

Levels of Involvement With Homeopathy

People can get involved with homeopathy at many different levels, from simply appreciating it to becoming full time homeopathic practitioners. Students typically start at the beginning and progress from one stage to another over time. For some this progression is smooth, while others stop at certain stages for years before moving on. Some are happy to stay at one stage and never move on; others find it hard to stop once they embark on their homeopathic journey.

¥ The Appreciator

There are students who contact homeopathy and begin studying and then drop out, realizing that the study and/or practice of homeopathy is not right for them. They may develop a deep appreciation for homeopathy, but have no wish to study it further. Homeopathy can, however, enliven them and leave them changed. They may refer friends, family and patients to homeopathy, embark on homeopathic treatment themselves or work with someone who does practice homeopathy.

¥ Casual Practitioner

This level of practice involves the casual usage of homeopathy and can be attained in a few hours of self-study or after a weekend course. The focus is usually on first aid prescribing using well-known remedies like *Arnica montana* after trauma or *Aconitum napellus* for shock/fright. Home prescribers at this level generally treat family and friends. medical practitioners at this level typically concentrate on their original medical practice but have a desire to experiment with homeopathy.

¥ Acute Practitioner

This level of practice is focuses on acute prescribing for conditions like colds, flu, and earaches. A practitioner can learn this level of prescribing in a typical 30-50 hour course through serious self-study. An example would be using the remedies like *Pulsatilla nigrans*, *Belladonna*, *Aconitum nappelus*, or *Mercurius vivus* in the treatment of otitis media (middle ear infections). Home prescribers at this level might use their home remedy kits to treat friends and family; the medically licensed practitioner might treat uses simple acute conditions, while reserving conventional medicine for more serious conditions, or referring such cases to a more skilled homeopathic practitioners.

¥ Integrative Practitioner

This level involves a deeper level of commitment to homeopathy. The practitioner learns a limited number of “constitutional remedies” that can be used in the treatment of chronic conditions. This typically requires a more intensive training program (100-250 hour course) rather than simple self-study.. An example of practice at this level is the usage of the remedy *Natrum muriaticum* in the cure of a patient whose syndrome of illness includes chronic migraine headaches, constipation, intermittent herpetic infections, and a tendency toward depression.

For non-medically licensed practitioners, this level involves integrating homeopathic practice with their other work; for medically licensed practitioners, it involves the deeper integration of conventional and homeopathic practice. At times, the practitioner may elect to pursue one modality of treatment over another or to combine them. The mixing of modalities can lead to confusion for some practitioners. They may find it very difficult to integrate their practices and experience a need to move on to the next level (homeopathic practitioner) as a consequence.

¥ Homeopathic Practitioner

The last level involves a deeper level of integration and commitment. One’s identity at this level becomes that of a homeopath. The study of classical homeopathy is every bit as complex as that of conventional medicine. Practitioners who are serious about the practice of homeopathy generally require a minimum of 500 didactic hours, although homeopathy is more accurately a lifetime of study. Distance learning courses are insufficient at this level without accompanying clinical training. An example of practice at this stage might be the use of the remedy *Stramonium* in the cure of a child with attention deficit disorder, night terrors, rage attacks and Tourette's Syndrome.

Practitioners may elect to only practice homeopathy at this stage or to maintain a more deeply integrated practice. Some practitioners choose to separate their practices to avoid confusion. What differentiates these practitioners from integrative practitioners is a much deeper level of commitment to

homeopathy and a well-established identity as a homeopath.

Certification becomes possible at this level, and entering the homeopathic community becomes increasingly important. This helps to create a professional identity and to avoid isolation.

Some of the dissension in homeopathy today is a conflict between practitioners who practice at different levels and have difficulty communicating with each other. Most commonly, this is a conflict between integrative practitioners and homeopathic practitioners, with differing views of how to approach homeopathic practice. It is important to have basic respect for other levels of practice. Fortunately, there is room for all levels of study and practice of homeopathy.

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