Scientific Investigation of Naturopathic Theory

Presented by: James Sensenig, ND

February 6, 2003-Basyr University

Naturopathic Medical Research Agenda

Opening Session – Scientific Workgroup

Hosted by the Naturopathic Heritage Library

A wing of the Naturopathic Medicine Academy

https://naturemedacademy.org

Philosophy

- Rational investigation of truths and principles
  - Determines our “world view”
  - Basis for our assumptions

Philosophy

- Explains/gives meaning to "facts"
- Allows what is possible
- Frames the questions to be asked

Systems of Medicine

- Philosophy
- Principles
- Theory
- Practice

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

-William Shakespeare

Hamlet. Act I, Sc. 5, Line 166

The criticisms of modern medicine are diverse, but the basic cause of the disquiet is the same: medicine's frustrating inability to make inroads against the degenerative conditions. Lacking a paradigm broad and deep enough to enable scientists and practitioners to progress, medicine is in many ways paralyzed.

-Conclusion, Chapter 12, Methodology

The Kellogg Report, Joseph Beasley, 1989

Naturopathic Medicine-Principles

- The Healing Power of Nature
- Identify and Treat the Causes
- First Do No Harm
- Doctor as Teacher
- Treat the Whole Person
- Prevention

Naturopathic Medicine

- Vitalistic/Unitarian/Hippocratic
- General systems theory
- Complexity science

Terms

- Same words-different meanings
- Misunderstanding/miscommunication
- Emotional reaction
- e.g., Vitalism

Contrasting/Paired Terms

- Galenic
- Mechanistic
- Cellular
- Rational
- Allopathic
- Reductionistic
- Morphological
- Hippocratic
- Vitalistic
- Humoral
- Empirical
- Homeopathic
- Constitutional
- Functional

Opposing Models/Tendencies

- End points on a continuum
- Not one or the other, but both
- Matter of emphasis

Contrasting Tendencies

These two tendencies have a point of contact and at the same time are very different.

They may alternate or modify each other and at times keep each other back.

Thus, analytical doctrine returns in a period in which the exaggerated metaphysical tendencies render absolutely necessary a very strict control of the method of reasoning, while a synthetical tendency with it's vitalistic attitude appears again today when a system has taken the inflexibility of a programme so as to acquire the authority of a dogma

Arturo Castilioni, MD

The Healing Power of Nature

The inherent self-organizing and healing process of living systems which establishes, maintains, and restores health

American Association of Naturopathic Physicians, 1989

Vis Medicatrix Naturae

The power possessed by the body of resisting disease and of restoring health.

A dictionary of Medical Terms, 1868

Vital force

The primary force of all forces, coming from the great central source of all life, an expression of divine intelligence.

Henry Lindlahr, M.D., Nature Cure, 1921

Vital Force

The motive plan or spirit animating mind and body expressed as physiological and psychological functionality and adaptability.

Carlo Calabrese, ND, 2003

Great Creative Intelligence

"Which some call God, others Nature, the Oversoul, Brahama, Prana, The Great Spirit, etc...each according to his best understanding."

Henry Lindlahr

Vis

- Intelligence
- Preconsciousness
- Physical, material world is not the source of life, but the manifestation of life
- Not moving away from the primordial soup but drawn toward the future

Physis

- Intelligence/motive “plan”
- Restores order/equilibrium
- “Tendency of Nature is toward restoration of Health”

-Hippocrates

Naturopathic Medicine Principles of Practice

First Principle:

- **The Healing Power of Nature**
- **Vis Medicatrix Naturae**
- **Vital Force**
- **Physics**

Naturopathic Medicine Principles of Practice

Second Principle:
Identify & Treat the Cause:

Tolle Causum

- Underlying cause
- Not suppression

Naturopathic Medicine Principles of Practice

Third Principle

First Do No Harm:

Primum Non Nocere

- Minimal risk
- Least Force

Naturopathic Medicine Principles of Practice

Fourth Principle

Doctor As Teacher:

Docere

- Education
- Therapeutic relationship

Naturopathic Medicine Principles of Practice

Fifth Principle

Treat the Whole Person:

- Everything is connected
- All Levels
- Microcosm/macrocosm

Naturopathic Medicine Principles of Practice

Sixth Principle

Prevention:

- Assessment
- Equilibrium
- Environment

Health

- Balance/equilibrium
- "Normal and harmonious"
  -Henry Lindlahr, MD
- "Animating force rules with unbounded sway"
  -Samual Hahnemann, MD
- "Law of Harmony"
  -Hippocrates

Disease

- Imbalance/disequilibrium
- Abnormal, inharmonious
- Law of Discord

Continuum

Health-->Disease-->Death

Naturopathic Model of Healing-Organism

- Optimal Health
- Normal Health
- Irritation
- Inflammation
- Chronic inflammation
- Degeneration

Continuum-Cellular

- Albuminous degeneration (cloudy swelling)
- Hydropic degeneration
- Fatty degeneration

Continuum-Nuclear

- Pyknosis (condensation)
- Karyorrhexis (fragmentation)
- Karyolysis (death/disappearance)

Symptoms

- Adaptions to the noxious influences
- Direct proportion to the imbalance
- Unique to each individual
- Show the “labor of the body”

Practice-Therapeutics

- Restores equilibrium (balance)
- Accounts for individual variations (individualized)
- Treats whole person (wholism)

Balance

- Address imbalance
- Not symptoms
- “Diagnosis is secondary to observing the individual”- Hippocrates

Balance

- Four humours-Hippocrates
- Three doshas-Ayuvedic
- Five elements-Chinese

Balance

- Acidosis/alkalosis
- Sympathetic/ parasympathetic
- Deficiencies/excesses (toxicity)

Individualization

- Each system/person/illness different
- Each intervention different
- Multifactorial/multiple treatments

Wholism

- Everything related to everything else
- All systems/functions affect all system/functions
- Microcosm
- Macrocosm

Theory-Hippocratic

- Balance
- Wholism (constitutionalism)
- Individual

Nature Heals

"Nature heals disease. Inherent mechanisms act automatically as reflexes, much as reflexes that we use in winking the eyelids or moving the tongue, for nature is active without training and without schooling in these essentials."

-Hippocrates

Laws of Cure

Symptoms disappear

- Reverse order of occurrence
- Top down
- Inside out
- Most important to least important systems /organs

Levels of Vitality

- Health
- Acute disease
- Chronic disease

Health

"In the healthy condition of man the spiritual vital force, the dynamis that animates the material body, rules with unbounded sway and retains all parts of the organism in admirable, harmonious, vital operation as regards both sensations and functions so that our indwelling reason-gifted mind can freely employ this living healthy instrument for the higher purposes of our existence."

-Organon of Medicine, Hahnemann

Acute Disease

An effort to eliminate from the organism waste material, foreign matter and poisons, and repair injury to living tissue. In other words acute disease is the result of a cleansing and healing effort of nature.

Chronic Disease

A condition of the organism in which the healing forces are no longer able to react against the disease by acute corrective efforts.

Healing Crisis

An acute reaction resulting from the ascendancy of nature's healing forces over disease conditions. Its tendency is toward recovery.

Disease Crisis

An acute reaction resulting from the ascendancy of disease conditions over the healing forces of the organism. Its tendency is, therefore, toward fatal termination.

The Therapeutic Order

- Re-establish the basis for health
- Stimulate the Vis Medicatrix Naturae (the healing power of nature
- Tonify weakened systems
- Correct structural integrity
- Prescribe specific natural substances, modalities or interventions for pathology
- Prescribe pharmacological substances for pathology
- Use surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and suppressive drugs

Determinants of Health

Inborn:

- Genetic make-up (genotype)
- Intrauterine/congenital
- Maternal exposures
  - drugs
  - toxins
  - viruses
  - psycho-emotional
- Maternal nutrition
- Maternal lifestyle
- Constitution: determines susceptibility

Determinants of Health

Disturbances

- Illnesses: patho-biography
- Medical interventions (or lack of)
- Physical and emotional exposures, stresses, and trauma
- Toxic and harmful substances

Determinants of Health

Hygienic Factors/Lifestyle Factors: *How we live*

- Fresh air
- Exposure to nature
- Clean water
- Light
- Socio-economic factors
- Culture
- Rest
- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Unadulterated food
- Loving and being loved
- meaningful work
- Community
- Stress (physical/ emotional)
- Trauma (physical/ emotional
- Medical interventions

In all times two obstacles have opposed the advancement of medicine: authorities and systems."

-Virchow, 1856