

# Al-Qaeda:



Charles Wansbrough studied dentistry before moving into the alternative field. The aim of his work is to go beyond simple classical solutions and explore radical methods that increase our abilities to use Intuitive Intelligence. He has been involved in esoteric/developmental homeopathy and edited the journal *Prometheus Unbound*, which introduced the phenomenon of meditative provings. He has co-founded the New College of Homeopathy.

The suicide warriors, who attacked Washington and New York on September 11 2001, did more than kill thousands of civilians and demolish the World Trade Centre. They destroyed the West's ruling myth.

Thus begins J. Gray's polemic on the nature of al-Qaeda and of modernism (Gray, 2003). He argues that al-Qaeda is not a throwback to medieval times, but a product of globalisation and the modern mind. He further argues that Western societies are governed by the belief that modernity is a single condition, everywhere the same and always benign. This ethos is based on the Age of Enlightenment. From the eighteenth century onwards the growth of scientific knowledge and the emancipation of mankind marched hand in hand. From the dominating influence of the scientific model together with the forces of colonial expansion, the West assumed that its influence would soon be accepted everywhere. Through the power of reason and science, humanity would be able to create a new world order. This was never true, yet our faith in science and reason produced this deception. This myth has now been severely shaken by al-Qaeda.

The underlying theme has been faith in the power of reason. Rational man would triumph, and humanity would emerge in a new world order. Yet 'rational man and the power of science' represents only one perspective. Reason, viewed in the light of modern progress, has perpetrated some of the worst crimes of the twentieth century. Thus 'the Soviet Marxist experiment', a radical version of the scientific belief in progress, led to Stalin

and the death of millions. The Nazi regime and its 'eugenics programme', another scientific experiment, led to the 'extermination camps'.

The homeopathic paradigm is a product of the Enlightenment. Samuel Hahnemann and his followers were driven by their overriding passion for generating a rational model that would challenge the model of medicine of that time. The 'classical model' of homeopathy is a product of the Enlightenment. No cliché is more stupefying than to expect such a traditional model to cope with the twenty-first century. In the same way as al-Qaeda challenges the monolithic model of benign scientific enlightenment that we call progress and demands another perspective, so 'the classical model' in homeopathy needs to be challenged!

In this article, I shall use the Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Skills) to define and highlight those areas that I feel need to be addressed (see Gardner, 1993a, and also [www.chariho.k12.ri.us/curriculum/MISmart/mi\\_smart.htm](http://www.chariho.k12.ri.us/curriculum/MISmart/mi_smart.htm)). There are many styles and many methods of taking cases in homeopathy. Every case is a unique encounter, every style reflects a different interaction. All this multiplicity must somehow be reflected in the qualitative encounter that we call the 'therapeutic process'.

## Analytical intelligence

Analytical intelligence is causal, linear and the predominant mode of thinking in the scientific community.

**1. We need to move away from the 'scientific model' with its emphasis on analytical methodology and detached objectivity.**

We need to return to an empirical model. William James, an eminent thinker of the later nineteenth century, was concerned with this problem. There cannot be a true science of any kind without someone naming and interpreting it. Objective realities always exist not as independent entities but as a function of something else. Empirical models deal with individuals separately, and treat the whole as a collection, a mosaic that allows the parts to speak for themselves. Scientific and rational methods are driven by models in search of facts to corroborate them (see Harman and Clark, 1994).

**2. We need to understand that the 'scientific model' is one model of thinking among many.**

The 'classical model of homeopathy' is a by-product of the scientific model. It is a by-product of linear thinking. Traditional methods of education have been heavily weighted towards this approach. Skills that homeopaths possess and use are not solely those based on analysis.

## Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence covers the areas of interpersonal skills, empathy and personal development.

**3. We must acknowledge the entangled state of the patient and practitioner in the state of cure.**

The therapeutic encounter is a marriage of three perspectives: that of the patient, that of the remedy and that of the practitioner. This effectively diminishes the myth of objective clarity to which some homeopaths seem to religiously adhere to.

Since the advent of quantum theory in the 1920s, it has been

# A rupture in tradition

By Charles Wansbrough BDS RSHom

reiterated countless times that the observer and observed can no longer be viewed as independent entities. Consciousness and the physical world cannot be kept apart. This has literally become a cliché, comatose with repetition. Yet how is it that for nearly a century this salient feature has been studiously ignored by our 'classical model'?

#### 4. The placebo effect must be acknowledged as an important aspect of our therapeutic encounter.

To deny the placebo effect is to deny the power of the practitioner. The placebo effect is so omnipresent that Shapiro and Shapiro (1997) speculate that the major medical achievements of the twentieth century may only be recorded as the development of methodology and controlled placebo experiments. Placebo effects have been documented to produce toxic effects, withdrawal effects, complete cures, drug addictions. The results of such an indefinable effect led medicine to recognise its role but deny its validity. This denial equally applies to the homeopathic community. Homeopathy may be anxious to prove its own clinical efficacy by denying any accusations of 'placebo effect'. Yet this effect is omnipresent in all healing encounters, and to deny it is to deny the therapeutic process.

This denial can be argued to arise from the linear causal model (the 'classical model'), with its emphasis on an objective universe. Placebo and healing encounters question this assumption.

#### 5. The concept of the unprejudiced observer needs to be

#### re-examined in the light of modern neurobiology.

What does it mean to be unprejudiced when recent evidence has uncovered a phenomenon known as 'change blindness'? In brief, this phenomenon seems to indicate that *we see far less than we think we do*. Rather than logging every detail of a visual scene, says Harvard psychologist D. Simons (2002), we are actually highly selective about what we take in. Our impression of seeing everything is just that – an impression. In fact we extract a few details and rely on memory, or perhaps even our imagination, for the rest.

One experiment performed at Harvard showed people a videotape of a basketball game and

## The 'classical model of homeopathy' is a by-product of the scientific model and of linear thinking

asked them to count the passes made by one or other team. After about forty-five seconds, a man dressed in a gorilla suit walked slowly across the scene, passing between the players. Although he was visible for five seconds, 50% of the viewers failed to notice him. When the tape was played again, and they were asked simply to watch it, they saw him easily. Not surprisingly, some found it hard to believe it was the same tape. In another experiment NASA researchers put commercial airline pilots in a flight simulator and asked them to 'land'. On some approaches they superimposed the image of a stationary

aircraft right in the middle of the runway. One in four pilots blithely landed on top of the obstruction. Change blindness demonstrates that we are only aware of a tiny aspect of a scene at any moment – even though it does not seem that way. What can we say about an unprejudiced observer when he is totally incapable of seeing something so obvious and how does this bear down on our conceptual ideas about case-taking?!

#### Associative intelligence

Associative intelligence covers the domain of visual/imaginative skills, together with the ability to think laterally and draw together different disparate elements into a coherent whole.

#### 6. Case-taking is assumed to be a precise analytical process based on scientific principles. This is a fantasy based on an incorrect assumption.

The many styles of case-taking can be broken down into a number of separate skills, based on a theory of Multiple Intelligence (Gardner, 1993b):

- analytical skills
- emotional skills
- associative skills
- intuitive skills.

In a study of the modern masters of homeopathy, those at the innovative edge of this discipline, the skills most appropriate to defining these individuals are revealed to be the associative and intuitive skills.

Divya Chabra bases her method on free association, an extension of the psychoanalytical method (Fleisher, 2003). It enables one to reach through the subconscious layers of dreams and deep-seated delusions, thereby reaching deep down into those

symptoms which manifest as illness. This whole process relies less on an analytical approach and more on the ability to associate and link elements that appear disparate. It is a method more suited to the feminine psyche.

Jan Scholten has created a magnificent edifice that is more akin to a memory map, in order to process and associate an enormous amount of information using his own version of the Periodic Table. His method is far more reliant on his ability to associate and focus intuitively on possible domains of remedy groups. It relies heavily on mind-mapping exercises and revives a tradition used in the Renaissance, known as the 'Art of Memory'.

Both these modern masters are tending to downsize the relevance of the analytical approach and increase their abilities to think laterally.

**7. As we begin the twenty-first century, the homeopathic community will have to give way to the feminine mind, with its greater abilities to multiprocess instead of the fading paradigms of the analytical approach.**

Helen Fisher, an anthropologist at Rutgers University, makes an interesting distinction between male and female thinking processes (Fisher, 2003). All of us think, collect data and recognise patterns. But when women think, they collect more pieces of data, they generate more complex patterns, and see more alternative options. They tend to weigh more variables in making decisions, tend to generalise and contextualise more freely. Fisher makes the point that this mode is more akin to thinking in webs rather than straight lines, and calls this 'web thinking'.

Men, on the other hand, tend to compartmentalise, to get rid of extraneous data, to focus on what they think is important and to take a causal linear approach to a problem. Fisher calls this 'step thinking'.

In some ways the sheer explosion of homeopathic information, with the inexhaustible number of provings, together with the increasing importance of the intuitive skills, tends to reflect the

female mind. Women are sturdier individuals because they have the most difficult jobs on earth, raising helpless little toddlers while performing a multiplicity of tasks concurrently.

**8. As globalisation and the Internet take over, we will have to evolve different methods in searching and processing information.**

The Internet and homeopathic materia medica have many themes in common. Both represent virtual or subtle realms, both have to be accessed and processed through search engines. In both cases one has to scan or search many possibilities. For example, if I type 'Hollywood' into a search engine, about nine million pages will be found; if I type 'Sulphur' into Reference Works, 20,237 references will be found. In both cases, this surfeit of information is a result of linear thinking and a scientific model.

**These modern masters are downsizing the analytical approach and increasing their ability to think laterally**

We have to develop different methods of accessing information. We scan and associate different aspects of the web, in the same way that we have to scan possible remedies and perform multiple tasks using all the different skills at our disposal. Traditional methods of teaching are not geared to this breadth of associative learning now present at all levels of our society.

**Intuitive intelligence**

Notoriously difficult to define, the essence of intuitive responses is that they are reached with little apparent effort, and typically without conscious awareness. They involve little or no conscious or rational deliberation.

**9. All the best homeopaths have high degrees of intuitive intelligence. Without this facility, excellence in homeopathy would be unattainable.**

Following hunches, which is part of an intuitive approach, is like appealing to some superior being, rather than appearing to have a valid basis. Yet today, many psychologists are beginning to accept that the brain has two main modes of processing, one verbal, linear and conscious, and the other nonverbal and unconscious. This division is less reminiscent of the left/right brain divide much studied in the 1970s, and is more about research that shows that much of our decision-making is done by aspects of our mind that are outside our awareness.

For example, psychologist Jonathan Schooler at the University of Pittsburgh believes the nonverbal condition can be essential. In fact, his best advice for solving some problems is: don't try too hard and avoid words (Spinney, 1998). Schooler bases this advice on research that shows that the brain handles verbal and nonverbal knowledge in different ways, and is not always happy to mix the two. If you want to get the most from your intuitive brain, don't strive to put into words pieces of knowledge that are essentially nonverbal – the look of a face, say, or a colour. This, says Schooler, will only disrupt the flow of intuitive, nonverbal thought.

Consider the way evidence is extracted from eye-witnesses to a crime. A few years ago, Schooler and his wife showed a video of a bank robbery to a group of people, some of whom were asked to describe the robber's face in as much detail as possible, while others occupied themselves by naming the US states. In the recognition test that followed, those who described the robber's face were about twenty-six per cent poorer at picking out the target from seven similar photos than those who had been reciting states from Alabama to Wisconsin. 'Verbalisation has a very specific effect,' says Schooler. 'It impairs judgement based on intuition.'

Massimo Mangialavori, who is regarded as one of the best modern masters of homeopathy today, uses all the above skills, but interestingly he is profoundly intuitive in his method of finding the remedy.

One of his students actually commented on his inability at times to explain how he had finally arrived at a prescription. The reason is simple: his mode of accessing the prescription is firmly based on shamanic processes that have little to do with our 'top heavy' and linear scientific paradigms.

**10. Many brilliant prescriptions arise from subtle cues that may at times be impossible to verbalise, yet all of us fail to give due credit to the intuitive process that plays a major role in our prescription.**

What is fascinating about the 'classical model of homeopathy' is the way it sustains a linear and rather formal approach to the homeopathic prescription. Many prescriptions may arise through profoundly felt hunches, yet its insistence on consistency force many of us to vocalise post-rational explanations for remedies we found but cannot fully fathom in the language of the repertory.

All initial prescriptions made in homeopathy always fall under the category of a 'guesstimation' (see the article on biolumanetics and homeopathy at my website, [www.biolumanetics.net/tantalus](http://www.biolumanetics.net/tantalus)). There are no correct prescriptions in homeopathy; until the patient has returned with a full evaluation, every prescription in homeopathy is a plausible guess. The homeopath is a skilled interpreter of facts. Yet every 'virtual prescription' must rely heavily on an intuitive hunch or feeling that the homeopath is able to discern internally.

A piece of very interesting research on the use of everyday intuition for decision-making was published by Dean, Mihalsky, Schroeder and Ostrander (1974):

In testing company presidents, Douglas Dean and John Mihalsky found that precognitive ability was a reliable indicator of financial success. Eighty percent of highly successful company presidents (who had doubled their company profits in five years) scored above chance on computerized precognition tests ... The highly successful presidents said they were using their intuition to foresee money-making opportunities.

This result is extraordinarily

interesting since it infers that a high degree of success may be linked to a high degree of intuitive intelligence. This factor alone is, I suspect, the principal distinction between good and poor homeopaths.

**11. Intuitive intelligence can be trained through experience and good feedback.**

The first published study to create intuition training was by Charles Tart (1977). He proposed that immediate feedback following the results of a guess can improve the human ability to make correct guesses, i.e. can train intuition. In a series of theoretical and experimental studies published from 1960–80, he established methods

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and strategies for intuition training. In particular, he noted factors, which can be positively correlated with intuition training.

These are:

- high motivation
- high general learning ability
- absence of specific conscious or (inferred) unconscious resistances to psi
- good memory skills
- ability to quiet one's mind
- non-attachment, i.e. the ability to drop strategies that are not adaptive in spite of emotional investment in them
- ability to ignore sensory distractions.

### Conclusion

To sum up the terse statements I have presented here, I think it is time that we examined our traditional methods of training homeopaths and reconfigured an educational process that would give equal weight and credence to all four of the skills mentioned above. It is clear that because of the amount of homeopathic information that is being generated, our tradi-

tional methods of accessing it will inevitably fail. We need to create a marriage between computer-generated information and a more archaic and intuitive form of accessing patterns of behaviour, similar to that employed by a traditional shaman. We need to inevitably embrace or recreate a form of 'techno-shamanism'. As a unique experiment in a more innovative approach to homeopathy, a new educational establishment has been set up in the hope of fermenting a more coherent view of the homeopathic process (see [www.new-college.org](http://www.new-college.org)).

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### FURTHER INFORMATION

You can read more about Charles Wansbrough's research at his website:

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