

Meeting the Challenge: Joint American Homeopathic Conference 2013

By Vatsala Sperling, MS, PhD, PDHom, RSHom(NA), CCH

Every year, hundreds of homeopaths drop whatever they are doing, pack their bags, travel from all over the USA and converge on the venue of the Joint American Homeopathic Conference.

A review of the JAHC 2013 topics indicated that the organizers had taken every aspect of homeopathy into consideration and offered something for everyone. Alize Timmerman, the ambassador of the trituration method, kicked off the Friday morning session with a presentation on human remedies, emphasizing empathy and how these human remedies could address many of the modern-day health issues arising out a lack of love or connection between mother and child. The topics of application of remedies and case receiving techniques were covered by Bhavisha and Sachindra Joshi.

Frans Vermeulen and Linda Johnston gave a talk describing difficult pathologies and materia medica. George Dimiriadis expounded on his expertise in the Boenninghausen repertory. Will Taylor commented, "I would like to fly a kite but I must know how to hold the string that connects me to the foundation, the roots. The works of Frans and George connect us to the roots of homeopathy." The scientific basis of homeopathy was presented by Iris Bell. She spoke to the group via telephone, but if you saw the focused look on everyone's face and the furious speed at which they were taking notes, you would think Iris was right in the Grand Ballroom, making sure everyone got the scientific facts about homeopathy right.

Other renowned teachers covered topics that are becoming increasingly important in our daily practice, for example, food intolerance (Joette Calabrese), coughs and colds (Ann Jerome), sinusitis (Fredrick Schroyens), autism (Jerry Kantor), substance abuse (Loretta Butehorn), ear infections (Kim Elia) and kidney and urinary issues (Karen Allen). In a highly entertaining manner, Will Taylor told us what not to do in our practice and then gave a message to the younger generation, "Come forward, present your cases and carry the torch forward." Henny Heudens-Mast urged us to always identify the patient behind the symptoms.

Besides these, the participants were treated to an update of what is happening in homeopathy across the world by Carole Boyce and Richard Pitt. Jay Yagur regaled us with anecdotes from the history of homeopathy as it was practiced in the USA. He focused on the life and work of Wilbur Price Armstrong whose granddaughter happened to be in the audience, making presentation even more poignant.

It was obvious that people were having a great time. I did ask a few of them just to make sure. "It is awesome," a young participant said and another whispered to me that attending the JAHC is an annual pilgrimage for her.

There was a busy vendors' area. Tea and lunch breaks drew the maximum crowd, but people were stopping by throughout the day. Homeopaths Without Borders had a table to motivate and inspire a fresh batch of volunteers to participate in HWB's Haiti project.

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The NCH board chose to confer a lifetime service award on Karen Allen for her untiring work in promoting and standardizing homeopathic education and the certification process, as well as for her services in Haiti with HWB. Karen was in tears and so were the NCH board members.

Homeward bound, I found myself looking forward to JAHC 2014, to be held on the West Coast.

Until then, I would like to share some comments I gathered while talking with attendees:

“For me, the JAHC is for re-educating myself about the beautiful and vast possibility of how homeopathy can improve upon human life experience and kindle the true spiritual potential of human beings, thus making them live up to their highest calling.”

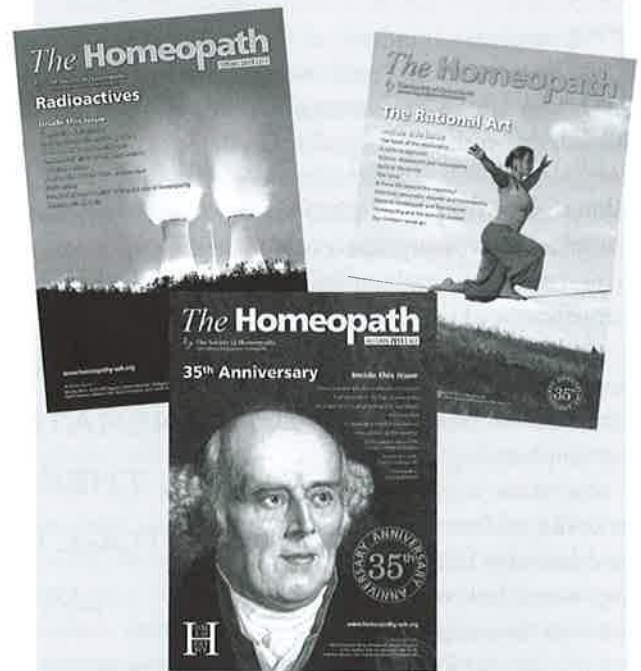
“The group synergy generated by bringing all these homeopaths together works like magic. We become comfortable and relaxed though we follow different styles and systems. We do not have to explain homeopathy to each other. We speak the same language. We are one tribe.”

Growing up in India, Vatsala Sperling saw homeopathy being widely used. After earning a PhD and working as chief of clinical microbiology services in a children's hospital, she continued to use homeopathy for herself and her family. Moving to the US in 1996 and spending the next few years in childrearing, Vatsala had all the time in the world to relish a book that her husband gave her as a birthday present: The Organon. That book motivated her to study homeopathy with Misha Norland's school. Since 2008 Vatsala has been practicing in Vermont where homeopathy is grandfathered in, though such is not the case in the rest of the US. She believes that if we can come together as a group and manage to raise our voices, we will find much better acceptance of homeopathy in our society. With this view she is looking forward to joining the NASH board as Secretary. Contact her at www.rochesterhomeopathy.com.

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