

Tending the Wind – Chapter 4
Homeopathy – Part 2
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When you take your four-legged friend to a homeopathic veterinarian, you'll be asked a multitude of questions that your average vet wouldn't typically ask. If you say your pet has been vomiting, you won't just be asked when it started or what might have triggered it. You'll be asked detailed questions about the color, consistency, time of day it happens, whether it happens immediately after eating or several hours after, what your pet does afterward, and equally detailed questions about any other symptoms accompanying it. You'll also be asked about the emotional state of your pet, both in general and since symptoms began. Even your pet's body type, temperature preferences and daily habits are important. In human homeopathy, the sensations and emotions of the patient are taken in great detail. We can't quite achieve this level of questioning in animals ("Do you feel a dull pain or a stabbing pain? Do you feel like you have a stone in your stomach? Are you depressed or just tired?") but we can usually get enough of an impression to start remedy selection.

The reason for all this detail, of course, is to choose the most similar remedy (*simillimum*). Two centuries of clinical work has shown that this is the remedy that will work best – not just a remedy made from the toxin your dog ate or the virus your cat caught. The strength of homeopathy is that it addresses the individual's response to a particular trigger, not the trigger itself.

It may take a few tries before the *simillimum* is found. One reason is the difficulty in obtaining all the information needed to make an informed selection, but the other is that a given remedy doesn't behave exactly the same way in all individuals. Critics are quick to point out that many provings of the same substance have come up with different symptom pictures, depending on the prover. There are, however, significant commonalities among the various provings that point to a remedy's appropriate application. They are clues as to how a remedy is likely to act. The degree of variation within a particular symptom portrait suggests that any one remedy is capable of accommodating several different subtypes within its general sphere of action.

Once the *simillimum* is chosen, you'll be given either a bottle of liquid remedy, or more typically a vial of tiny pellets (lactose/sucrose beads embedded with the liquid potency). These pellets are smaller than the ones for humans, so that when put in your pet's mouth they'll stick easily and dissolve quickly. Because remedies are thought to contain the subtle energies of a substance, they are considered sensitive to other electromagnetic fields; the bottle must be stored away from appliances, computers, television sets, phones, direct sunlight, and even strong odors such as camphor. The dose should ideally be given away from food and other medications.

The name of the remedy (e.g. Pulsatilla) will be labeled with its potency (e.g. 30C). This is its strength. Homeopathic remedies are made by a process called *potentization* – serial dilution and succussion (vigorous shaking) of a substance in a mixture of water and alcohol. For example, one drop of an herbal tincture is diluted in 99 drops of water/alcohol, shaken a specified number of times, and then one drop of that mixture is further diluted in 99 drops of water/alcohol, shaken, and so forth. The dilution factor each time in this example is 1:100, called a centesimal (or C) potentization. Other commonly used scales are X (1:10) and M (1:1000). A 30C potency means the 1:100 process has been done 30 times in a row, representing a total dilution of 10^{60} . Chemical theory states that a dilution greater than 6.022×10^{23} (Avogadro's number) theoretically contains none of the original substance. Hence all the controversy. Succussion is said to be the key to the biological activity of such dilute solutions. (Quantum physics is beyond the scope of this work, but for those interested please investigate the double entanglement theory of homeopathic action. Quantum mechanics, and specifically weak quantum theory, predicts entanglement/correlatedness within quantum systems. Homeopathy uses

two instances of entanglement: one between the remedy and its original substance, and one between the similar symptom portraits of the original substance and the patient.)*

The greater the dilution scale, or the greater the number of dilutions and succussions within a scale, the stronger the remedy is considered to be. The strength chosen will depend on the strength of the patient and the duration of the disease; the potency should be suited to the vigor of the vital force. Stronger remedies, if chosen poorly, tend to be less forgiving than weaker ones because their effects are more precise and longer lasting. Homeopaths often start with a lower potency and work up. Stronger potencies are also given less frequently than weaker ones.

As a general rule of thumb, the frequency of dosage should be reduced as improvement occurs. (And certainly stop the remedy if symptoms worsen.) Any medicine given when it's no longer needed can cause problems. For this reason, and to see if they've chosen the right remedy, many homeopaths start with only one dose. (Chronic or deep-seated illness typically requires some degree of repetition.) The earliest signs of improvement in the patient are usually increased vitality and a brighter attitude. Physical changes come gradually after.

In Hahnemann's earlier works, he spoke of a brief aggravation of the patient's symptoms as the stronger remedy displaced the disease state, inciting an opposing counteraction by the vital force. In his later years, he felt this aggravation was not a necessary part of the healing process if one used the appropriate potency, dosage size and frequency. He spoke then of a purely curative action rather than an opposing counteraction. Some homeopaths feel the quantity of remedy given is not crucial, since it's only the vibrational quality and/or informational content that's important. Others feel quite strongly that the size of the dose matters because each dry pellet or drop of liquid represents a packet of energy. (Is it a wave or a particle?) Until we understand the biological activity of remedies, proper dosage size and frequency (as well as potency) will be an ongoing debate. Practitioners must ultimately rely on their own clinical experience to decide.

Homeopathy doesn't work for everyone, but it can work very well. The important lessons to take home are to be as observant as possible (this will aid in remedy selection and adjustment of dosage), and to be patient but not foolish. Change is not as rapid as with conventional medicine, but should occur within a reasonable amount of time. If improvement doesn't seem forthcoming, don't wait too long to make adjustments. The benefits of homeopathy must be regarded in light of other options. The next chapter will examine this important issue in more detail.

* Entanglement Model of Homeopathy as an Example of Generalized Entanglement Predicted by Weak Quantum Theory, by H. Walach, Samuelli Institute; Forsch Komplementärmed Klass Naturheilkd 2003; 10:192-200