

*As the press debate about homeopathy is still current, I think this article is relevant.
Nearly 6 million people - almost one in 10 members of the population - opt for complementary care
each year, and a host of people in the public eye, from Madonna to Cherie Blair, are interested in an
approach that may have once been called "way out".*

Enjoy! Pauline

The Revolutionary Revival of Homeopathy and its Demolishment by the World Media

by Louise Mclean

27th August 2005

Anyone who read the papers, watched the news or listened to their radios yesterday might be forgiven for wondering what yesterday's media demolition of homeopathy was all about. It comes hard on the heels of a report on 24th August that Prince Charles commissioned a study on the economic benefits of complementary medicine and a report in The Times UK on 21st August which stated that 'demand for alternative therapies such as acupuncture and homeopathy is soaring and people are increasingly using their medical insurance to pay for it'.

This news appears to have sent the pharmaceutical companies into a flat spin and they went into coordinated overdrive to get all their favourite medical and science correspondents to put out highly negative stories about homeopathic medicine in newspapers all around the world. These reports were based on a very unfavourable study on homeopathy published in the Lancet which stated that the benefits of homeopathy could be all in the patient's mind. The study was unveiled with fanfare at the end of a week full of complimentary articles about alternative medicine.

Commenting on the study Prince Charles commissioned, Professor Edzard Ernst, the only professor of complementary medicine in Britain, made unfavourable remarks about homeopathy and yet in an article of 22nd November, 2003 entitled 'A Scientist in the Alternative Camp' published in the British Medical Journal Online, he says: 'Our family doctor in the little village outside Munich where I grew up was a homoeopath. My mother swore by it. As a kid I was treated homoeopathically. So this kind of medicine just came naturally'.

The ferocity of the media attack can only mean one thing – that there is a huge rise in popularity of homeopathic medicine and that it is now becoming a threat to the billion dollar drug industry! This worldwide revolution has taken place almost entirely by word of mouth and by personal recommendation - a truly remarkable phenomenon because up until now the media has studiously ignored and excluded any positive news on the subject.

A few years ago the programme *Horizon* on BBC 2 tried to demolish the work of Dr. Jacques Benveniste whose studies proved that homeopathic medicines work. Benveniste claimed his studies had been replicated hundreds of times. Dr. David Reilly of the Glasgow Homeopathic Hospital has also conducted many such successful studies and the Bristol Homeopathic Hospital has conducted long term studies of the benefits of

homeopathic treatment. All these homeopathic hospitals, including the London Homeopathic Hospital reportedly have at least 6 month waiting lists.

If anyone needed proof of the efficacy of homeopathic medicine, they need only study the statistics of various epidemics during the 1900s. In 1854 a cholera epidemic struck London. A report revealed that under allopathic care the mortality was 59.2% whereas under homeopathic care the mortality was only 9%. In the yellow fever outbreak in the US in 1878, the mortality in New Orleans was 50% under allopathic care and 5.6% for homeopathic care. Records of three years of diphtheria in Broome County, New York from 1862 to 1864, show the mortality rate for allopaths as 83.6% and 16.4% for homeopaths.

There are 220,000 homeopathic doctors in India and all over Europe, especially France and Germany, homeopathy is hugely popular. The Queen, who is arguably the richest woman in the world, reportedly travels everywhere with a homeopathic first aid kit and often dispenses to staff. The kings and queens of Britain have always had their own personal homeopathic doctor and for the last two centuries the aristocracy has traditionally enjoyed the benefits of homeopathic medicine. Many famous people, including MPs choose homeopathic treatment. Tony Blair's sister-in-law, Lyndsey Booth, changed careers from being a lawyer to becoming a qualified homeopath. Is it possible that all these people have been deluded into taking dummy pills, the effects of which are 'all in the mind', in their imagination?! Hardly.

What about animals and babies? How does the placebo effect work on them?! As any homeopathic vet will tell you, homeopathic medicine works almost better on animals than on humans and likewise, babies respond particularly well to treatment. Is it even possible to explain to them that the homeopathic remedy alleviated their symptoms, much less that the psychological effect of taking it brought about the cure?!

Hippocrates said there were two laws of cure – the law of opposites (orthodox medicine) and the law of similars (homeopathy). In homeopathy, a small, highly potentised dose of a substance (that in a large dose would produce the patient's symptoms), works as a catalyst to stimulate the patient's own dormant healing power, setting it into motion to bring about cure. During the process of creating a homeopathic medicine, the dilution alone would do nothing. It is the effect of the succussion (vigorous shaking) in combination with the dilution that causes the medicine to become highly potent in its action.

This Lancet study is probably just another skewed trial intent on bringing down homeopathy, akin to the kinds of trials we have to come to expect from a pharmaceutical industry that gave the green light to such medicines as Thalidomide and Vioxx.

The fact of the matter is that homeopathy has enjoyed a huge rise in popularity for one simple reason and that is because it works.