



Anthroposophical Medicine



The philosophy behind Anthroposophical Medicine is vast and reaches into many areas of life such as education (Waldorf), movement (Eurhythm), and farming (Biodynamic Agriculture). Dr. Rudolph Steiner, the Founder of Anthroposophy (Wisdom of Man; Science of Man), developed this approach to medicine in the early 1900's.

Rather than using a "recipe" approach with the natural remedies, the doctor, by way of a thorough history, visual and physical examination, gains insight into the picture of the illness manifested by imbalances between the organs and the physical and spiritual bodies of the human being.

Unlike traditional homeopathy, which works with the law of similars (like cures like), Anthroposophical remedies were developed from spiritual study of the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms and how their expression in life reflects in the processes of the human being.

Two of the components of how Anthroposophical medicine views the human being are a three-fold and four-fold perspective.

Continued on next page





Anthroposophical Medicine

Continued



The three-fold aspect

In the three-fold aspect of the human being the balance of the body systems is addressed. Also, referred to as poles, the body is divided into:

- the nerve-sense
- Rhythmic metabolic systems.

The nerve-sense system is made up of the brain, spinal cord, nerves and sense organs. Within this system stimuli from the outer world is brought into the body unchanged through the senses (vision, hearing, touch). This system has windows to the outer world, yet is carefully protected by boney structure (skull and vertebral column). There is very little movement, and minimal metabolism or growth and development of this system after birth.

In opposition, the metabolic-limb system encompasses movement and warmth. Movement can be both an external change in position, and the transformation of matter into energy (metabolism). These functions are present in the muscles, liver, intestines, kidneys and blood. The abdominal region of the body is the home of the metabolic system.

To mediate stillness/movement, coolness/warmth, low/high metabolism, the rhythmic system of the thorax seeks balance. All processes that demonstrate a temporal alternation between activity and rest are included in this system. The heart and lungs each having rhythms of expansion and contraction with the main purpose of moving air and blood are representative of the rhythmic system.



Continued on next page



Anthroposophical Medicine

Continued



The four members of the Being

The four members of the being include:

- the physical body (mineral/earth)
- the etheric body (the organizational principle underlying life), formative forces/ anabolism/water
- the astral body (bearer of our instincts, passions and impulses), soul/catabolic/air

the ego ("I", that aspect of the human being that can obtain wisdom and bring it into consciousness expressed in man's uprightness, speaking and thinking-spirit, Self.

Man is first and foremost a spiritual being, receiving from the Divine world of creation a body that corresponds to the spirit. We are not the products of heredity and environment. We use them purely as raw materials for transforming and molding individuality into an expression of "I", the individual.

The balance and harmony of the three-fold and four-fold human being is dynamically expressing one's health. An over-emphasis of the nerve-sense system can create a tendency toward sclerosis/hardening, whereas an overactive metabolic-limb system can create inflammation and degradation.

The interplay of the four members of the three systems is the dance of life.

