

Nancy Herrick

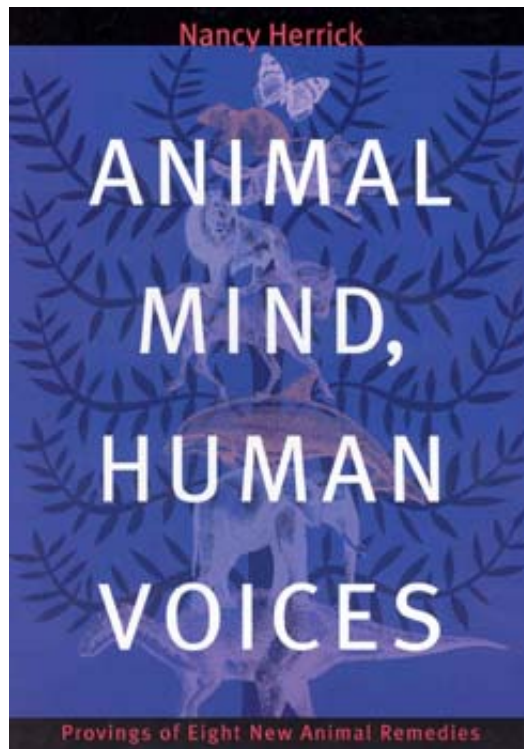
Animal Mind, Human Voices

Leseprobe

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INTRODUCTION

H

omeopathy has sustained and fascinated me for over 20 years. The process of taking a case, giving a remedy, and watching a very ill person bloom into health gives a sense of satisfaction unlike anything I have ever known. But there is something missing. Some cases, no matter how we struggle with them, cannot be solved. Part of the reason for this is that many of the most important medicines have not yet been developed. Foremost among these are the animal remedies, especially the milks of the mammals. We have over 2,000 remedies, and only 14 of them are made from the mammals. Almost 100 years ago, the great homeopathic master, James Tyler Kent, said: "All the milks should be potentized, they are our most excellent remedies; they are animal products and foods of early animal life and therefore correspond to the beginning of our innermost physical nature."

After going to India and being inspired by the work of Rajan Sankaran, I became intrigued by the idea of doing some new animal provings. It soon became apparent that this was a formidable undertaking. Many aspects of the proving process have been difficult—from finding acceptable provers and obtaining the animal substances to organizing the vast amount of material that is developed in the process. Nevertheless, this has been an extremely stimulating and rewarding endeavor. The remedies from Dolphin, Dinosaur, Elephant, Horse, Rat, Butterfly, Lion, and Wolf have already been used successfully based on the informal spread of information from these provings. That is why I believe it is important to formally publish them. Otherwise, the use of these new remedies would remain an arcane and secret practice.

What Is a Proving?

A proving is a way of making a new medicine available to the repertoire of remedies used in homeopathy. It involves the documentation and analysis of symptoms that occur when healthy individuals take a remedy. Samuel Hahnemann, the father of homeopathy, determined that when healthy individuals take a substance, they manifest the same symptoms which that substance cures in sick persons. Virtually all homeopathic remedies now in use were proved at one time or another. There is no end to the substances which

can be proved. Interest in proving substances is growing even as the science and art of homeopathy reestablishes itself in the forefront of healing arts in the new millennium.

Methodology of Provings

The system I use for provings has developed as a result of the work of other provers and my own design. First, eight to twenty people volunteer freely to participate. Preferably they are either homeopathic students, colleagues, or people who are advocates of homeopathy. I do not use any patients or people who are not familiar with homeopathy as provers. Homeopaths make good provers because they are familiar with their own symptoms and are more likely to recognize a new symptom when it comes up. Non-homeopaths are more likely to enter old symptoms in the proving record. I trust homeopaths to record symptoms with accuracy and to appreciate the value of detail, especially that valuable information about mental and emotional states.

Each prover who is a homeopath decides whether or not they want a supervisor. If they want one, I will provide another homeopath to do it. Non-homeopaths must have a supervisor who also takes their baseline case for at least their first proving. Neither supervisors nor provers know what the substance is.

The substance is selected based on its relative importance to humans—something that people have a strong feeling about one way or another. For example, people love roses; they hate rats.

The remedy is made up into a 30C potency. Each participant, blinded totally as to the substance, is mailed a vial of the remedy. They are also mailed a proving booklet to record each new symptom they experience under the appropriate heading, such as mind, head, stomach, and so on.

All provers start at approximately the same time and day by taking one dose. Some provers will note a symptom that occurs almost immediately upon taking the remedy, while others will note no symptoms whatsoever during the entire proving session. For a period of three weeks, the provers keep notes and detail carefully all symptoms that differ from their usual state. If a supervisor has been assigned to the prover, s/he will phone the prover regularly in order to go over physical symptoms and state of mind as well as the days' experiences.

It is very important that the provers carefully record their emotional state, including dreams and the details of any unusual events that occur in their lives during the entire proving period. Recording details of all kinds is encouraged, especially if there is an acute illness or a crisis, or if important new symptoms occur. If they have no symptoms at all, the provers are asked to repeat the remedy two more times, two days apart. If they have very slight symptoms which

dissipate in a matter of days, they are asked to repeat the remedy once, after the symptoms are gone. If they have definite symptoms, they are asked not to repeat the remedy at all but just to watch the symptoms and their general emotional state. Under all circumstances, they are asked to keep their notebooks going and to record each day for three weeks, even if it is only to say "no symptoms." Many times we have seen that symptoms occurred which were so subtle, they were not apparent to the provers themselves until the group meeting, when they saw that other provers had the same symptoms. For example, in the rat proving, many provers felt a strong desire to go out at night—especially to be in the woods in the dark. Virtually none of them thought of this as a symptom in the proving but dutifully recorded it as an activity in their lives. When we got together at the meeting, we were amazed at the consistency of this unique symptom.

The dreams which occur throughout the proving are another extremely important guide to the underlying emotional state of the person who would need this substance. Provers are asked to wake up in the night to record their dreams, but if this is not feasible, they are requested to keep pen and pad by their bed and record dreams within 60 seconds of waking. After this period of time, the dreams are lost to memory in most cases. Some provings bring out an emotional state that is reflected almost solely in the dreams of the proven. For example, in the wolf proving, there were minimal physical symptoms, but the dreams revealed a deep and profound emotional disturbance. Other provings are predominantly physical and have much detailed symptomatology.

If at any time during the proving there is a crisis or any major area of difficulty, I am available any time night or day, and the provers have my home phone number. If I do a proving in another location, I have a local supervisor who is available. It is important to give a feeling of safety and security to provers. The only exception I made to this was in my second proving—dolphin. This entire proving was different in that it was done during a week-long seminar in Hawaii. I was not personally familiar with each of the provers, as I was in my other provings. Also, it was the largest one, with over 20 provers. One prover had long-term symptoms after the proving that she never told me about until over a year later. This was unfortunate and taught me an important lesson about knowing the provers and staying in contact.

Another point that came up during this proving was the use of children as provers. After some debate, we decided to include them. Two sets of parents volunteered. One set gave their daughter the substance in potency and the other merely put it under their child's pillow. Both children had a strong reaction with noticeable behavior changes and many physical and mental symptoms. While this provided a lot of insight into the remedy, I have made a decision not to do provings with children in the future because I feel that the provings are too strong

for their comfort level. An interesting point is that several other children, who did not have contact with the remedy but whose parents were provers, also had strong, new symptoms consistent with the remedy. The experiences of these children are not included in these reports.

At the end of three weeks, the proving meeting is held. The provers have been asked not to discuss among themselves in any way their state or symptoms during the proving time. We gather in a quiet room where we will not be interrupted. The session is videotaped, but provers may choose not to be on tape. Each prover in turn reads his booklet and summarizes his or her experience. They may, and do, elaborate a bit. At the end, provers can bring up something they experienced but did not recognize as a symptom until they heard other provers mention it at the meeting. Then they attempt to identify the substance, or at least the kingdom. Finally, I reveal the substance, and we have a discussion about their general experience, the substance, and their feelings about it. At this point, most people who are still experiencing symptoms have a catharsis, wherein the remedy and the symptoms leave them, and they go back to their usual state.

Following this meeting, the challenge of organizing all the material collected from the notebooks and proving meeting begins. This is truly a major job and would be extremely difficult to do without a team.

It is ideal to follow the provers for the next year to identify changes and developments over the long term. However, for the many provers who participate in two or three provings a year, this is not practical. But I do believe it is an excellent practice. Certainly, it is important to follow up on any symptoms that are still active after the end of the proving period of three weeks. Readers will find themselves able to enter into the mind of the animals in this book. The voices of the human provers allow us to "hear and feel" the state of the animals. It is my hope that by doing this, we may heal the animals as we heal ourselves

Important Things I Learned from Doing Twelve Provings

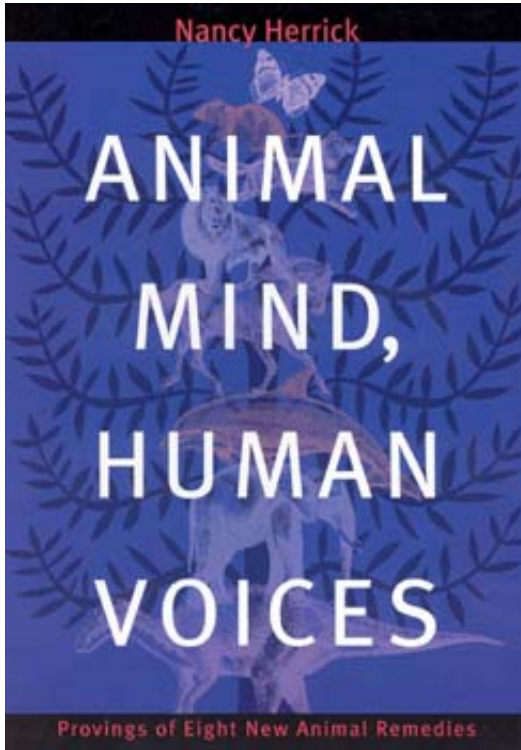
1.-Treasure your provers. Sensitive provers are gems of unimaginable value to the future of thousands of patients who will be healed by the remedies they have proven. Love them; be kind to them. Do not push them to do a proving if they don't want to, and do not ask them to do too many provings for their comfort level.

2. Select your substance very carefully. Make sure you identify it properly. Many people will offer suggestions, but a proving is a major undertaking. Untold hours of work and effort go into it. Make sure your choice is a good one. If you decide to do a proving that has already been done, do it in a different country or in a different manner.

3. Make rubrics. This adds the proving language to the general lexicon of the

working homeopath. The number of rubrics is secondary to their being accurate and reliable.

4. If you're going to do it, do it right and do it thoroughly. Do only that number of provings you have the commitment to publish. Then publish them. The world needs this information.



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