



Picking up Teacups

The International Conference on Homeopathy for Developing Countries which took place in Amersfoort on 6–7 June 2009 “inspired” a group of young scientists to write a letter to WHO. They were concerned about the health of people living in third world nations and feared that homeopaths would stand in the way of effective treatment for epidemics like AIDS and malaria.

I understand their concern... and have a different opinion.

On a recent trip to Africa, I witnessed people becoming paralysed after being given ARV treatment. If anywhere in the world a single patient became paralysed after receiving homeopathic treatment, the front pages of the tabloids would be too small for the headlines.

If homeopathic treatment caused therapy resistance for malaria, as is the case with conventional drugs, legislators would fight over the microphone to urge their Minister of Health to ban homeopathy.

If any allopathic drug were as effective, as safe and as cheap for epidemic diseases as the homeopathic genus epidemicus approach, it would be on the Six o'clock News of all the broadcasting stations in the world, and the stocks of the pharmaceutical company that brought it on the market would soar.

The body of healthcare in the world is standing on two legs.

The right leg of conventional medicine is very positive about its identity as the one and only right leg. Any leg that is not right is automatically wrong and should be left out or should at least be restricted as much as possible in its ability to move: a totalitarian attitude in line with its reductionist vision.

The left leg, to which homeopathy belongs, strongly opposes the idea that without the right leg there is nothing serious left for the body of healthcare to stand on. Actually it believes itself to be the right leg and would love to switch places, but if it were true to its holistic vision it would accept the reality and value of both, and be happy to play the role of the “sinister” one.

Without both legs acknowledging the value of each other and finding a way of working together the body of healthcare will not walk, will not move forward and is even more likely to tumble over.

The letter by the Voice of Young Scientists and the many other attacks on homeopathy show we have not reached the preconditions for marching forward in harmony yet.

The International Conference on Homeopathy for Developing Countries also inspired the participants. The exchange of ideas and linking of resources will further our common goal of providing sustainable healthcare to those needing it most. An opposing wind may make it impossible to sail to the goal in a straight line and thus requires skilled manoeuvring, but with a fair wind blowing we can make good speed.

How should we deal with unfair winds, with accusations and personal attacks?

My answer would be picking up teacups. I had this experience several times and it's wonderful. It starts with seeing the cup, its beautiful shape, the way it is placed with the bottom up. I witness my hand going towards the cup and enjoy the motion and sight of it. The fingers together gently fold around the cup and hold it in a loving fashion. The round shape feels soft and smooth. The hand lifts the cup and the other hand joins the embrace. Together they place the cup on the table. I choose the teabag that invites me to pick it up and feel its texture and how little it weighs. Then I pour hot water into the cup and slowly let the teabag sink in it. The water starts changing colour and wonderful odours fill my nostrils.

At this point I have not started drinking any tea yet but each step of preparing it was a great experience by itself. I could leave the cup or give it to someone else and still be fulfilled.

Picking up teacups may be easier than picking up life's challenges but in the core there is no real difference. Whether we will ever drink the tea is irrelevant to how we experience every step that may lead to it. Whether we will ever fulfil the promise of homeopathy for developing countries should not stop us from enjoying every step of the way that may or may not lead to it.

Moreover, as any sailor knows, a tailwind is comfortable but it is so much more exciting to sail into a headwind.

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