

# Jonathan Stallick

## AIDS - The Homeopathic Challenge

Leseprobe

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## Introduction

AIDS is the disease of this age in the same way that tuberculosis reflected the state of mankind in the early years of this Century. By this, I mean that AIDS perfectly mirrors the concerns, fears and spiritual state of humanity now, whether or not it appears to affect us personally.

AIDS is a world-wide phenomenon. It has caught the imagination of vast numbers of people. It could even be said to possess a kind of glamour - the images that are evoked have a poetic quality to them (certainly in the West people with AIDS are often seen as martyrs dying for a cause). The recent 'Benetton' advertisement poster is a good example. This depicts the moment of death of a man with AIDS while his anguish-stricken parents look on. This theme is echoed in numerous films, plays and books. The association between well-meaning commercial Sponsors and celebrities with AIDS-related fund-raising projects may have emphasised the illusion of *glamour in the struggle* against insurmountable odds.

At the beginning of the AIDS scare, the Status of gays in the Community plummeted to an all-time low because of the fear that gay men were somehow threatening the very fabric of society and were responsible for this 'plague'. At last, people thought they had a valid reason for their prejudices and could justify ostracising the gay section of society. In response, though, the gay Community were able to demonstrate that they could be as responsible as anyone in changing their sexual habits, and could, at the same time, reclaim their self worth and integrity through fighting against the prejudices which had always been part of the gay / straight divide. Of course, AIDS does not only affect the gay Community, but it is perhaps meaningful that, statistically speaking, all the main groups affected could be perceived to have been abused either by themselves or

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society<sup>2</sup>. In this way AIDS has been a catalyst for the whole of society.

As an astrologer, in addition to being a homoeopath, I was interested to learn that Pluto started its journey through Scorpio at the same time that AIDS became a sociological phenomenon, i.e. in 1984. Pluto in Scorpio, the sign of death and regeneration, indicates that power issues are foremost. The way that we individually and collectively use and abuse power concerning sex, the environment, death and disease has to be confronted. The dark side of our psyche, those 'neuroses' or taboos which have become separated from our consciousness will be brought to the surface to be examined and integrated - and these *are* the issues of our times. One could say that it is a case of 'regenerate or die'<sup>1</sup>. One book written in the 1970's says that the transit of Pluto through Scorpio is the time in which there is the greatest danger of plague, famine, and atomic or biological warfare.<sup>3</sup> Pluto concludes its sojourn in Scorpio in 1996.

AIDS could be said to provide a logical development in the history of illness and medicine. The collapse of the immune System begs for the deepest understanding of the nature of health and disease - and this presently eludes conventional medicine. Huge resources are being devoted to just one avenue of research - the search for a vaccine - based on the idea that the HIV virus is the sole or main cause of AIDS. Yet at present, none of the medical drugs being used transforms the course of the disease and a vaccine seems as far off a possibility as ever. Western medicine seems finally to have met its match. Most homoeopaths think that the history of allopathic medicine is one of increasing suppression. If AIDS is the latest product of this process, then we can only recoil in dread at what the next step could be.

When AIDS first hit the headlines in around 1984 it quickly took on the mantle of 'most feared disease' which cancer had held for several decades. Like cancer, it was assumed that the prognosis for sufferers was automatically very poor. This resulted in a great deal of fear and caution

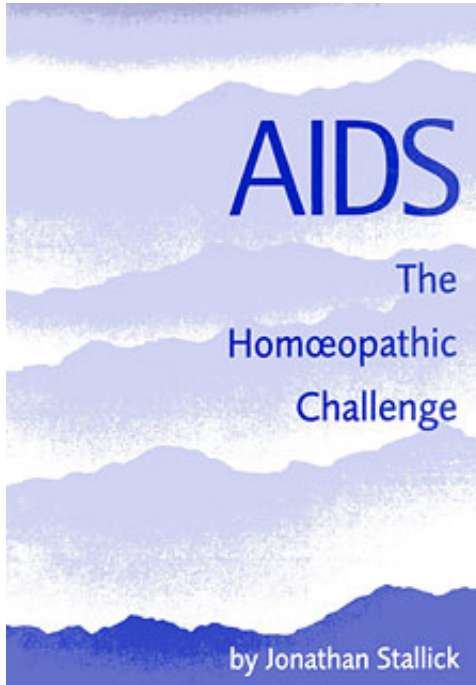
amongst many alternative therapists. The other side of the coin, of course, was that as there was not much to lose, given the inadequacy of the conventional approach; we might as well 'have a go'.

At the two centres for AIDS where I have worked it quickly became apparent that the alternative therapies were the most popular Services offered. Out of the therapies on offer, acupuncture, massage and other hands-on therapies seemed most in demand; whilst homoeopathy, although not unpopular, did not seem to have quite the same draw.

There may be several reasons for this:

- confusion as to what exactly homoeopathy is;
- the fact that homoeopathy is frequently not as immediately gratifying as some other therapies;
- homoeopathy requires more application on the part of the patient in terms of self exploration and discipline;
- being based on the prescription of pills brings it perilously close to the practice of conventional medicine, in the eyes of some patients.

Of course, as homoeopaths we are also faced with difficult questions. For example, how do we counter the Claim that HIV is the sole cause of AIDS? And if the HIV virus is unique among all of those that afflict mankind, how does that affect our ability to help our patients? These concerns may prove spurious but they have to be faced nevertheless. Looking positively, one great strength that homoeopathy has in this Situation, apart from the remedies themselves, is an alternative perspective on disease with which we can de-construct the blame, victimisation and hopelessness which are such a large part of the AIDS scenario.



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