

Interview with Francis Treuherz



Francis has been in practice since 1984. He was Member of the Board of the Society of Homeopaths for over 20 years. He currently works in London NW2 and at the Letchworth Centre for Healthy Living which won the CAM 2003 prize for the best complementary and alternative health centre in the UK. He was in NHS practice from 1990 to 1993 at the Marylebone Health Centre – Dr Patrick Pietroni (1990-1993), Fitzrovia Medical Centre – the late Professor John Cohen and Dr Caroline Evans (1993-2003), (and Bounds Green Group Practice with Dr Alan Schamroth and partners from 1993-1999).

Francis Treuherz was a regular teacher at homeopathy schools Manchester, Helsinki, Stockholm and Prague. He has also lectured in Amsterdam, Chichester, Galway, Helsinki, London, Manchester, Prague, San Francisco, San

José, Seattle, Stockholm, Westminster.

He was editor of *The Homeopath* 1986-2003 and 2006-2010. Francis was a Board member and Hon Secretary of the Society of Homeopaths for some 20 years. In April 2017, he was again elected to the Board of the Society of Homeopaths. Francis has become a skilled homeopath who will devote as much personal attention to each distant patient as he does with those who visit his consulting room. He has been a Trustee of the British Homeopathic Association. Francis has been a contributor and developer of MacRepertory and other special computer software for homeopathy since 1987.

Dr Isha Gupta (ED): *How and when did you first become acquainted with homeopathy?*

Francis Treuherz (FT): My father was in the leather industry so as a child I was given many new shoes. In those days an X-ray machine called a fluoroscope was used to measure children's feet. The result was psoriasis. Starting with my toenails and as a teenager I had over 50% body coverage with psoriasis. As a young man I had infectious hepatitis from poor quality water in the Negev desert and was never well. My dentist declared that I should go and see his brother who was a homeopath. I did and not only did my energy return but my psoriasis was 80% improved in 2 months and that was not even the reason for my consultation. My interest aroused and I started to read books. I remember my first book, an original 1927 *Boericke* and someone thought I was reading a Bible on the train.

At last a subject that interested me, as I was a social science academic with an MA. I registered for a sociology PhD to work on the 'social construction of homeopathy as

a rejected science'. I studied not only Hahnemann, and historical books by Bradford and others but I studied Kent, I studied Steiner, and I began to grapple with Bach. I became so immersed in reading and I slipped in to the lectures at a new homeopathy school in London. I quit PhD and instead studied to become a homeopath.

ED: *There are several new methods of homeopathic practice created after Hahnemann, including*

multiple prescription. Please share your views over it. What is your advice for the novice homeopaths?

FT: I would refer you to another publication, of a debate in the old Boardroom of the Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital in London. The motion of the debate was 'The single remedy is the *Medicine of Experience*' based on Hahnemann's essay of that name of 1805. The motion was overwhelmingly carried. The text is on my website



<https://www.homeopathyhelpline.com/articles-resources/> (as are the texts of the other references to my own work in this interview). The late Dr Peter Fisher chaired the debate.

I prescribe one remedy at a time, although in acute cases this might be frequent. I often prescribe a remedy in water to be diluted and succussed daily for a week. I suggest that novice homeopaths from the UK arrange for observation placements with experienced colleagues, and attend courses or internships in Kolkata, such as those arranged by Dr Subrata Banerjea. There are many ways of being right.

ED: *Which book has influenced you the most and why?*

FT: *The Dictionary of Practical Materia Medica* by John Henry Clarke, 2nd and subsequent editions (1925). It is very thorough, displaying the experience of most remedies known at that time and including for example, much unpublished material by James Compton Burnett. I was chagrined to learn later on, that Clarke was an active anti-Semite.

ED: *Tell us something about your journey from a graduate to a renowned homeopath?*

FT: Having an MA in Social and Public administration, and 11 years' experience as a university teacher meant that I had some skills to share in my new profession. I became editor of the journal of the Society of Homeopaths: *The Homeopath*, for 10 years. I became an elected Board member of the Society and Company Secretary. I wrote articles, taught at homeopathy schools, and gave conference presentations. I have always had a busy practice, including from 1990 to 2003 when I worked in the UK National Health Service.

ED: *You are often called the Encyclopedia or Library of Homoeopathy 'What is yours say on it'?*

FT: My wife called me the 'Homeopathic FT Index'. In 1996, together with a colleague David Needleman who had the idea, we started '*The Homeopathic Helpline*' a premium rate UK phone service with a homeopath on the line from 9 am to midnight, 7 days a week. So I have done around 2 days a week for over 23 years of acute prescribing, as a locum service, primary care, epidemic care, and as a referral service. It keeps my brain active and is a useful service as we still receive many calls.

ED: *What are the scope and limitations of homoeopathy in the treatment of the ailments of the modern world?*

FT: Limitations? They have to some extent been overcome. There are human limits of insight, intuition and memory, which might be handicaps when interviewing a patient and considering a choice of medication. I was an early adopter of *Mac repertory* computer software in 1987. The program has developed and greatly assists in access to the huge literature of our field. The creator of this software, the late David Warkentin, became a great friend. I still miss him.

There are limitations in many countries of legal access to homoeopathy due to the hegemony of the allopathic school and their powerful pharmaceutical industry. As an extra layer there are poisons like Glyphosate pesticides which deeply affect human health through contamination of food. But the scope is without boundaries as new patients turn up for help. Every patient is an adventure.

ED: *What are the toughest cases you healed with homoeopathy according to you?*

FT: I think I have been the toughest case. I wrote a paper on *Extreme Homoeopathy* which explains my answer to this question.

ED: *How has been your experience giving lectures at various colleges.*

FT: I can only say that preparing and delivering lectures expands the mind.

ED: *How has been your experience being associated with numerous homoeopathic stalwarts across the world?*

FT: I have travelled a great deal but slowed down now. I recall meeting the late Dr SP Dey and Dr S Dubey in Calcutta and learning from them. Then I met Dr Rajan Sankaran in Bombay in 1986 and had the idea of inviting him to our UK Society of Homeopaths conference which was his first voyage outside India and became the start of a new career as an international teacher. I studied with George Vithoulkas and Dr Vassilis Ghegas in Greece and learned much from them. One voyage to San Francisco changed my life when I arrived with whooping cough to teach a seminar, and Dr Roger Morrison prescribed a remedy in a 50M potency which healed me in deeper ways than just the cough. I shared my love of our literature with the late Julian Winston and miss his cheerful humour. I am delighted to count the Israeli homeopath Jeremy Sherr, now in Tanzania, as a friend from college days.

In common with all colleagues, I shall never recover from the shock of learning of the death of Dr Peter Fisher in a cycling accident in London last summer. Through his friendship I became a member

of the Editorial Advisory Board of the journal *Homoeopathy*, and have given a few papers at Faculty of Homoeopathy conferences, the earliest in 1984, and the most recent in 2018.

ED: *What do you feel is the most gratifying for you as a professional – medical practice, teaching, writing or research? Or; what has been/will be your most gratifying achievement as a homoeopath?*

FT: All these activities have been gratifying and the most is the practice, and the others contribute to practice, my own and other people's. I have enjoyed being a Board member of the Society of Homoeopaths in the UK on and off for over 20 years, which I think is a record. I was awarded a Fellowship some years ago for my contributions. I have also been a Trustee of two homoeopathic charities.

After the medical practice my most gratifying achievement has been the assembly and study of our literature. At the time of writing, I have some 11,800 volumes on homoeopathy, and this includes all the original editions of the *Organon* and translations into 32 languages. I just learned that there is a Chinese translation which will make it 33. I also have a museum collection. I hope to create another book myself.

ED: *Which is your most memorable case, can you share some glimpses of it?*

FT: **My first case of Alzheimer's in 1985.**

A lady who was a patient took me to see her father, resident in a care home for the elderly. He did not know her. The main other presenting symptom was being fresh with the ladies, whatever

that meant. The home smelled of fish, as it was a Friday, which they had eaten for lunch*. I met the man and asked him how he enjoyed his lunch, he informed me that he had eaten chicken. I decided I could not interview him and asked to see a care assistant.

[*In older English culture it was a tradition to eat fish on Fridays.]

I asked her what was happening. He was getting fresh with only one lady and sometimes had to be gently restrained or led away. He was being medicated with sleeping drugs. I asked the care assistant what name he gave her or did he know her name. I was told the name. I asked his daughter what the name implied. It was her late mother's name; the patient's delusion was that this was his wife.

I prescribed *Hyoscyamus* 30c, one each night for a week, stop if response. The daughter called me after the week. He stopped his behaviour with the other woman resident and recognised his daughter again.

Some years after this I attended a seminar on Jewish medical ethics jointly for doctors and rabbis, and although not a doctor I was permitted to attend. The ethical case to discuss was the Biblical Commandment to 'honour your father and your mother'. If the parent had Alzheimer's what should be done, honouring them by keeping them at home and upsetting your family life with their presence; or sending them to a Jewish Care home where they would receive good care but from strangers.

The third way, of helping them with homeopathy had not been considered. I raised my hand and related this case. There was a stunned silence and I was ignored.

Not quite, as after the seminar I was contacted by a GP who had been present and I was invited to join his NHS practice where I stayed for 10 happy years until his untimely death. I had never considered *Hyoscyamus* for Alzheimer's before or since, having prescribed for the patient and not for the disease name. But it worked.

With kind acknowledgements: previously published in the Irish Homeopathic Times, 21:1, Dublin 2019.

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