

**Graduating into Homeopathy:  
Changing the World by Transforming Consciousness**

*An Address to the Graduates\* of the  
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What an honor and a pleasure to be invited to speak to you on this momentous point in your journey. I have a special fondness for all of you that is out of proportion to the amount of time I've spent with you. That fondness is related to the degree of connectedness I felt during the time I had to teach and learn with you. At each moment in those two days last October, I could feel that each and every one of you was WITH me in our collective understanding of the process of case-receiving and case analysis. You asked good and probing questions, and you followed the path of perception and reasoning that stemmed from the cases and the questions that arose. Most importantly, I felt your attention and concentration stay active and alert the entire time. It was the most satisfying teaching experience I have ever had. If you can maintain that high a level of attention and perception when I am speaking, you will have no trouble doing so with your patients. So I have great confidence in all of you as homeopaths, and as colleagues who will enrich homeopathy and our small but priceless community of homeopaths.

But back to the journey: As we stand at this crossroads together and survey the path, let's first look back over our shoulders. There is certainly variation in the paths that bring each of us to homeopathy, but for many of us it is witnessing an impossible cure, to use Amy Lansky's phrase. That perception, that observation produces a cognitive dissonance, a crack in the inner model of how the world works, that beckons one to look a bit closer. Perhaps that leads to the reading of an introductory book, where one is introduced to some very strange and peculiar counterintuitive ideas, such as "Like cures like", and curing with infinitesimal dosages. One's reactions to

these ideas can range from denial, repulsion, and derision, to curiosity, fascination, and fanaticism. If one proceeds further along this path one might seek out treatment for a problem. The first experience of a homeopathic transformation is analogous to stepping through an Alice-in-Wonderland Looking Glass. Is the universe really this strange? Did this really happen? Now one is *really* committed to a breach with commonly accepted common sense. Well, all of you went even further. Three years ago, when you enrolled in the Desert Institute School of Classical Homeopathy, you committed an act of either certifiable insanity or tremendous faith and courage. Now, hundreds of hours of study later, thousands of dollars spent, you have arrived at the moment of graduation. If you have already stumbled upon cracks in the universe, stepped through Alice's Looking Glass, and enrolled in a college that teaches what many consider an obscure, arcane and unreasonable body of knowledge, what does it mean that you have persisted, studied hard, refused to look at "objective" factors such as the paucity of employment opportunities in your new vocation, to arrive at this point? What does it say about you as individuals, and as a collective? What can we say about who you are? And about who WE are, as now there is no longer the illusion of separation between student and teacher, you and I. One thing is certain: we are in this together; there is no turning back, and it is up to us to define to ourselves and to the world exactly what it is we are about, who and what we are.

Let me make a proposed definition of a homeopath that has no etymological justification: A homeopath is a healer who goes deep. A homeopath is an individual who refuses to accept conventional wisdom, common assumptions, and superficial realities. You know, it is possible to use a repertory and to prescribe a homeopathic remedy, without really being a homeopath. Indeed, even when we are homeopaths, we are always presented with the temptation - the psuedo-apple of the garden's serpent - of taking the quick and easy route, of staying on the surface. The path we are on, the path we have chosen, is to always go deeper...in homeopathy as well as in life.

In your own life, be fearless and look deeper. If you go deep enough you will find that the universe is trying to teach you something about your own consciousness. Indeed the universe, for each of us, is a reflection of the condition of our own consciousness. When we are on the level of surfaces, of appearances, we suffer from the delusion that we are all separate beings

with similar problems. When we go deep, we come to the realization that we are all aspects of one great being; separated only, however, by our unique and individual grasp of an evolving and unfolding axis of reality, a segment of universal consciousness, which gives shape, texture, joys, meaning, and suffering, to our sojourn on this earth.

I have spoken of superficial versus deep, but of course there are many levels of reality. Take conventional medicine. It isn't wrong. Just like Newton's laws, allopathic concepts have their place and their explanatory power. But the sphere of that explanatory power is limited to a material plane of reality. We, as a community of healers, have a special responsibility to bring depth to the art of healing. As inheritors of a healing discipline that is rooted in a core aspect of reality that is deeper, that has a more robust adherence to the deep structure of reality; we have a sacred responsibility not only to heal, but demonstrate the congruence of our healing system with the emerging new paradigm which undergirds our world-view. When people begin to understand that homeopathy isn't just neat because it's gentle and it works, but that its power is linked to its ultimate foundation in what is really true about our essential natures, we will be among the vanguard in the revolution of human consciousness.

Thomas Kuhn wrote an important and influential book in 1962 called The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. He begins by pointing out that conventional wisdom has it that scientific progress proceeds in a linear fashion. That as we accrue knowledge, in the form of observations, measurements, experimental results, etc., our knowledge of the world and of reality increases in a kind of arithmetic aggregation. He then goes on to very effectively deconstruct that idea, to disabuse us of the notion that scientific progress is in any way incremental. Rather, our understanding of reality changes with struggle, conflict, with revolution, as advocates of old and new paradigms compete for the right to frame perceived data through their own lenses.

Our understanding of the truth of our world, our reality, is based on a commonly accepted myth, and our science is predicated on that myth. When Ptolemy observed the motions of the planets and the sun, he charted out their courses so that they all orbited around the earth, in accord with that commonly accepted (and church-endorsed) myth. When Giordano Bruno and

Galileo Galilei endorsed Copernicus' heliocentric model of the solar system...a model which made much better sense of observed and recorded data, they were declared heretics, imprisoned and burned at the stake, or forced to recant, respectively. A peaceful, orderly, linear progression of knowledge? Not at all.

It has been said that the human being is not so much a creature of rationality, as much as the embodiment of rationalization. We have astounding capacities to rationalize not only our actions, but to defend our cognitive model of how things ARE in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Our delusions are remarkably stubborn.

We live in an age not so different from Copernicus. We live, as Thomas Berry has said, in an age "between stories". There is an accepted wisdom, a commonly held assumption, about the nature of reality, and it is crumbling. This collapsing paradigm goes by several names, including scientism, reductionism, materialism. It holds that reality is fundamentally made up of material *things*, that our consciousness is fundamentally *caused* by our neurochemistry. That our mind is a by-product of our brain, and that whatever cannot be verified and explained in material, causal terms must be regarded as possessing less truth-value than results of scientific-mode style investigation. And while this old story is crumbling, the new story has not yet been adequately written. Writing it is a task that belongs to you, to me, to us.

Why is this edifice of rock-solid common sense crumbling? It is crumbling for a number of reasons, and I'll describe three of these. Namely, Cosmological Disenchantment, Depth of Subjective Experience, and Quantum Quandaries.

First, we as a people are tired of what Richard Tarnas has aptly termed "cosmological disenchantment." "The idea that our existence here on earth is primarily random, meaningless, lonely, and circumstantial has led to an alienation and spiritual hunger so profound that it is being rejected." Under the reign of the old paradigm, "the more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it seems pointless." (1) "If we evolved out of a disenchanted universe, we become a selfish gene, a mean machine, a biotechnological artifact" (2). Rather than march in lockstep to the logical

positivism of Comte and Descartes, people are seeking meaning in alternative world-views which not only acknowledge, but rather celebrate and strengthen the awareness of spirit in our lives.

Richard Tarnas writes beautifully about this, characterizing the old and the emerging paradigms as two suitors seeking to romance the cosmos. Here he describes a thought experiment:

"Imagine for a moment", he suggests. "that you are the universe. Let us imagine that you are not the disenchanted mechanistic universe of conventional modern cosmology, but rather a deep-souled, subtly mysterious cosmos of great spiritual beauty and creative intelligence. And imagine that you are being approached by two different epistemologies-two suitors, as it were, who seek to know you. To whom would you open your deepest secrets? To which approach would you be most likely to reveal your authentic nature? Would you open most deeply to the suitor-the epistemology, the way of knowing - who approached you as though you were essentially lacking in intelligence or purpose, as though you had no interior dimension to speak of, no spiritual capacity or value; who thus saw you as fundamentally inferior to himself; who related to you as though your existence were valuable primarily to the extent that he could develop and exploit your resources to satisfy his various needs; and whose motivation for knowing you was ultimately driven by a desire for increased intellectual mastery, predictive certainty, and efficient control over you for his own self-enhancement?

"Or would you, the cosmos, open yourself most deeply to that suitor who viewed you as being at least as intelligent and noble, as worthy a being, as permeated with mind and soul, as imbued with moral aspiration and purpose, as endowed with spiritual depths and mystery, as he? This suitor seeks to know you not that he might better exploit you, but rather to unite with you and thereby bring forth something new, a creative synthesis emerging from both of your depths. He desires to liberate that which has been hidden by the separation between knower and known. His ultimate goal of knowledge is not increased mastery, prediction, and control, but rather a more richly responsive and empowered participation in a co-creative unfolding of new realities. He seeks an intellectual fulfillment that is intimately linked with imaginative vision, moral transformation, empathic understanding, aesthetic delight. His act of knowledge is essentially an act of love and intelligence combined, of wonder as well as discernment, of opening to a process of

mutual discovery. To whom would you be more likely to reveal your deepest truths?" (3)

Let's turn to the second factor in the crumbling of the materialistic, reductionistic paradigm: the apparently inexplicable depth of our subjective experience. Our personal experience is too rich and too divergent from the mechanistic model for it to provide bearings, let alone direction, to our path in this beautiful and troubled world. Where is the "ghost in the machine", and how do we account for it? How many of us have ever had an experience of precognition? Of intuition? Of the sacred? Been so touched by something so utterly beautiful that we could not help but weep? Experienced synchronicity, a deep knowing that two events which occurred near or at the same moment in time were connected in a *meaningful*, albeit not causal manner. All these experiences seem to have a depth of reality that is experiential yet nonprovable, knowable but not always believable, deeply felt but not always understood. A world-view which disregards inner experience as irrelevant to truth cannot last forever.

Thirdly, Quantum Quandaries: Observations from the realm of quantum mechanics at the level of subatomic particles, and from the realm of general relativity at the level of the cosmos, do not conform in any way to a so-called common-sense understanding of the universe. When observations do not conform to accepted theory they are initially ignored, downplayed as insignificant, reviled and ridiculed, or misperceived. But eventually, as the weight of the evidence, and more importantly, the experience, accumulates, a revolution **does** occur. It is inevitable.

At the risk of going way beyond my depth, let me take a quick diversion here to try to summarize just how far from common-sense these revelations are.

As we all know, Einstein first turned our common sense notions of *time* and *space* as uniform givens upside down at the beginning of the twentieth century. His discovery of the *relativity of simultaneity* upset our assumptions around the nature of causality; as earlier event A causing later event B, is predicated on the assurance that time is always unidirectional and is experienced in the same way by all observers. If time and space are relative, and depend on the speed and direction of those involved, we are

forced to contemplate something which makes us feel uneasy, maybe even a bit dizzy: what exactly IS time? What exactly IS space? What, then, is the nature of reality through which we experience our lives?

Time: Does it have an objective existence all of its own? Or is our experience of time exactly that: an *experience* of time, whereas *time* itself has no reality outside of, apart from, our subjective experience of it?

As unsettling as Einstein's theories were to those looking for firm ground, a *terra firma* amidst cosmological upheaval, the revelations of quantum physics were so difficult to grasp and revolutionary that even Einstein couldn't finally get behind the implications of the discoveries he himself helped make possible!

You see, even Albert Einstein was committed to a world-view which upheld the tenets of realism, locality, and determinism. Let me define these, with the help of physicist Shimon Malin's wonderful book: Nature Loves to Hide. Realism means that the world consists of physical objects which exist on their own, independently, independent of consciousness. Locality means that an event can influence another event only if there is enough time for a signal traveling no faster than the speed of light can travel between the events. Determinism means that every event can be accounted for by the sum of past events, as the sum of past causes.

Reality, it turns out, however, is probabilistic, not deterministic. The phenomenon of quantum entanglement demonstrates that connectivity exists across conventional boundaries and concepts of space and time; that what occurs to one particle simultaneously affects an entangled particle separated by thousands of miles. And there is no reality apart from our observation of it, from our CONSCIOUSNESS of it.

Heisenberg's discovery of the uncertainty principle, which states that one cannot simultaneously measure and know both the position and momentum of a particle...and Bohr's delineation of complementarity, which illustrates the indivisibility of the observer (and measuring apparatus) from the phenomena which is being observed, highlighted the omnipresent reality of **consciousness** as a heretofore poorly understood but incredibly important aspect underlying the nature of reality.

I know that these ideas are difficult, very abstract, and seem very far from the daily reality we greet when we wake up each morning. But try, just for a moment, to appreciate the astonishment of physicists as they tried to settle, once and for all, whether light was really made up of particles (that is basic building blocks of matter), or of waves! In the now-famous double-slit experiments it was discovered that the *very presence of a measurement apparatus* changed the behavior of the light: when no measurement was taken, a stream of electrons produced a wave pattern as it went through the double-slit. But when they tried to observe each electron to determine exactly which slit an electron would pass through, it behaved as a particle. The realization that the *act* of observation changed the nature of the reality under investigation is not congruent with the reigning paradigm, which insists upon a sharp distinction between observer and observed, subjective and objective, and human versus universe.

Well, you may be wondering....this is all very interesting (at least I hope you think this is interesting)...but what does this have to do with homeopathy? With our graduation? With the big questions of "Now that we've graduated from school, what do we DO?"

Hang in there with me, please, and hopefully this will all make sense. At every moment there is a field of *potentia*, an infinite number of possible configurations of reality. Matter itself, at the level of subatomic particles and atoms, is **created** out of these fields of potential, by our acts of perception. Time itself is a series of infinite points of collapsed potential, a materialization of one set of arrangements to the exclusion of an infinite number of others: at each and every moment, it seems, nature makes a choice.

OK, here's the important point: Matter is created, *reality* is created by the ACT of PERCEPTION. And what is homeopathy? Homeopathy is the art of perception, highly developed, highly refined, expertly utilized in the service of healing. Isaac Luria, the renowned 16<sup>th</sup> century Jewish Mystic and kabbalist, used the expression Tikkun olam, to refer to the discipline of healing, repairing the world. So the path you have taken, my friends, is not just about healing the sick...not that this isn't a worthy and noble and

challenging-enough occupation...it is about creating a new reality, aligning with a universe that chooses healing, evolution, integration, unfolding, and harmony (4). Depth homeopathy involves active participation in the creative act of bringing healing, congruency, clarity, and meaning into existence.

There is a comforting symmetry here. You have chosen to align with a healing force in the universe. The task -doing homeopathy artfully, correctly, effectively - may seem just a bit overwhelming. The comfort is that the universe is seeking out ways to help you. It is an active collaborator, an active partner. The universe, in its embodiment in our natural world and the consciousness emanating from it, is making choices at every moment, choices which reveal clues, directions, to those who pay attention. Even this most active partner, however, even this *anima mundi*, this *living* universe, will have a difficult time assisting someone who doesn't pay attention. It is attention that takes you to the heart of a case, it is attention that creates reality, and it is conscious attention that connects you to the heart and core of creating a new, healing, reality; a new world.

I'd like to share a dream I had last week: I am in some kind of scuba diving outfit at the bottom of the sea. Before me there is a stranded submersible; there are several occupants inside this vehicle which is stuck, really lodged into some rocks, and can't break loose. My task is to dislodge it so that the occupants can be saved, freed. At first I tug at the craft this way and that, but it is no use. The sub doesn't budge, and my anxiety level rises as I realize that the oxygen inside must be running low. Then I perceive the cable hanging down next to the craft...and that my job isn't to dislodge the stuck sub with my own force, but rather to simply attach the cable in such a way that the helicopter up above can do the work. I attach the cable, and with a dramatic scraping and heaving the craft is pulled free to the surface, and all of us, the rescued travelers, and myself, clamber with relief into what has turned into an airplane above the surface of the water.

I had this dream after receiving a moving note from a patient I have worked with for over five years. She is a highly spiritually evolved woman healing from psychic wounds involving childhood sexual abuse. She felt support from homeopathic treatment with the very first prescription of *Silica*, but her true, deep simillimum turned out to be the remedy *Hummingbird*.

This is an excerpt from her note to me:

How can I thank you for helping me find my way out of that dark place? I hope your journey is as rewarding to you as it is to all of us whose lives you touch.

This note brought tears of joy and gratitude to my eyes, for I can't imagine any path being more rewarding. And I can't imagine any gift having more value than the gift of having patients entrust themselves in my care.

We think there must be a high level of trust, confidence, and perhaps blind faith, when people allow themselves to be anesthetized and put under the care of a surgeon with a scalpel. But isn't the trust, isn't the faith, isn't the risk, even greater, when we entrust the *care of our soul* to a healer, not just the physical body?

You are taking on a tremendous responsibility, and will be the recipient of great gifts. I liken my job to having a front row seat at a window into the inner workings of the universe, into mystery and wonder. Of course the metaphor falls short because we are not merely spectators. But as the dream imagery reminds us, we don't really have to do the work by ourselves. If we perceive correctly, and touch the vital force in the right place, we will align ourselves with the healing impulse of nature, and conscious attention and intention will do all the rest.

**Sources:**

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### Endnotes:

1. Weinberg, Steven *The First Three Minutes; A Modern View of the Origin of the Universe* New York, Basic Books, 1977, quoted by Tarnas, Richard in *Cosmos and Psyche*
2. Tarnas, Richard, *Cosmos and Psyche* New York, Viking Press, 2006.
3. Tarnas, Richard, *Cosmos and Psyche* New York, Viking Press, 2006. pp. 39-40.
4. I expect that some readers may perceive in these words a contradiction of Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of our healing art to whom we are all immeasurably indebted. In his scorn for the theorizing and materialist explanatory models for disease so popular in his day, he declares that "The physician's highest calling, his only calling, is to make sick people healthy --- to heal ----as it is termed" (Hahnemann, Samuel *Organon of Medicine*, 1810) To these readers I ask consideration of the following:
  - a) Hahnemann was raising a prophetic voice here, calling for *action* to heal the sick in the face of empty words, hot air, elaborate mechanical theories of disease which were unsupported by evidence and dismal failures in effecting cures. He was not abandoning his defense of *Vitalism*, upon which homeopathy is unalterably based.
  - b) Hahnemann may have felt intuitively that he was speaking the breath of truth into a hurricane of fate blowing in the opposite direction. For his discoveries came asynchronously at the pinnacle of the Enlightenment and at the precipice of the Industrial Revolution.

As the assumptions of rationalism, materialism, reductionism, and logical positivism were taking hold deeply in his culture, he discovered empirically the validity of truths which were articulated best in an earlier age. He may quite understandably have felt that a debate over underlying philosophical principles was an unwinnable battle. Here we may perceive a striking similarity to the discoveries of the astronomer and mathematician Aristarchus of Samos, who in about 280 BC proposed a sun-centered solar system. His findings were completely ignored until re-discovered by Copernicus and Kepler, when the underlying truths of the age proved vulnerable to revolutionary upheaval.

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