

Harry van der Zee

Homeopathy and Mental Health Care

Reading excerpt
[Homeopathy and Mental Health Care](#)
of [Harry van der Zee](#)
Publisher: Homeolinks Publisher



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Preface

Starting some two centuries ago with its founder, Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, homeopathy has been successfully applied in mental health care for a long time wherever homeopaths are active. Homeopathic journals and conferences around the world are full of case reports detailing homeopathy's holistic, gentle, safe, and effective approach to mental health. Increasing numbers of health professionals who have become aware of homeopathy's utility and healing benefits have undergone additional training to fruitfully integrate homeopathy into their practices, often choosing to respecialise in it. Yet homeopathy's role, application and potential in mental health care remains largely untapped and underused. The enormous global burden of mental health suffering continues to outstrip the availability, access and affordability of conventional capacities to respond. With these capacities falling short, and with the effectiveness of some conventional mental health treatments in question, the reported successes and underexploited potential of homeopathy in mental health care surely merit our attention.

Homeopathy belongs to everyone, not to a single profession. The "right to health" is a human right everyone should be able to enjoy. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights spells out the obligations of states to respect, protect, and fulfil this right by, inter alia, promoting, and preventing the hindrance of equal access to, the full spectrum of conventional and non-conventional healing practices, medicines, and preventive care. One way for us to promote access and prevent hindrance to homeopathy in mental health care (or any other form of healthcare) is to take it beyond the field-specific journals and conferences that only homeopaths can understand and into an open, coherent, and integrated mainstream discourse of health research, development, and application that other professionals can examine, study, and integrate so that its full promise for everyone may be realized.

The integrative advantages of using homeopathy in mental health care are clear to those of us successfully using this approach, and certainly to our patients who tell us how much they wished more professionals would practise this integration. But how many mental health professionals do we know who are keen to consider some training in homeopathy or who would feel confident to refer to and collaborate with a homeopath? How many doctors do we know who would immediately think of homeopathy's applications in mental health? Probably not many. Homeopathy is still "popularly" thought of as useful for scrapes, bruises, allergies, infectious diseases, 'skin things', and chronic or intractable physical complaints conventional medicine doesn't have a better answer for. The existing evidence base of empirical research that homeopathy has amassed to date tends to follow along these popular grooves, which understandably, in the absence of any other guidance, does not make for a very solid basis the conventional health professional has to go on to recommend homeopathy in mental health care.

So what other guidance is there? Those books we do have dealing with homeopathy in mental health care tend to be specialist handbooks of detailed case approaches or applied homeopathic philosophy intended only for the practising homeopath. They do not really offer the larger, contextualized, and integrative picture of how homeopathy applies to mental health care, and they do not offer the greater snapshot of the issues we need to deal with to take homeopathy in mental health care further.

This anthology was born out of a desire to start positively addressing some of these issues and concerns. We were motivated by a wish to create a useful text for both homeopaths and mental and allied health professionals that touches base with as many relevant issues pertinent to homeopathy in mental health care as possible from as large and international a perspective as possible.

Besides case examples in practice for a variety of mental health conditions throughout, we are grateful to our contributing team and their richness of experience for including coverage and contextualization of issues pertinent to meaningful areas of integration and integrative process, research, theory, ethics, and possible future directions. We hope this work, convenient to dip into as a single volume, will be useful not only to those already applying homeopathy in mental health care, but also to those who intend to and to those seeking some knowledge of the implications. Beyond that, our hope is that it will stimulate further dialogue and work by others in order to advance the kind of development, research and additional integrative applications that will promote a greater realisation of homeopathy's healing capacities in mental health.

We invited an international team of leading health professionals, researchers, theoreticians, and practitioners to help us with our intention. We have been impressed and grateful at their immediate and enthusiastic response and together offer you our united voice in this anthology. With this book, we invite you to join in the delight, the challenge and the privilege of carrying this work forward.

Christopher K. Johannes
Kyoto, September, 2009

Harry E. van der Zee
Norg, September, 2009



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Integrative Practice, Principles and
Research (Hardcover edition)

336 pages, hb
publication 2010



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