



## ACHIEVING AND MAINTAINING THE SIMILLIMUM

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DR LUC DE SCHEPPER,  
M.D.,Ph.D.,C.Hom.,D.I.Hom.,.Lic.Ac



Dr Luc De Schepper who published [Hahnemann Revisited](#) in 2001 as a textbook of classical homeopathy, [see review of [Hahnemann Revisited](#) Homeopathic Times , Dec issue , page ] has followed up his magnificent work in [Hahnemann Revisited](#) by publishing in 2004 a 'long awaited companion book' [Achieving and Maintaining the Simillimum](#) - "a guide to strategic case management for successful homeopathic prescribing".

Why should the homeopath who has read [Hahnemann Revisited](#) need to read [Achieving and Maintaining the Simillimum](#) ? [Hahnemann Revisited](#) "represented the Science of Homeopathy: Laws, case taking and finding the simillimum". [Achieving and Maintaining the Simillimum](#) "is the other side of the coin - The Art of Homeopathy". De Schepper asks the reader in the introduction to the book "*Do you want to treat the most chronically ill with their strong miasmatic background.? Do you want to prevent unneeded similar aggravation? Do you want to treat the most sensitive patients ? Do you want to speed up the time to cure by a half, a quarter or less the time that it takes with a dry dose? Do you want to be successful with heavily suppressed cases and with illnesses deemed 'incurable'? Do you want to use Hahnemann's most advanced methods and walk in his footsteps? If you do then this book is for you*".

In [Achieving and Maintaining the Simillimum](#) Dr De Schepper sets out to document and teach the advanced methods of Samuel Hahnemann. He draws from years of research into the 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> editions of the *Organon*, several editions of *Chronic Diseases*, Hahnemann's *Paris casebooks* and the works of von Boenninghausen, Dudgeon, Kent and several other Old Masters of homeopathy. De Schepper's underlying belief is that it is "*fruitful for us to study what really is in the Organon*" and he sets out to assist his readers on the path of understanding Hahnemann's advanced teachings. He leads the reader through Hahnemann's writings as only a scholar who has immersed himself deeply in such works can. He entices us to learn more about Hahnemann's advanced methods and he writes with enthusiasm and practical knowledge gleaned from years dedicated to implementing Hahnemann's advanced methods.

The author undertakes the arduous task of explaining to the reader the advanced methods of the *Organon* while acknowledging that the methods are artistic ones that "*must be individualised to the patient... No preconceived schedules or protocols can guide the practitioner..the practitioner must be guided by his individual judgement based on the advanced methods that Hahnemann taught*".

De Schepper in his opening pages of the book notes that Hahnemann was "*one of the world's most creative geniuses..an exceptional scientist - 200 years ahead of his time*" and , one that "*we may have to wait for centuries for a 'Hahnemann' to come again and lead us to the completion of the work he left us. So far no one has been able to pick up where he left*".

In PART 1 of the book [ POTENCIES] De Schepper explains in detail Hahnemann's understanding of the Vital Force and devotes a chapter to the primary and secondary action of the potentised remedy medicine on the vital force. In this way he lays a foundation for further discussions throughout the remainder of the book on treatment plans, doses and potencies.

Separate chapters are assigned to the subject of potency selection and management of each of the final three editions of the *Organon*. The author traces the development of Hahnemann's thinking in the 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> editions of the *Organon* and points out that because of the influence of Kent on the generations of homeopaths who have come after him *"it is as if homeopathy froze in time around 1828 as most of the techniques used in modern practice are from this period [the 4<sup>th</sup> edition *Organon* according to which Kent practiced]."*

*As De Schepper notes almost all "true homeopaths... call themselves classical homeopaths - indeed they are since they try to follow the rules and regulations outlined by Hahnemann in the *Organon*... The question needs to be posed however "classical according to which edition of the *Organon*"? ...90% follow the 4<sup>th</sup> edition...Even now, stuck in the 4<sup>th</sup> edition, many poorly trained homeopaths fail to grasp the evolution of the *Organon* through six distinct phases".*

It is De Schepper's hope that *"every homeopath in the world will go over to using the watery solution guidelines described in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> editions of the *Organon*. He asks homeopaths "Doesn't it make sense to start your cases with the smallest doses of the lowest effective potency in adjustable aqueous solutions and proceed to increase the potencies and amounts as needed.? And he advises "Begin as conservatively as possible, just as Hahnemann did and believe in the maximum effect of the minimum dose!"*

To help guide the homeopath in the selection of potency for patients, Dr De Schepper has created a useful table of guidelines for choosing potency , based on the sensitivity of the patient [he advises using the table with common sense always bearing in mind the individual case.]

PART 2 [MANAGEMENT] is a guide to the homeopath on management of the case, although as De Schepper points out *"Many management problems could be avoided if Hahnemann's rules as outlined in the previous chapters were known in the first place and strictly adhered to in the second"*. As De Schepper notes in this section of the book the quest to find the simillimum is *"difficult enough in and of itself"* but when we have found the simillimum we are *" only halfway to the cure. We must know how to follow up the case properly or we'll get lost"*. De Schepper gives the homeopath practical guidelines for assessing patient response to the homeopathic remedy. He discusses the significance of accessory symptoms and related problems and the problem of suppression.

A chapter deals with modern homeopathic myths and misconceptions in which there are lively discussions on some controversial aspects of homeopathic practice. De Schepper outlines the logical reasons for rejecting mixing several homeopathic remedies. He discusses the use of intercurrent remedies and alternation of remedies. The author examines some "*misstatements*" and "*assertions made by leading homeopaths*" who in making such statements "*show their ignorance of the most important work in homeopathy*". Once again De Schepper reminds us that lest we throw the baby out with the bathwater we have "*yet to discover a newer and better method than what Hahnemann outlined in the last two editions of the Organon. The problem is that 90% of all homeopaths do not know or correctly apply these advanced methods*".

When he comes to discussing the list of obstructions to the cure in the next chapter, De Schepper wryly notes that there are so many obstacles to cure "*it seems surprising that anyone can be cured*". The "*biggest and most frequent obstruction to cure*", in the author's opinion, can be the practicing homeopath. A homeopath may lack the necessary love of humanity and sympathy which is "*akin to intuition and instinct*". The author states that "*much of the art of prescribing lies in the quality of sympathy*". He goes on to discuss the other qualities that are necessary to be a homeopath including objectivity, discipline, concentration, patience, supreme concern with mastery of the art and above all else a love of homeopathy and people. The remainder of the chapter outlines in detail the obstacles to cure homeopaths will have heard of before, with several pages devoted to a discussion of errors in diet and lifestyle including an exploration of Hahnemann's insistence that the patient abstain from coffee.

The chapter on acute intercurrent or intermediate remedies in chronic diseases opens with De Scheppers observation that "*modern homeopaths no longer understand how to use an acute intercurrent remedy*". He notes that the "*skillful use of intercurrents is an essential method in classical homeopathy an aspect of complete case management*" and he outlines what Hahnemann, Kent, von Boenninghausen said about the use of acute intercurrents.. De Schepper outlines what acute events need an intercurrent remedy.

The next chapter deals with the use of chronic intercurrent remedies or nosodes in chronic diseases, and discusses the special role of nosodes as chronic intercurrent remedies. Indications for the use of nosodes are clearly outlined and advice is given about how to administer nosodes, and how to assess progress when a nosode has been administered. Two nosodes - *Carcinosin* and *Streptococcium* are discussed in particular detail, including two charts differentiating *carcinosisin* with *medorrhinum* .

The chapter entitled 'the Second Prescription - Different Scenarios for the Second and Subsequent Prescriptions in the Management of Chronic Disease' presents twelve different scenarios and for each scenario, possible questions the homeopath might ask follow with an analysis by the author. For each scenario De Schepper gives the path that might be followed by a prescriber from each edition of the Organon. Much can be learned from the presentation of scenarios, and Dr De Schepper's gifted insights in the subsequent analysis of each scenario. There is little doubt that on studying the different scenarios the limitations of prescribing according to the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Organon become glaringly obvious. In fact De Schepper says *"the following scenarios..should encourage anyone to abandon the 4<sup>th</sup> edition and move onto the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> editions of the Organon"*. Examples of scenarios include Scenario #1 *"Immediate improvement of mental, emotional and physical levels without any observable similar or dissimilar aggravation"* ; scenario #4 *"Quick, short similar aggravation followed by improvement and increase of patient's strength"*; scenario #10 *"long-term improvement over weeks or months, then sudden similar aggravation"*.

The final chapter in the second part of the book discusses complementary remedies and remedies that follow well, including paragraphs on complementary miasmatic states, antidotes and inimical remedies.

PART 3 [MANAGEMENT INQUIRIES ] is a collection of questions and answers which the author considers pertinent, some of which he found in the writings of the Old Masters and some from his own *"inquisitive mind"*. Questions posed and answered include *"If the simillimum is given in the perfect potency will the patient experience an aggravation";/ "What is the difference between a disease aggravation and a remedy aggravation";/ "How do we differentiate between old returning symptoms and the symptoms of similar aggravation?"/ "When do we use a 'small' remedy?./ "How do you treat head, body and crab lice?"/ "Is it true that lower potencies antidote higher ones and if so why?"*

PART 4 [CLINICAL EXAMPLES OF MANAGEMENT] as its title suggests outline clinical examples of management with case examples chosen to help the reader understand the follow -up visits after the first prescription. Throughout the case examples and assessment of the cases De Schepper emphasises the importance of understanding of the laws and principles of case management as taught by Hahnemann.. Throughout the author's comments he quotes from Hahnemann's writings and several of the Old Masters.

In PART 5 [HAHNEMANN'S PARIS CASEBOOKS] the author gives us a "*glimpse into the monumental work*" of studying Hahnemann's Paris casebooks in a chapter entitled 'The Later Years of Hahnemann - Theory and Techniques'. De Schepper notes that "*Whatever symptoms he chose as a basis for his prescription mental, emotional, physical, pathological and general or particular-they always related to Aphorism 153:they were always peculiar and individual to his patient and equally peculiar to the chosen remedy. And he always had firmly in place the changes he advanced in his 5<sup>th</sup> edition- using watery solutions and more frequent repetitions of the remedy*".

The hard cover book contains over 360 pages, and is divided into 5 parts with 13 chapters, two appendices, an epilogue, detailed bibliography and an index. The two appendices include [A] a clear and useful diagram of possible responses after the test dose and [B] sample instructions to the patient for taking the LM remedy.

The book completes with an epilogue which recognises the principle founders of homeopathy as Samuel Hahnemann, von Boenninghausen Constantine Hering, Adolph Lippe,.

De Schepper acknowledges in the epilogue that the "*advanced solution methods..are not easier to use than the dry dose method...these methods demand more experience and artistry than the dry dose*", however he encourages the homeopath to "*take the time to master the basics as the rewards will be tenfold*". His parting words to the reader are "*Try out these advanced methods for yourself, gain experience with them, and you will become a true classical Hahnemannian homeopath, beloved by all patients*".

END OF REVIEW.