu and its complications every year. Taking statistics into account, homeopathy is a significant untapped resource.

The flu pandemic of 1918–1919 is still remembered for its devastating death toll. Considered the worst epidemic in U.S. history, with 600,000 people dead, it took the lives of 20 to 40 million people worldwide. In 1921, in a long article about the epidemic, the *Journal of the American Institute of Homeopathy* reported that in Dayton, Ohio, the overall mortality rate of flu patients was 28 percent, whereas in 26,000 cases of flu treated homeopathically, patients had a mortality rate of only 1 percent. Hahnemann College in Philadelphia reported a similar figure for their homeopathic treatment of flu in 26,795 cases that year. Similar statistics came from other homeopathic physicians across the country. Flu season typically lasts from November to March. The media-generated panic that surrounds it each year keeps the memories of the earlier disaster alive.

Cases When Homeopathy Won't Work

Homeopathic treatment doesn't work in situations where structural damage has been done to a patient's body, cases such as genetic disorders, birth defects, and other profound physical conditions (for example, side effects from conventional medication or certain types of injuries). In other words, a condition has an *obvious* cause that may or may not be reparable—but if so, only by some means other than homeopathy.

Genetic Disorders and Birth Defects

Homeopathy cannot work if someone has a genetic disorder that's resulted in significant physical or emotional and mental deficiencies. For instance, children with Down's syndrome have multiple health issues. Although many symptoms can be relieved with homeopathy, defects related to intellectual functioning and structural changes of the cartilage cannot be removed. The same is true of other genetic disorders. They are inbuilt.

Pregnant women who consume significant amounts of alcohol or illicit drugs can damage their babies in the womb. These irreversible defects can be quite significant. Interestingly, when attempts are made to treat these children homeopathically, at first there's often a significant improvement in different levels of functioning. But eventually, it trails off. The next prescription usually results in a less-intense and shorter-lived response.

Side Effects of Medication

Frequently, it's impossible to treat the side effects of a conventional drug with homeopathy. But there's a way around the problem.

Imagine that someone comes to the emergency room with a knife sticking out of his thigh and says, "Listen, Doc. You have to help me. But you cannot touch the knife!" Although it would be possible to give the guy painkillers, that type of care would be silly.

To close the case, all you need to do is remove the knife and sew up the wound.

In the instance of treating side effects, my advice is to discuss possibly changing the medication with the doctor who prescribed it.

To be fair, I must admit that some homeopaths claim success in treating side effects of allopathic medications. At least one book has been published on this subject. Still, the proposition doesn't make as much sense as changing medications. Doctors have many drugs of the same type to choose from and can usually adjust their treatments.

Now, of course, an even more reasonable solution is to try to cure an illness with homeopathy rather than conventional means. If you succeed, then your child won't need allopathic medication. But is this true for every illness? What can homeopathy do for terrible chronic diseases, like cancer and AIDS, which don't spare children?

Advances have been made in the homeopathic approach to life-threatening, chronic illnesses. However, conventional physicians have been increasingly successful at saving and prolonging the lives of patients with cancer and AIDS. A significant amount of money has been directed toward the research and development of medications in these areas. Thousands of dedicated physicians and scientists have been working on saving people's lives. We cannot disregard these facts! As a parent, you should always consult with experts in the field before making a critical, life-altering decision.

Reversible Structural Problems

A few years ago, I received a referral patient from a famous homeopath. Noel, a slightly obese woman in her late fifties to early sixties, had been seen by this homeopath three times without success. She complained of excruciating pain in her right shoulder, and her story was quite remarkable. Noel claimed that while she was asleep, her husband, also very large, had rolled over in his sleep, pressed on

her chest, and dislocated her right collarbone, thus causing all her subsequent pain.

Every conventional specialist possible saw her. Numerous imaging studies, including an MRI, had been performed. They found nothing. As happens very frequently when doctors don't find answers, Noel was pronounced anxious, depressed, or perhaps psychotic. As a result, she was placed on many painkillers, mood stabilizers, and antidepressants. The list of her medications was long and scary. Certainly, she had many side effects from them, too. Although Noel *knew* that she was right, the doctors' studies just didn't support her claim.

Noel went to an acupuncturist. No results. Finally, she located the famous homeopath. He prescribed a few remedies for her with no effect and also decided that the woman was probably psychotic. That's when I came in handy, for I am a psychiatrist as well as a homeopath. In this case, I made the perfect second opinion.

Noel came to see me along with her husband. The first thing I noticed was that they both were very honest, normal people, and Noel was suffering a lot. After taking a thorough history, I was convinced that there was no evidence of mental illness. I believed Noel's story. I also knew something that the conventional physicians refuse to admit to their patients, which is that there are *osteopathic* physicians. These doctors are specially trained to diagnose and treat structural changes, even if they are very minute.

I sent Noel to an excellent osteopath, who also saw nothing in the tests. But an osteopathic examination showed that her collarbone did move just a tiny bit. In an area so rich with nerve endings, this minute displacement was causing Noel an enormous amount of pain. The osteopath adjusted the problem. Literally, after the very first visit, Noel felt much better. For the first time in many years, her pain was diminishing! In three to four weeks, she was off most of her medication. She was cured!

This case illustrates a few important points. First, it proves—yet again—that our collective knowledge has many limitations,

even when we use modern technology. Second, if there is an *apparent* cause of an illness, it has to be removed. Third, do not give up on your convictions about your family's health. If you know why your child is ill, pursue the line of treatment that can remove the cause. Furthermore, medical miracles can happen. I know, for example, that osteopathic physicians adjust severely displaced collarbones in newborns. The results look like a miracle, but they're not. There are many other health care providers, both alternative and conventional, who can treat your child. Of course, I've seen many so-called miracles that happened with homeopathy.

A Holistic Approach

Homeopathy uses a holistic approach. An allopath looks at a patient in segments, as if under a microscope, and frequently forgets about the person as a whole organism. A homeopath looks at a patient through two lenses: a telescopic lens, to see the person's entire health picture, and a microscopic lens, to distinguish what makes this person unique. When we look at people as unified beings with a telescopic perspective, we begin to understand their true level of health. Understanding levels of health is important. We need to know how healthy or sick we are so that we'll know what to expect from our treatment—homeopathic or otherwise—and what various symptoms indicate.

How frequently have you heard about someone with a serious illness who was told by doctors ten years earlier that he had less than a year to live? I'm guessing often. At least, I have. I used to laugh at scenes in movies and books, where a doctor somberly informs a patient, "You have three months to live." How would the doctor know? Who is this doctor, a god or something? I find prognoses of death unbelievable, especially when they come from allopathic physicians who are consumed by issues such as gross and cellular pathology, testing (of all kinds), and poisonous medications.

There is a way to see a big picture and it's actually rather easy to understand—that is, after a leading Greek homeopath of our era,

George Vithoulkas, digested it all for us in his book *The Science of Homeopathy*.

Let's consider the human being as a system of overlapping circles that would be diagrammed like a dartboard. If we imagine a human being as three circles of growing diameter, the inner circle would represent the emotional and intellectual level, the second circle would represent the vital organs, and the outer circle would represent the skin and other less-important organs. According to this model, the inner circle is surrounded and protected by the outer circles. This is how it is in real life. Our mental and emotional functions are the most important ones. Without them, we don't exist. In order to provide sufficient housing and energy supplies to these functions, we need vital organs. To create support and protect the vital organs, we need our skin, our skeleton, and all the other devices of our body. When a person is injured, the blood flow is naturally redirected to supply the vital organs first.

I think we can agree that our deepest dimension is the emotional and mental self. Have you ever entered a room and instantly liked or disliked someone there without even talking to him? Think back to college or high school. Perhaps a new professor or student entered the classroom and—in a flash—you just knew you'd get along well. That's how quickly, and deeply, the emotional self works. When we're upset, we cannot function well in any capacity. Emotional pain can be as strong as physical pain or stronger. The mind is important, too. Without clarity of mind, everything else is irrelevant.

Next comes the dimension of the vital organs. We wouldn't be able to feel, think, or do anything if we didn't have a brain or a heart, or a set of lungs, or a liver, and so on. Is this starting to remind you of *The Wizard of Oz*? Remember how important these dimensions were: the Cowardly Lion desperately needed courage (emotion), the Scarecrow needed a brain (vital organ), and the Tin Man wanted a heart (vital organ).

The least important, albeit still valuable, dimension of our being is our skin, bones, and other more surface organs and attributes.

Now when the body aims to heal itself, it tries to express its problems at the most superficial level it can. This fundamental concept in homeopathy relates to the natural tendency of the human body to protect its vital core.

As a child, I went to school with a boy named Michael, who was mentally retarded. He had a large head, but he couldn't read even in the fifth grade. Although this lack of sufficient progress is sadly a reality for many students in America with normal intelligence, it was unheard of in Russia in the 1960s and 1970s, unless a person was developmentally disabled. And Michael was. His behavior was offbeat, too. He often was putting his face close to someone else's, peering into the windows of apartments on the ground floor of buildings, and cursing. Even during the frigid Russian winter, Michael walked around in just shorts and a T-shirt.

To the neighbors, his mother would sometimes say something along these lines: "Michael is not so smart, but at least he's healthy." Wrong!

Michael wasn't healthy. In fact, he was very ill. His most important functions were significantly impaired, although the housing for them (his brain) was pretty large. Please take your time to think about what I tell you next, as it is important. A smart, humorous teenager with terrible pimples is much healthier than a school beauty that sulks around and has suicidal tendencies.

Actor and director Christopher Reeve was one of the most astonishing examples of the accuracy of this three-level diagram of health. After the horseback riding accident that paralyzed him, he lost the use of his body, but he retained his mind and his soul. At the core, he was healthier than thousands of good-looking, but totally dysfunctional, junkies or severely developmentally disabled people, because his emotions and his intellect were intact! I'm not saying he didn't have bad days, as I'm sure he did. But he was resilient. He ultimately died because the structural damage to his body was too severe.

Of course, there are also cases when a physical illness adversely affects a person's emotional and mental state. This means that the person is deeply ill—malfunctioning on all three levels. I've met

people with severe cases of cancer who were happy and I've met teenagers with pimples who were almost suicidal. The intimate interplay of various levels of our body and soul creates an opportunity to assess a person's future prospects. A child with severe pneumonia who's happy and surrounded by a loving family has a much better chance of a complete recovery than an unhappy orphan with eczema. In homeopathy, when we look at someone's symptoms, we take the mind-emotions-body into account.

This brings us to the discussion of a slightly different dimension of our health. Obviously, the severity of an illness significantly affects the whole person. Anyone who's had a toothache or a splitting headache will tell you that he felt totally miserable and absolutely couldn't function. I frequently hear statements along the following lines: "I'd rather have my hand amputated than have this terrible toothache" or "There's nothing worse than migraines!" People say such things in the heat of the moment. But how can we properly assess the level of health based on the severity of the illness?

Levels of Health

We can actually distinguish four major levels of health.

Level One Health

I frequently use the example of a young child growing up on a farm to illustrate the ideal state of total health. Generally speaking, children living in a natural environment stay healthy. They wake up in the morning, have a simple nutritious breakfast, and then go out to play. Or they help their parents take care of the family's livestock and pets. The constant contact they have with the environment gives the children's immune systems an opportunity to learn very quickly what is a "friend" and what is a "foe." Every minute of their lives is spent training the immune system. Thus it grows strong and doesn't make mistakes by hysterically overreacting to a harmless thing like cat's dandruff or dog's fur or taking what is a part of the child's body for an enemy. Allergic reactions simply don't exist.

The endocrine system grows strong. They aren't bombarded with junk food and a huge overload of sugar. These children's emotional lives are also simple and healthy.

One day, a Level One child comes home and says, "Mom, I don't feel so good."

The mother checks out his temperature. It's quite high. "OK, son," she says. "Go make some hot tea with honey and get some sleep."

The boy goes to bed and perspires all night. In the morning, he wakes up healthy and ready to go back to school. Aggression (a virus) has been met with immediate strong retaliation (his immune system), followed by a complete elimination of the illness. No emotional or physical consequences of this brief illness are present. Because this boy is healthy, he needs no intervention, no medication. If the cold or the flu were severe, one dose of a homeopathic remedy or herbal medication would probably provide all the help necessary to overcome the illness completely.

Children at this level of health get colds maybe once a year, or even less often. They don't have any allergies or skin problems. They're happy, content, full of energy, and they have pleasant dispositions. I see them on the street, in my friends' homes, or in old movies, but never in my office. They don't need medications. They're completely and independently healthy, and can take care of their daily stresses by themselves.

This is the ideal health we all strive to achieve. Unfortunately, for more children in our stressful and polluted world it seems to be a fairy tale. *But let's not give up!*

Level Two Health

City dwellers and inhabitants of suburban areas are familiar with this level of health, as the so-called civilized environment is terribly polluted. TVs, electronic games, and other sources of loud noise, visual stimulation, and violent imagery contaminate the minds of children. Many chemicals taint the air, water, and food

supply. Refined foods have replaced wholesome, more nutritious ones. Drugs have also become a regular part of the culture—and I'm not even referring to illegal street drugs.

God forbid a child has a slight discomfort or a low-grade fever! Medication is introduced right away. Products that should remain hidden deep in the medicine cabinet, to be used only in the state of a *real* emergency, come out prematurely. If children have a scratch, they get an antibiotic ointment. If they have a pimple, they are given antibiotic pills for ten days. For fever, they get aspirin. The vaccination for hepatitis B is now given to infants at two days of age. Why? Just in case something happens.

Are any of these interventions inherently wrong? Of course not! If somebody has a serious wound or a bacterial infection, antibiotics can provide a lot of help. A particular vaccine administered to a population from a high-risk group could be lifesaving. But all of these medications become the enemy of good health when everyone blindly uses them.

The discovery of antibiotics changed the destiny of many severely ill children. Their lives were saved. But then doctors started to prescribe antibiotics for mild and even questionable cases of infections. As a result, new strains of bacteria developed that were resistant to the antibiotics. So we needed new, stronger medications. A vicious cycle was initiated. Hormones (steroids) also saved the lives of many children. Then doctors began prescribing them left and right. Now we're collectively paying the price. Most of our children's immune systems are weak and overstimulated. Their bodies don't know the difference between a friend and a foe. That's Level Two health.

Let's follow an imaginary child named Jessica. Her morning begins with eating cold cereal that contains about a dozen different additives for flavoring, coloring, and preservation, drenched in milk "fortified" with different vitamins. The cows that gave the milk were given hormones every day. Residual hormones have spilt over into the milk. Often Jessica's breakfast is consumed while watching a channel on TV that plays music videos or violent animated programs.

Last night, Jessica sneezed a few times, and her mother gave her an anticongestant “just in case.” But this morning, her nose is still stuffed, so Jessica gets a hormonal nose spray. And this is only the beginning of the day! There’s more to come. The list of all the overwhelming stressors the child faces could take up a few hundred pages! Jessica’s emotions, her immune system, and her endocrine system are overstimulated and weak. She comes home from school feeling under the weather. She has a slight fever. Her mother gives her some aspirin. By the next morning, Jessica is even sicker, so she goes to a pediatrician. The rest of the story is clear: she’s ailing for about two weeks.

The majority of relatively healthy children of the modern age belong in the same category as Jessica. They were born with Level One health, but all the numerous stresses put on them by our civilization have made them weaker and dependent on drugs. In a sense, we offer healthy children “crutches” that they don’t really need, and their bodies grow up crippled. They don’t know how to get by without the immune support.

Level Two children have colds many times a year. These regular colds, flu, and ear infections linger and pile up. So they typically have one or two superficial chronic health problems: conditions such as acne, eczema, ear infections, asthma, attention disorders, or anxiety. But take note! It is important to acknowledge that these children still experience acute illnesses with high fevers. This indicates that their bodies are capable of fighting bacteria and viruses at the superficial levels and coping with everyday stresses.

Children at Level Two have every chance and reason to move to Level One. But reclaiming their health requires breaking the vicious cycle of overmedication. Instead of giving them antibiotics and other medications when they get an acute illness, treatment requires precise homeopathic prescribing and adjustments to their lifestyle and diet. As they still possess resources good enough to shake off all the superficial problems they have, even a single common cold treated with homeopathy can boost their immune defenses to a totally new capacity. Eventually, they’ll be able to overcome the adversities of daily life on their own. Like the Level

One farm boy I described, when the immune system is given the chance to fight on its own, it learns and becomes stronger in the process.

Your ultimate goal is to increase the level of your children's health to Level One, or as close to that level as possible. This will make your children *independent* of drugs. You'll learn what you can do as a parent to help your children overcome acute conditions with homeopathy in Part Two. Chronic problems require *constitutional homeopathic treatment*. This approach is described in Part Three.

Level Three Health

Unfortunately, larger numbers of children are moving toward this unsatisfactory level of health. Its main characteristic is the presence of at least one deep-seated chronic illness, such as a severe form of ADHD, depression, autism, asthma, obesity, or an eating disorder. The hallmark of this level of health is a lack of acute diseases. Remember Michael from my childhood? He was seriously developmentally disabled but never had even a simple cold! Obviously, he was not healthy. So what was the reason he didn't catch colds? As his problem was so severe and so central to his being (emotional-mental), the integrative systems of his organism were always on the highest alert possible.

Although the same defensive systems are activated in Level Two children, they don't run at such a high level. They're simply overstimulated and exhausted. In Level Three children, it's a matter of survival. Their bodies continuously attempt to repair what is wrong and fail. The defenses are revved up. A flock of viruses attempting to attack the body hit a firewall of the immune system and burn right away. There's no room for a trivial cold. The battle for survival renders the body unresponsive to more superficial stimuli like cold and flu viruses.

Some parents of children with severe behavioral problems stemming from ADHD or autism have reported that on the rare occasions when their children develop colds with high fevers, their

behavior transforms. As one mother said, “For this day or two, my son was ‘normal’ again.” This observation is exciting news to homeopaths. It means that if we learn how to stimulate such children appropriately, we could cure them!

Hahnemann was the first doctor who noticed this phenomenon. He postulated that a stronger acute illness takes over the old, weaker illness. He suggested that if we give a chronically ill person a substance that produces an acute, strong illness, it would cure the chronically ill. It worked. This approach is called homeopathy. Homeopathic remedies are made from substances that in healthy volunteers or victims of accidental poisonings caused symptoms similar to what the patient has. The principle of similars, remember?

Usually, as chronically ill children get better, they start having simple colds. The key then is to treat these acute illnesses either with medicinal herbs or if indicated, with homeopathy. Seek professional guidance on this matter. As treatment goes on, children get stronger and move to Level Two health, and perhaps, eventually, close to Level One.

Level Four Health

This level of health is a sad situation. Most of the Level Four patients that I meet are adults. These individuals have severe, incurable illnesses, such as advanced cancer and long-standing schizophrenia, or they’re in the final stages of other fatal illnesses. The goal of treatment is to make them comfortable by alleviating their pain, agitation, and depression. Frequently, a correctly prescribed homeopathic remedy causes a temporary episode of significant improvement. But because the body lacks sufficient resources to support a full recovery, the person reverts back to where he was beforehand. The next prescription may lead to another, less spectacular, improvement, followed by another reversion. Still, it’s worth the attempt, as the patient usually feels more comfortable for a while.

Hering's Law: The Direction of Cure

Using information described in the works of Hahnemann, Constantine Hering, one of the founders of American homeopathy, clearly articulated a healing phenomenon that's now known as Hering's Law. This principle states that a homeopathic cure happens from the inside out, from the top of the body moving toward the bottom, and in a chronologically backward sequence. It's as though you were watching a movie of your life in reverse, only faster, but only in terms of symptoms of disease. This natural principle was discovered during the observation of thousands of patients, and through the careful documentation of their chronological development of symptoms as well as of the sequence of their disappearance after homeopathic treatment. Parents may notice it happening when the level of their children's health improves. It's a terrific sign of progress when it occurs.

Many years ago, I prescribed a homeopathic remedy for Boris, a twelve-year-old boy with ADHD and other severe behavioral problems. Over the course of two months or so, Boris stopped hitting other children, he began paying more attention at school, and his teachers reported significant progress to his parents. However, even as Boris continued making strides academically and started having more friends, he also developed asthma. Boris's parents were extremely concerned. At our follow-up appointment, they told me how disappointed they were with the "side effects" of the remedy.

We discussed the case. At first, they didn't grasp that the remedy Boris took more than two months earlier couldn't have been responsible for his asthma attacks because it was so highly diluted and was given only once. Then I asked them if Boris had ever had the same symptoms before. The issue hadn't come up at his initial evaluation. Suddenly both parents said, "Aha!" They told me that when their son was four, he had asthma, which was treated for a few years. Finally, after a course of prednisone, the asthma was gone.

I explained Hering's Law and reassured them that Boris's asthma would probably go away shortly. I also asked if there were any other illnesses they'd forgotten to mention. They recalled that at two Boris had many ear infections and sinus infections that required numerous courses of antibiotics before they went away. They also told me that at twelve months he had severe diaper rash, especially in the front, and later some mild eczema that went away after a few applications of prednisone cream. Their report sounded like a common scenario for children from the late 1980s onward.

These parents were intelligent and realized that all the former issues might return as a result of the homeopathic treatment that Boris received. If so, I assured them that we'd be able to deal with each one successfully without too much pain. All the illnesses they'd mentioned seemed to fit nicely into the picture of the remedy I had given to Boris. Throughout the book, you will see that the *picture of the remedy* must be an exact match with the *picture of the set of symptoms* that it should be used for. Therefore, in this case, all we needed to do was to repeat the remedy when it became necessary.

My prognosis was correct. The asthma was mild and went away rapidly. A few months later, Boris, who was still doing well emotionally, developed an ear infection. It was fairly significant, so I suggested he take a new dose of the same remedy. I know that infection went away, but I don't know what happened after the next year, as Boris was doing well and I lost track of him. Although his eczema didn't come back during the period in which I treated him, if it had, I suspect it would follow a typical healing pattern. I've treated numerous cases of eczema and psoriasis. In general, but not always, the rash initially worsens somewhat. Afterward it clears first on the face, then on the torso and arms, and then it moves finally it clears lower and lower in the body, until it disappears completely.

My eldest daughter's recovery from measles illustrates the direction of cure. First, her cough went away. Then, her rash cleared from her face, trunk, and arms. Finally, it cleared from her legs. The moment the rash cleared from her feet, her fever came down.

In my days of conventional psychiatric practice, I often observed a similar direction of cure. But I'm not always able to persuade my patients that it's a sign of progress or to teach them how to take the opportunity to strengthen their immune system by forgoing interventions. One of my patients was suffering from severe, disabling depression. After completing a course of antidepressants, his depression went away. He then developed a severe bilateral ear infection. With my prompting, he remembered that something similar had happened many years earlier. He'd had a severe ear infection that was treated with antibiotics for a few months. To treat the reemergence of his ear infections, I suggested homeopathy. But he refused. Instead he chose to take a new course of antibiotics. His treatment took a long time. The ear infection subsided, but his mood became significantly worse. Despite my best efforts, it never improved to the extent it had before.

Sadly, we can see clearly that the direction of my psychiatric patient's treatment was wrong. According to the scheme we discussed previously, the cure should have moved from the deepest level (his emotions and mind) to the periphery (in this case, his ears). Using conventional medications, such as antibiotics, suppresses symptoms and drives them underground, neutralizing this healing mechanism. Homeopathy supports the body to express symptoms and thus, essentially, to go back and complete necessary healing.

Unfortunately, there has been no funding available for a retrospective study of the thousands of children who received suppressive treatments for skin problems, like Boris's diaper rash and eczema, to see how deep the pathology goes. No one really knows why a particular child develops a skin disease. We say *predisposition* or *genetics*, but these are only words. Even if we were to identify a particular gene or group of genes responsible for asthma, we don't know what would happen if we altered them—maybe something better or maybe something significantly worse.

The bottom line is that suppressive allopathic treatment of relatively superficial problems doesn't resolve a condition's underlying

cause. The body has to deal with it the best it can, and it does so by creating a new set of symptoms, usually on a deeper level. When a child shifts from one level of health to the next with the support of homeopathy, we are likely to see signs of former conditions that have been suppressed reemerging. In children whose immune responses haven't been suppressed with medications, such as my daughters, we see diseases expressed and healed according to the direction of cure. In this way, acute illnesses are not driven underground to take root as chronic illnesses.

Acute Versus Chronic Illness

Today millions of children have chronic illnesses, such as ongoing series of ear infections and sinus infections. In November 2004, I conducted a basic Internet search on the term *chronic disease*. Google turned up 2,180,000 Web pages. Yahoo came up with 611,000. What's the reason that chronic disease is so prevalent in our culture? Why are we facing an increase in disease? Simple. As I've already stated, conventional medicine provides suppressive treatment and transforms acute diseases into chronic ones. We are *all* chronically ill and have been for a long time. But our children in particular are getting weaker. So let me begin to address this concern. Homeopathic theory speaks to this issue. As you'll see later in this book, homeopathy also can provide us with solutions.

Hahnemann was the first physician to classify diseases as acute or chronic. In his main work, *Organon of the Medical Art*, he clearly defined them both. Let's examine his definitions and compare them with definitions embraced by conventional medicine.

Acute Illness

Conventional physicians define acute illness as a condition that starts suddenly and is short-lived. Homeopaths define it as a short-lived condition with symptoms that are different from the usual characteristics of the person and different from the symptoms of any persistent condition the person has.

Acute illnesses have a few important characteristics:

- Their onset is sudden.
- Their progress is rapid.
- They finish their course more or less quickly.
- They have a tendency to heal naturally (that is, without intervention).
- Without treatment, they end in complete recovery or death. (Of course, these days death is an unlikely outcome for an acute illness.)

One of the most obvious examples of an authentic acute illness is an epidemic. Hahnemann actually distinguished individual, sporadic, and epidemic acute diseases. Individual disease doesn't require any explanation. Sporadic disease means a few people in different locations develop an acute illness with the same set of symptoms. During an epidemic, a large proportion of the population suffers from the same disease. If its causative agent (a microorganism) is very strong, the majority of these people will have similar symptoms and may require the same homeopathic remedy.

Symptoms of true acute conditions are usually prominent. If your child has an acute illness, you will be able to see the symptoms. Ideally, you'll also give your child what he or she needs to overcome the illness and remain healthy. In some cases, early symptoms of an illness can be seen only in the first couple of hours. This phenomenon provides parents with a great opportunity to halt the disease in its tracks. I know of many cases when this has happened. This book will teach you how to perform this miracle, using homeopathy, for the great benefit of your children.

Chronic Illness

Conventional physicians define a chronic illness as any disease that develops slowly and lasts a long time. Homeopaths define it as a long-lasting condition, and they emphasize that when it flares up,

it may resemble an acute illness. Its symptoms will be the same every time there's an episode, just pronounced.

It's important to note that a chronic illness is not self-limiting. If left untreated or treated allopathically, sooner or later it will get worse.

Before we delve any deeper into these two categories of illness, let's see how important the distinctions between them can be in real life. Imagine that Dr. Watson saw many patients today. Two boys, Sherlock Holmes (who became a great detective in stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle) and James Moriarty (who became a brilliant criminal and Holmes's nemesis), left the most remarkable impression. Both had come down with ear infections a week ago and were seen by the doctor immediately. He gave penicillin to each. Today their parents brought them in for follow-up visits. Young Sherlock was cured. He had no pain and showed no signs of inflammation during his ear exam. Clearly, he is a happy, healthy lad.

By way of contrast, James's parents reported that although he had no fever, their son was weak and complained of discomfort in his ear. On examination, there were still signs of inflammation. Dr. Watson had to give James another prescription for a different antibiotic. The poor Moriartys! Their unfortunate son has been having those stubborn ear infections for a few years already.

As you have probably guessed, although their symptoms were similar, Sherlock had an acute ear infection, whereas James actually had an exacerbation of a chronic illness. Sherlock is at Level One of health, as he doesn't have any chronic problems. James is at Level Two of health, as he has a recurring problem. Homeopathic treatment would have been better for the boys than penicillin, because it strengthens all the defense mechanisms of the body. Even with the medication, and perhaps because of similar courses of medication in the past, James has developed chronic *otitis media* (inflammation of the middle ear). So he's probably going to have an ear infection with a similar combination of symptoms every time he's subjected to a significant stressor, like cold weather, an emotional trauma, or a virus.

What could his parents do to help young James regain his health? They need to help him fight his illness all the way through to the end so he can get rid of his current predisposition to ear infections. This requires professional homeopathic help. Imagine what could have happened if James were treated homeopathically the first time he had an acute cold or flu that turned into otitis media. It would be over!

The problem with conventional treatment is that it suppresses the body's symptoms. Although it seems like the illness goes away, in reality the root of the problem is not being addressed. Only individuals who are at Level One of health are cured. But even for them, the unnecessary use of antibiotics is detrimental. Antibiotics always weaken the immune system and in time move a child from Level One health to Level Two health. This is evidenced by more frequent infections and a lower level of energy.

Antibiotics must be used when necessary. Fortunately, in the majority of cases, natural treatment modalities, such as homeopathy, are good enough and antibiotics are unnecessary. Homeopathy helps make children stronger and more independent. Allopathic drugs make patients depend on them more and more by virtue of transforming acute problems into chronic ones.

The majority of children nowadays are at Level Two. They are much more vulnerable to developing chronic problems than earlier generations of children were. Back in his era, Hahnemann noticed some cases in which even the best outcomes of treatment didn't last a long time. He suggested that certain people—now the majority of our population—are predisposed to chronic illnesses from birth. He called this predisposition a *miasm*. Perhaps it's a viable explanation for what's happening to contemporary children.

The Theory of Miasms

Hippocrates was the first physician to use the term *miasm* to describe an infectious agent. The concept has its origins in the Greek word for “taint” or “fault.” He postulated that diseases could

be transmitted to humans through tainted air and water. After rediscovering the writings of Hippocrates, eighteenth-century physicians adopted the belief that impure airs were responsible for the spread of epidemic diseases. Although Hahnemann agreed that air could carry infectious diseases, he didn't consider the pathogenic material to be gaseous in nature. For instance, he realized that syphilis was a contagious blood disease that could mask itself behind the symptoms of many different illnesses.

Hahnemann redefined Hippocrates' miasmatic approach. After twelve years of thorough clinical observation and historical research, he published a new theory in his book *The Chronic Diseases* in 1828.

According to Hahnemann, all diseases result from inherited predisposition. He insisted that specific morbid tendencies are passed from one generation to the next, and he used the term *miasmatic animalcule* in reference to how they were transmitted. *Animalcule* means "an animal invisible to the naked eye." Dutch naturalist Antonie van Leeuwenhoek invented the microscope and had published his observations of small living animalcules (microbes) before his death in 1723. Hahnemann, although obviously thinking about microorganisms in regard to miasms, didn't know about DNA or genetics. In his book, he offered numerous examples that unequivocally supported his theory.

Originally, Hahnemann identified three major types of miasms. He gave them metaphorical names: the *psoric* (derived from the Greek word *psora*, meaning "itch"), the *sycotic* (derived from the Greek word *syc*, meaning "fig"), and the *syphilitic*. By syphilitic, Hahnemann did not mean the sexually transmitted disease. Although each type of miasm clearly applies to particular diseases, the true essence of the theory of miasms is that people are prone to developing particular sets of problems. Miasms are responsible for diseases of a chronic nature and also lay a foundation for all disease in general. An individual can have any number from one to all three of these major predispositions. Some of the basic characteristics of these three miasms are the following:

- *Psoric*. The entire population shares this predisposition, as it is the most ancient and established a foundation for all other miasms. Its main characteristics are a constant feeling of lack, a need to get more, and a need to be surrounded with more and more protection. This tendency materializes on every level of the human being: anxiety, fears, feeling cold (lack of heat), weakness (lack of strength), conservation, and a constant itch. Children born with a prevalence of psoric features often are plump; cry a lot; have many fears; like to be pampered; like comfort foods, such as milk, eggs, and pastry; need additional layers of clothes; and are prone to frequent itchy skin eruptions.

- *Sycotic*. This miasm represents excess, the need to connect, and the need to spend—a tendency that manifests itself in all the dimensions of the human being, too. Children who possess this miasm tend to be extremely sociable and sexual; love animals; have more energy at night; have physical problems that manifest with excess, such as discharges and skin growths; and feel warm most of the time. As their name suggests, sycotic eruptions resemble little figs. Warts are a good example of these.

- *Syphilitic*. The main characteristic of this miasm is destruction—aimed outwardly and inwardly. It is not a reference to a sexually transmitted disease. I hope none of your children is born with pronounced syphilitic tendencies. These children are prone to behaviors such as torturing animals and teasing or tormenting their siblings. They may also be self-destructive, possibly depressed and even suicidal—sometimes at a very young age. Syphilitic physical problems would include bleeding ulcers and such.

Let me reiterate, microbes do *not* cause the miasms. The theory of miasms is not another, more exotic way of talking about genetics. Many generations ago, microbes and possibly other influences—we don't know exactly what—caused changes in our ancestors. These morbid, or unhealthy, tendencies (miasms) were then passed along to their descendants from one generation to the next. Thus a familial predisposition was created to react to significant stressors *of any kind* in a predictable way.

If an individual with pronounced sycotic tendencies were exposed to gonorrhea, symptoms would flourish quickly in that person. But only a small percentage of people exposed to gonorrhea go on to acquire the miasm. They're either born with it or not. It would take substantial exposure to acquire a new miasm of any kind. Of course, once it did set in, a miasm would be passed on to all succeeding generations.

A common misunderstanding about this theory is to believe that the different miasms are assigned to particular illnesses. In reality, any illness can represent various miasmatic tendencies. It just depends on what stage the illness is in. For example, a person suffering from depression may be uncommonly anxious at the onset of the illness, reflecting a psoric stage. Then the person may become extremely irritable, reflecting a sycotic stage. Finally, if the depression is left untreated, this individual might develop strong suicidal tendencies, which would represent a syphilitic pathology.

Our understanding of miasms has expanded since Hahnemann's day. Currently, homeopaths distinguish as many as ten different miasms. What's important for you to understand, as a parent interested in sustaining your children's well-being, is that the theory of miasms is groundwork for how homeopathy is practiced. It is a partial explanation for why numerous layers of illness may be present in the same individual.

Any time chronically ill children are brought to my office for treatment, I know that their multiple layers of disease probably were created not as much by their miasmatic predispositions as by other modern problems, such as the following:

- Attempts to suppress symptoms of past acute illnesses with allopathic drugs
- Side effects of medications
- Unreasonably aggressive vaccination schedules
- The high level of daily stresses provided by the modern lifestyle

The majority of homeopathic practice is devoted to peeling off multiple layers of illness, if they exist. The ultimate goal is always to restore Level One health. In the next chapter, we'll explore homeopathic remedies, and you'll begin to understand how the principles we've been discussing can very effectively, and easily, be put to use.

