

This letter to the editor first appeared in 'Homeopathy Today' (2001, Vol.21, May), the newsletter of the National Center for Homeopathy, Alexandria, VA, USA, (www.homeopathic.org) edited by Julian Winston. It is presented here with kind permission.

In this letter Joel Shepperd calls up for finding a basic common ground for the homeopaths following different approaches. The debate should develop without personal attacks. It is important to share a minimum of common principles, otherwise there is no science anymore. But at the same time progress is necessary, as Hahnemann himself also never stopped his research.

Joel Shepperd

A call for common ground

On reviewing past issues of *Homeopathy Today*, the evidence shows that Julian Winston has done a remarkable job. With his competent guidance the magazine has become the most informative and reliable voice of the homeopathic community. He has reported the viewpoints of everyone, including laypersons, licensed practitioners, professional homeopaths, and events in all areas of the world. Pages and pages are occupied by the activities and ideas of most of the signers of the letter with no pre-judgments. Julian has been mediator between the different schools of homeopathy; he has been referee to the high quality of the contents of *Homeopathy Today*; and he has been an editor with opinions. These opinions are presented from a position of principles, never from the level of personal attacks. No one has done more to bring the many individualists in homeopathy to a common ground.

Hahnemann dedicated his life to homeopathy. Julian Winston has dedicated his life to homeopathy. The signers of the letter have dedicated their lives to help suffering humanity through the good of homeopathy. Their beliefs are strong and their feelings are strong because they see in their mind the truth of homeopathy; they experience in their heart the beauty of homeopathy. Energy has been aroused by controversy. Instead of dissipating this intensity in personal attacks, this is an opportunity to confront the important issues facing homeopathy today in an open forum. It is urgent that all homeopaths find basic common ground and become a real homeopathic community. It is vital to establish standards of competence and accepted methods of practice. It is necessary to agree about the process for the validation of clinical experience and the testing for new remedies.

It is a matter of survival to have a community with established boundaries, a clear focus and an open heart. The Hahnemannian Homeopaths should be open to new verified observations that enrich our method. The Popular Homeopaths should not let apparent results justify the means. There must be an irreducible minimum of principles that defines homeopathic medicine or we have no science. There can be a unity in the natural diversity that keeps homeopathy dynamic.

Never did Hahnemann stop improving and refining his method through experience. Never did he say that his method was a finished product. Never did he end his treatment of the sick. Never was he done.