

Relationships are our mirror

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by Anne Vervarcke

I am he as you are he as you are me and we are all together.
(The Beatles: *I am the walrus*).

Just about every patient who comes into our offices will talk about relationships because relationships are inevitable: even if we are an only child and live like a hermit, we have a father and a mother and thus a primordial relationship. It is by living among humans that we are taught how to be a human; had we been left with the wolves, we'd grow up to become a wolf.



Relationships are our mirror, our challenge and the stage on which we play out our drama. They show us who we are, and reflect back how we act and how we feel. They are our ultimate tests: no matter how kind, patient and loving we think we are, if we have disharmonious relationships, we know what to work on.

We have the tendency to analyse a relationship problem in psychological terms, with the underlying convictions and beliefs not recognised nor questioned. We think there are rights and obligations; we talk about respect, needs and desires. We often think it's normal to measure how much we give and how much we receive and calculate the balance. We want our share of love; we are in debt or pay back. We think that love is a game of give and take. It often sounds like the logic of economics. We don't realise that there is a greater truth; that love gives freely, unconditionally and without expecting reward.

In daily reality, we mortals often feel the other is disappointing us, playing power games, behaves egotistically or is hurting us. But since there is 'nobody out there' (for this please refer to my book: "The Charm of Homeopathy" and to my blog for more explanation about this phenomenological approach) nobody can do all those things to us unless we have these sensitivities within

us.

Earlier I used to say we perceive reality through coloured glasses; this is our delusion. If we are afraid of thieves, we see thieves everywhere. Now I tend to think we actually have mirror glasses on and see in the outside world the same things that we experience in ourselves.

Practically speaking, this is a help in a homeopathic consultation: whatever the patient tells about 'the other' applies to himself. Since most people have no problem complaining about others, we get a lot of information in this indirect way. And taciturn children or adolescents who are dragged in by their parents but determined not to share their inner world, might be willing to tell about their siblings, classmates, friends or idols.

When we approach the patient's suffering in a psychological way - let's say they feel unloved, taken for granted, betrayed, not appreciated or understood - we can judge how 'healthy' the relationship is. We might calculate how much the patient gets out of the relationship and then give advice.

look somewhere else for the fulfillment of his needs and tell him he 'deserves' a warm and supporting relationship. If we think a good relationship is proof of success and a lovely personality, this will colour our judgment.

In homeopathy we try to avoid this. One reason is because we don't know what life lesson the patient has chosen to experience regarding relationships and we shouldn't project our ideals on them. Another reason is that judgment contains the danger of putting ourselves in a place of power, because we know how healthy relationships are and ours go unquestioned in the consultation room.

I'd rather listen to the patient

If he has a seemingly unusual relationship to the outside world, it's the patient only who can convey the experience. We can't judge what is meaningful for the patient and what is not; we can witness what it does and how it feels. Maybe the patient 'needs' this to learn how to assert himself, to gain self-esteem, to look at his shadow

About the Author: Anne Vervarcke graduated in Oriental Philology and Anthropology and took later courses in classical homeopathy in Belgium, and in The Netherlands. She established The Centre for Classical Homeopathy' (CKH) in Leuven, Belgium and was teacher and director for 15 years. She has also had a private clinic since 1989. Currently she presents international training and seminars in different countries. In Belgium she still teaches at the CKH and does Master Classes with live cases. After attending countless seminars, investigating, practising and teaching for about 25 years, she has developed her own style and method in the art of homeopathy.

Maybe we'll stimulate him to assert himself,

sides to evolve to a level of more compassion.

Unconditional love is the goal and we are all on the way. A homeopathic remedy can be a great help for this: it makes a person feel OK with himself and miraculously everybody around all of a sudden seems to be less annoying, egotistical, and unreasonable, yes even becomes easier to get along with!

I always consider it as a proof that the remedy is doing its work when maybe for the first time in his life the patient sees things from the other person's point of view. Or for the first time he allows the thought that he wasn't always that easy for other people to deal with either.

It is clear by now that I don't grab the Periodic Table and look for a suitable remedy in the third row as soon as the patient starts talking about his difficulties or worries in relationships. The third row is known as the Relationship Row and time and again we end up with *Natrum*, *Magnesium*, *Silica*, *Phosphorus* or *Sulphur*. Since virtually everybody talks about relationships: no surprise!

Is it not true then? Isn't the third row of the Periodic Table about relationships then? Sure it is! As is the second row....

The second row is about symbiotic relationships

The third row is about dependent relationships

The fourth row is about family relationships

The fifth about the relationship to an audience

The sixth row is about power relationships

Do only mineral kingdom remedies have problems with relationships then? Surely not! Animal remedies are bound to have a lot of difficulties because their relationships are always unequal. They always feel superior or inferior towards the other and have that effect on others too. A recipe for conflict and trouble!

Plants are easily affected by everything and they react before thinking. Hence it is to be expected that they will be strongly affected by something so emotionally charged as their relationships.

This means that relationships are at the centre of patients' stories: together with their work it is the most important theatre to express their vital sensation. It is not the conclusion of the case though, it is the opening scene.



An illustration from page 30 of *Mjálhvít (Snow White)* an 1852 Icelandic translation of the Grimm-version fairytale. Source: Wikimedia commons.

REFERENCES

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