

Alastair C. Gray

Experience of Medicine 3

Extrait du livre

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de [Alastair C. Gray](#)

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INTRODUCTION TO VOL III

Do we really need more remedies? Don't we have enough already? Given that we have too many to remember, given that the size of our computer hard drives just to run the data bases and homeopathic software are simply enormous, given that Hahnemann seemed to do fine with a few dozen, given that homeopathic students get stunning results with a handful of remedies, and given that the similar remedy is so often enough when in the hands of a competent homeopath, surely we have enough.

But homeopathic medicine is imbued with the spirit of experimentation, change and movement through that experience. It is radical medicine. It started like that with Hahnemann. It's still there now. It is no accident to me that those most busy and dynamic of homeopaths seem to be the ones that engage in a meaningful way (manufacture and proving) with the medicines. Proving of new remedies and the re-provings of the old are vital to us as a profession and to us personally in order to grow.

But what is the best way to proceed? There are such varying and different ideas. Recently I reviewed a new book. Peter Tumminello in his recent book *Twelve Jewels* introduced twelve more remedies, and in a way that remedy information has never been presented before. It is so different to the way in which I have presented my work or others such as Sherr, Klein or Sankaran. I want to discuss some aspects of proving methodology through the prism of his contribution.

It's an immediately personal book. At the outset Peter describes his journey into working with these substances. It is high quality and the illustrations and photos have immediate richness. But there is substance too. Included are the details of the individual provings. There is an index of concepts and themes of these medicines at the back of the book. As a consequence Peter has been able to begin a much needed profile of the gems as a family which will inevitably grow as other members are added to it and as we get further clinical verification. There are twelve remedy profiles from the gem family with supporting proving and case data. With each medicine Peter presents a negative seed essence. At first I was confused, but on reading the introduction I realised it means this. In order to get over the dryness of reading raw proving data, the feel of the remedy or a concise distillation is required. The negative seed essence is therefore a distillation of those symptoms, fears, delusions and dreams to emerge from the proving. This is followed by a positive seed essence; a distillation of those curative or positive symptoms and feelings that emerged after taking the remedy.

He then presents the key themes from the mental symptoms. It is a monumental task of ordering and systematizing the information. There is information on the generals, then physicals before confirmation of the remedy profiles with cases from Peter's clinic. It's comprehensive. It is also accompanied with photos of each gem and illustrations of each negative and positive essence. While not everyone's cup of tea and heavily laden with symbolism they are a valuable addition to the work. Many of us learn best by metaphor and picture.

Inevitably questions will be asked in a couple of aspects of his work; mainly around methodology, and manufacturing. The provings here are in fact not single provings - an event that takes place once and then is over. In fact there are multiple provings over years. This in itself is no controversy, and personally I feel it has great merit, but the inclusion of some information may be to some observers. Nevertheless it is different to the method employed by most proving coordinators around the world.

Furthermore, some of the remedy profile information comes from meditation provings. I sat in a classroom in 1994 and meditated with that class holding a bottle of the remedy Molybdenum. Nothing happened. For me that is. For others it was a very profound and rich experience. But then that's me. When I meditate it takes around 8 seconds before I see the shopping list and my mind inevitably drifts to the makeup of the Australian cricket team or the likelihood of the All Blacks winning the next world cup. I am still working on it. But that's clearly not the experience of others. There are degrees of sensitivity. Peter's meditations and visions that he describes at the outset of the book are just fantastic.

Questions of the validity of the information that comes from a person in the middle of a meditation circle will inevitably be asked. Does the influence of others or the presence of a charismatic group leader infect the others? Is the information embroidered (some might say contaminated) by the powerful personality who knows what the remedy is? There is no question as to the validity of the experience. But can the information from that experience then find its way into the next updated repertory or into the next edition of a materia medica? That is the question that seems to divide many homeopaths. When I ask students this question I am always surprised that they answer 'absolutely not'. But then that is usually before they realize the exact methodology - if that is even the word - for some of Hahnemann's early trials.

Those questions acknowledged, for me there are a number of checks and balances that Peter has in place that entirely validates the work. None of the information comes purely from one source. When it come to say Pearl, there is the meditation group experience, but this is balanced with a Hahnemannian trial conducted at a different college and in a different context. The information is very complementary and deepens our understanding. I have experienced this from the other side in my own proving work. My experience of conducting rigid right wing Hahnemannian trials is that they often lack richness. It's hard to actually say just what a remedy is really about. Of all the Hahnemannian trials I have conducted - 19 so far, easily the flattest and the one that was most deflating and boring and dissatisfying to the participants was the triple blind trial conducted using the strictest modern controls and blinding and cross over methodology. All that came up in these rigid trials are often a couple of physicals and the odd general symptom.

In addition the manufacture of the remedies used by Tumminello might raise a fundamentalist eyebrow. The remedies are immersions and not triturations. It is certainly interesting that the lack of trituration is not reflected in the intensity of the symptoms or experiences of the provers.

A point should also be made about Peter's use of 'positive and negative seed essences'. I wonder if he has deliberately or inadvertently stumbled upon a solution for an issue that confronts anyone who has engaged in multiple provings. There is such immediate clarity about a new symptom. 'I felt fear'. 'My stomach hurts'. 'I itch'. There is no problem with these symptoms. The issue is with the positive things that happen. 'The rash I had before the proving is gone'. 'I feel great'. 'I am dancing in champagne'. These are Peter's positive seed essences. Others might call them cured symptoms. Some ignore them because they are secondary. This is a new take on the two hundred year argument about primary and secondary symptoms that divides some homeopaths. While Hahnemann told us in his earlier writings about primary and secondary symptoms and encouraged us to forget about the secondary ones because these were caused by the organism's vital force pushing back against the morbidic agent, he never got down to the nitty gritty of describing just exactly how we identify each and every symptom as one or the other. It is certainly different approach to that outlined by Henscu in his two volume Provings books.

What Peter has done here is exactly the opposite of what some other homeopaths have done in the presentation of their work. Peter and others such as Nancy Herrick in her published provings have done a deep degree of analysis and come to some concrete conclusions about the remedy profiles that they have been proving and asserted them early; central themes, essences, core delusions. Others such as Jeremy Sherr (and here myself included) have preferred not to do that. They have presented just the raw proving data, with some introductory remarks. What is the value of this approach? The material is there in its entirety for each individual homeopath to evaluate. The disadvantage is of course that it is as dry as a river bed in bush fore season. It is so flat. After all, reading provings isn't easy. You need a clear strategy when it comes to reading a proving (which is hardly ever taught and any time devoted to it in college) to ensure the flatness assumes three dimensional depth. The point is this. Who is going to argue or critique Peters profile of Black Opal? No one, because we don't have the raw data to work with. But we do with the presentation of the material like the proving of Plutonium nitricum - because it is all there, unadorned.

Can we distill the seed essence of a substance as we are taking it, or writing about it? Do we need some of the clarity that time can bring? Perhaps, as Scholten says in the foreword the concepts of objective and subjective are outdated anyway so it doesn't matter. It's a small point but it needs to be made. With the assertions of central themes of remedies some are better at it than others. Some homeopaths such as Sankaran just nail inner essences and main feelings in a flash. But not all of them are spot on all the time. I trust these essence statements here because I know Peter's work and I have seen him in action. He has decades of clinical experience. If in doubt, try waiting the months in the queue to try and get an appointment with him. But I am not so sure about other homeopath's capacity to do this.

Some may be troubled by aspects of this work and its artistry. The homeopathic police, those who haven't seen a patient in years, who emerge from time to time from under their rocks will glance the headings, see the illustrations and have an opinion.

That said, the work which follows here in this third volume of provings has fewer artistic flourishes and conclusions. What is here in these three homeopathic provings are the words of the prover. It is intended to be the starting point, from where clinical verification can support the provers words and over the forthcoming years to create a solid and identifiable homeopathic profile.

THE THREE REMEDIES INCLUDED HERE

WARATAH

The glorious New South Wales icon. 'She now felt such inconsolable grief that she willed herself to die, her body blending slowly into the weathered sandstone. And rising from the spot came the first waratah. The stalk hard, straight, and without blemish, like the young man Krubi had pined for, the leaves serrated and pointed like his spear.' This red flower is used in the Australian bush flower essences. And this proving from 2005 goes a long way to describe the liberated internal nature of it.

LIQUORICE

In herbal medicine no other plant has such diversity; anti inflammatory and anti viral properties. Massive amounts of time and money are being poured into the understanding of the pharmacology of this plant in orthodox, Chinese and western herbal medicine. This proving brings out the inside. Discharges and throat pain, headaches and nausea.

TEA TREE

Every pharmacy sells it. Known for its anti everything qualities this Australian tree begged for a proving. In this trial I received a huge amount of assistance from Dr Carol Pedersen. It was no easy ride. I'm very fearful of this remedy; I just want to flush it down the toilet. I felt as if I was stoned, as if I was getting a cold. Nausea and grumbling in my tummy and paranoia. I started biting my fingernails'.

To the generosity of these students who acted as either provers or supervisors or researchers, my thanks for your perseverance and courage and time and generosity. I am sincerely grateful.

Alastair Gray
Sydney 2006



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