

Practice Newsletter, Autumn 2014

Welcome: The season of “mists and mellow fruitfulness” is upon us once more and for many of us this seasonal change renders us more susceptible to “catching” colds and flu-like illnesses, or developing coughs that drag on for weeks and drag down our vitality, our joie de vivre. It is also the time for many of us to begin a new phase in our education. Whether it be at primary or secondary school, college or university, the step up is often accompanied by stress and anxiety as well as excitement (all of which can affect our susceptibility) and usually involves us attending classes in over heated and over illuminated buildings that become incubators for all manner of bacteria and virus. This is a good time to visit your homoeopath for constitutional or epigenetic (see below) treatment.

- **Epigenetics:** In 1828 a German doctor, Samuel Hahnemann, published *The Chronic Diseases, Their Peculiar Nature and Homoeopathic Cure* which seems to be the earliest treatise on what is now known as the science of Epidemiology. He described three essential kinds of chronic disease; those caused by over medication, those caused by unhealthy lifestyles and those caused by a previous infectious disease process, either in the patient or even in an ancestor. He suggested that diseases such as Leprosy, Tuberculosis or Syphilis could somehow induce changes in the patient’s health and susceptibility, changes that could be passed on to children and grand-children. Especially since the discovery of the structure of DNA in 1953 and also the completion of the Human Genome Project in 2003, Hahnemann’s “miasmatic theory” has been dismissed by orthodox science. However, a new stream of science appears to support and begin to explain this phenomenon that homoeopaths have observed for many years. Epigenetics, meaning “upon genetics”, refers to external influences (such as trauma, famine, disease, poisons) that are capable of modifying DNA and turning genes on or off. These modifications do not change the DNA sequence but they do affect how cells “read” genes. Epigenetic changes may occur in one person for life, or may be passed on to future generations. This begins to echo Hahnemann’s thoughts of nearly two hundred years ago!

When I meet with a patient in the clinical setting I can often make an accurate assessment of their ancestry e.g. on the basis of their childhood tendency to recurrent tonsillitis, their teenage incidence of glandular fever and their current tendency to catch chesty colds easily, I can suggest that an ancestor contracted TB. This can help me to explain why the person also tends to catch chesty colds when the weather changes. Patients understand this and find it helpful, especially when I can also offer suggestions for their future healthcare e.g. “given that an ancestor contracted TB you may have an inherited tendency to burnout and fatigue so it may

be wise to give yourself time to convalesce after this bout of influenza". As importantly, I can prescribe specialized medicines called nosodes which help to diminish the epigenetic effects. On many occasions in my practice I have suggested that an ancestor had, for example, TB, and the patient response (either in the moment or on returning for a follow up having asked around the family) has been, 'how on earth could you know that?' The answer is because we homoeopaths have been observing this phenomenon for nearly two hundred years!

Choice: One of the most important aspects of our work here at the Practice is to offer and support choice in healthcare, to encourage you to make your own unique journey back to health, and to simply be your ally in the face of sometimes bewildering circumstances. The NHS has reported a 70% rise in prescription drugs over the last ten years; this does not suggest a healthy culture and there are other ways to help than just the pharmaceutical approach.

Ali returns: As a consequence of a major bereavement some time ago, Ali decided put down her homoeopathic practice. However, she has made the decision to return to practice (doing the work that has always accompanied her homoeopathy), as a therapist working from a Jungian perspective. Ali will start seeing clients again from January 2015 and anyone wishing to make an appointment or wanting more information is welcome to call on 01392 422555 or email info@enhc.org. It will not be her intention to prescribe homoeopathic medicines; unless there is an obvious prescription she will refer clients on to Mo for homoeopathic treatment. Here is a little introduction to her new role:

"Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

Mary Oliver

Working with Psyche, Soul, & Dreams

Ali's background is in homoeopathic medicine & she has been a practitioner, supervisor & teacher since 1995. From 2002 onwards, she has worked in analysis with Julian David, senior analyst, and studied Jungian psychology. It is this psychotherapeutic tool which informs her work with clients. Following 6 years of working in palliative care, Ali also offers support to those who are living with cancer & with bereavement.